



# REVISED OPERATIONAL PLAN

## 2021-2022



## Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>OBJECTIVES .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>BACKGROUND .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>STAKEHOLDERS.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>FUNDING.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>FORECAST BUDGET 2021-2022.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PLANNED PROGRAMS 2021-2022.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1. Wild Dog Program.....	6
2. Large Feral Herbivore (LFH).....	7
3. Priority Declared Weeds.....	8
<b>ACTIVITIES IMPACTED BY BUDGET REDUCTION.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>TIMELINE OF CORE ACTIVITIES.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>LINKAGES/ALIGNMENTS.....</b>	<b>12</b>

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Goldfields Nullarbor Rangelands Biosecurity Association (GNRBA) 2021-22 operational plan identifies the priorities and actions for the control and management of priority declared pests in the region. GNRBA funds are primarily sourced from the Declared Pest Account (DPA). In addition to the DPA, funds are sourced from state and federal NRM grants, Royalty for Regions (R4R) contracts, local government shires and other stakeholder bodies.

The GNRBA is a not for profit organisation formed under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2015* and operates under the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007*. The primary purpose of the GNRBA is the control and management of priority declared species in the Goldfields Nullarbor region, these being Wild Dogs, Large Feral Herbivores (LFH) and weeds. The GNRBA is formally recognised by the Minister of Agriculture as a Recognised Biosecurity Group (RBG), and is managed by a committee of management, which consists of 8 members.

The Goldfields Nullarbor region has significant exposure to UCL and consequent management issues with pests on the extensive pastoral interface, particularly wild dogs and feral camels. Much of this UCL is Determined Native Title and the GNRBA conducts significant Indigenous engagement activities and partnership arrangements in order to assist in declared pest management and control. The GNRBA works actively with Ngadju, Spinifex, Martu and Birriliburu Traditional Owners and Ranger groups.

The region is also exposed to two state borders – the Northern Territory and South Australia. Road, rail and air travel enter the GNRBA area of responsibility through a number of corridors, with only limited quarantine control. The GNRBA remains ever vigilant for declared weeds entering WA from interstate, particularly on uncontrolled corridors (eg Great Central Road).

Extensive abandoned settlements and mining operations over the past 120 years have led to major legacy cactus infestations over much of the Goldfields Nullarbor, which is rapidly spreading as conditions improve. Much of this is on UCL.

### **Ad valorem/cents-in-the-dollar**

The GNRBA recommends that the Minister for Agriculture and Food (as per legislation) determines an ad valorem rate on the unimproved land value for Pastoral land in the local government districts of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Coolgardie, Dundas, Menzies, Leonora, Laverton, Sandstone, Wiluna and Ngaanyatjarra for the financial year commencing 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- 1) To enable and assist Goldfields Nullarbor landholders and land managers to develop a coordinated approach for declared pest control in their area, in support of what they are required to do as individual land managers.

- 2) To provide the basis for shared responsibility and funding in the control of declared pests in the region, which enables communities and industry to partner with others, including state government agencies, for landscape and established declared pest management.
- 3) To provide a framework to foster efficiency through partnership arrangements to make the best use of skills, funds, capacities, incentives and regulations to control declared pests.

## **BACKGROUND**

The GNRBA was one of the earliest Recognised Biosecurity Groups (RBG's) formed in Western Australia following the legislative changes from Zone Control Authorities (ZCA's) operating under the Pastoral Lands Board (PLB) to formally operating as a non-profit Incorporated Association in 2011. The GNRBA region incorporates 100 pastoral leases and nine local government shires – Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Coolgardie, Dundas, Menzies, Leonora, Laverton, Sandstone, Wiluna and Ngaanyatjarra. The Goldfields Nullarbor region covers an area of 933, 814 square kilometres (ie over 93 million hectares and approximately 33% of the West Australian land mass) and has a population of approximately 45,000, concentrated mostly in Kalgoorlie. This region consists of a diverse range of land tenures, including pastoral leases, mining leases, unallocated crown land (UCL), Department of Biosecurity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) reserves, Indigenous Protected Areas (IPA's) and Determined and Undetermined Native Title.

### **Priority Pests**

The GNRBA priority declared pests are wild dogs, large feral herbivores and weeds such as cactus. These declared pests are the main focus of the operational plan. These pests impact significantly on pastoral production and the environment. GNRBA funds alone are not capable of fully controlling these pests, however the GNRBA manages these pests to the best of their ability within the financial confines of the DPA and opportunistic external funding.

While management of declared pests is the responsibility of individual land holders, the GNRBA offer's assistance to landholders through best practice community coordinated control programs.

The GNRBA encourages broad scale, coordinated, cooperative and integrated pest management and control, and promotes best practice control methods. It is playing a key regional role in assisting land managers to control high impact declared pests.

### **Committee of Management**

The GNRBA Committee of Management (CoM) consist of 8 members, currently 7 Pastoralists and one Associate member as tabled below.

<b>GNRBA COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Term Remaining</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Shire</b>
Brendan Jones	1 year AGM 2021	Committee member	Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Nigel Wessels	1 year AGM 2021	Associate member	Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Edmund Forrester	1 year AGM 2021	Vice Chair	Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Justin Stevens	2 years AGM 2022	Treasurer/Secretary	Kalgoorlie-Boulder
Brett Day	2 years AGM 2022	Committee member	Kalgoorlie-Boulder
David McQuie	3 years AGM 2023	Chair	Sandstone
Trevor Schutz	3 years AGM 2023	Committee member	Laverton
Carol Hodshon	3 years AGM 2023	Committee member	Sandstone

## **STAKEHOLDERS**

The GNRBA stakeholders are numerous, they include, but are not limited to; All relevant shires, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD), Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA), Rangelands NRM (RNRM), Industry Funding Schemes (IFS), TAFE, Licensed Pest Management Technicians (LPMT's), Meat suppliers, Mining companies (including exploration & drilling), Pastoralists, Prospectors, Tourists, Recreational users, Main Roads, Rail Operators & Transport, Aboriginal corporations and Ranger groups.

## **FINANCES**

Due to the unprecedented circumstances resulting from the 2019 Pastoral Lease Valuations and the impact this has had on DPA funding available to RBG's, a revised budget and Operational Plan has been requested and compiled and submitted to DPIRD for approval. As certainty is unavailable regarding this funding at the time of writing, figures and plans have been made available to the best of the GNRBA's knowledge at the time.

Activities within this operational plan will cost ~~\$1,066,000~~ \$873,500 allocated as follows:

<b>Budget Summary</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Revised</b>
Wild dog control	<del>\$628,000</del>	\$563,500
Large Feral Herbivore control	<del>\$55,000</del>	\$ 85,000
Declared Plant control	<del>\$45,000</del>	\$ 36,000
Administration and Governance	<del>\$338,000</del>	\$ 189,000
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<del><b>\$1,066,000</b></del>	<b>\$ 873,500</b>

The GNRBA requests DPA funding to deliver the operational plan in the following months:

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (26<sup>th</sup> July 2021)</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter (6<sup>th</sup> March 2022)</b>
<del>\$400,000</del> \$210,289	<del>\$280,000</del> \$210,289

Note: \$97,000 will come from R4R Wild Dog Action Plan Funding  
\$131,000 will come through Shire funding and various Grants

## **FORECAST BUDGET 2021-2022**

In 2021, the Valuer General allowed objections against the 2019 pastoral rent review that resulted in a significant reduction in pastoral lease rents and consequently the unimproved land value of these leases. This had a direct impact on State funding available for RBGs as it changed the unimproved land values that the Declared Pest Rate (DPR) is based on in the Rangeland areas in 2021/22 and retrospectively for 2020/21. As a result, GNRBA revised its 2021/22 budget in line with available Declared Pest Account funding, including the additional funds made available by the State. GNRBA's revised total budget for DPA funded operations in 2021/22 is now \$520,624. Further information on the revised budget is available on request.

## **PLANNED PROGRAMS 2021-2022**

### **1. Wild Dogs**

Wild Dogs have the most significant impact on pastoral production and profit in the Goldfields Nullarbor Region. They attack small and large stock, causing direct stock losses, and also cause losses through maiming (and consequently commercial value), lambing and mis-mothering (Influence of the predatory effect) and the high cost of control measures.

The GNRBA utilises an integrated approach to wild dog management including landscape scale community coordinated aerial and ground baiting programs, supply of appropriate traps, baits and training for landholders and employment of LPMT doggers. This is supported by coordinated and cooperative stakeholder contributions (eg DBCA and shires) and external funding (eg R4R and grants).

**Table 1: Wild Dog Program**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Input</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Source</b>
Co-ordinated baiting programs - March - June (Aerial) - September <del>Nov/Dec if required</del>	CEO plan, co-ordinate and deliver programs. Inform & advertise. RCP Permits.  LPMT time both dogging and bait prep (harvest, cut, inject, bag & deliver baits). 1080 Signage.  Landholders trapping & bait distribution.	No. of participating members  Landholder feedback  LPMT feedback and Post Activity Reports	Budget: Operational <del>\$628,000</del> \$444,500  Administrative & Governance \$119,000  Source: 85% DPA 15% R4R
<del>Pastoral Trap Training days</del> <del>April</del> <del>September</del>	<del>CEO plan &amp; co-ordinate</del>  <del>LPMT prepare trap boxes and deliver training</del>	<del>No. of participating members</del>  <del>LPMT &amp; landholder feedback</del>	Budget: \$10,000  Source: 100% DPA

The GNRBA budget allocation to wild dog management of 65% reflects the priority of wild dog control in the GNRBA region. The GNRBA committee prioritises the wild dog management program, ensuring wild dog baits continue to be available to members for the 2021-2022 FY.

## **2. Large Feral Herbivores (LFH)**

Large feral herbivores (feral camels, horses and donkeys) have a significant impact on pastoral production and the environment within the Goldfields Nullarbor, primarily pastoral leases located along the desert interface. They compete directly with stock for food and water, spread weeds, contribute to soil erosion, damage pastoral infrastructure including fences and water points, and foul natural waters.

The GNRBA conducts an annual LFH aerial shoot in the area of highest LFH impact. Traditionally this has been within the Shire of Wiluna which has been a broad scale, coordinated program in partnership with Pastoralists, Wiluna Shire, Desert Support Services (DSS) and Tarlka Matuwa Piarku Aboriginal Corporation (TMPAC). Where country proves suitable, ground support programs will be made available for members significantly impacted by LFH during the warmer months.

Additionally, the GNRBA provides a limited ammunition subsidy to any pastoralists that experience high level LFH impact.

**Table 2: Large Feral Herbivore Program**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Input</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Source</b>
Multi tenure LFH aerial cull program (March)	CEO consulting, planning & co-ordination  DPIRD accredited shooter & aircraft  Landholder time and support.	Post activity report  Numbers culled  Landholder feedback	Budget: Operational \$25,000  Administration & Governance \$15,000  Source: 100% DPA
Pastoral ground shoots when/if required (Nov-March)	CEO consulting, planning & co-ordination  LPMT time to assist with program  Landholder time and support	Post activity report  Numbers culled  Landholder feedback	Budget: Operational \$25,000  Administration & Governance \$15,000  Source: 100% DPA
Ammunition reimbursement	Collate evidence Communicate & co-ordinate allocations Monitor & record	Numbers culled  Landholder feedback	Budget: Operational \$5,000 Source:100% DPA

Ten percent of the GNRBA budget is allocated to LFH control for 2021-2022. Historically the GNRBA has utilised this money to attract further funding for partnerships with Shires and Aboriginal Organisations for use on aerial shooting operations.

### **3. Priority Declared Weeds**

Cactus, parkinsonia, bathurst burr and onion weed are the GNRBA priority weeds. These weeds spread quickly by a variety of means, outcompete native vegetation and reduce the productive grazing capacity of pastoral lands.

With grant assistance from State NRM, Rangelands NRM and local Shires, the GNRBA have enjoyed outstanding success with the ongoing cactus biological control program. Managing and distributing host specific cochineal, the GNRBA, participating shires and pastoralists have successfully introduced various cochineal biotypes to 3 major cactus species to date. Species targeted will continue to diversify as the cochineal species becomes available.

The GNRBA traditionally conducts numerous declared weed spraying activities utilising a qualified LPMT weed spraying contractor in partnership with external funding bodies (eg shires and grants). The GNRBA also supports land holders with limited herbicide reimbursement for widespread weed control.

Due to this years limited budget, the spraying programs will not be conducted this year and only a limited herbicide reimbursements will be made available to members by the GNRBA for the 2021-2022 FY.

**Table 3: Weeds Program**

<b>Actions</b>	<b>Input</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Budget &amp; Source</b>
Ongoing management of existing cactus biological control programs	CEO/EA co-ordinate & manage programs.  CEO/EA train relevant stakeholders  Landholders time	Regular visits to sites to monitor & manage  Landholder/stakeholder feedback	Budget: Operational \$45,000 \$ 6,000  Administration & Governance \$30,000  Source: 100% DPA
<del>Weed spraying programs</del>	<del>CEO/EA co-ordinate &amp; manage programs  LPMT undertake spraying activities</del>	<del>Regular visits to sites to monitor &amp; manage.  Landholder/stakeholder feedback</del>	

The GNRBA will allocate 4% of its budget to priority declared weed control but, continues to rely heavily on external funding for assistance in the costs of managing priority declared weeds, particularly cactus.

### **ACTIVITIES IMPACTED BY BUDGET REDUCTION**

#### **Wild Dog**

- Aerial Baiting removed
- Summer Baiting removed
- Trap Training removed

#### **Large Feral Herbivores**

- Reduced/modified aerial shoot program depending on partnerships and funding.

#### **Weeds**

- Weed spraying removed
- Reduced cactus management program

It is the committee's intent to maintain focus on the GNRBA core activities such as bait production and availability and LFH management and undertaking these activities when most seasonally effective. The GNRBA will be encouraging all Shires and Pastoralists to manage weeds to the best of their ability and the GNRBA is willing to support these activities where financially capable.

Priority programs if more funding should become available in order of reintroduction;

- Reintroduction of a limited wild dog aerial baiting program (April or June 2022)
- Increased LFH aerial control program (March/April 2022)
- Increased cactus management program (Spring/Autumn)
- Reintroduction of Trap Training program (response to demand)
- Weed spraying (Spring/Autumn)

### **TIMELINE OF CORE ACTIVITIES**

The timeline incorporating all core activities is presented in Table 4 below

**Table 4: Timeline of Core Activities**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Planned Activity</b>	<b>Medium/Consultation</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
July	Commence reporting and financial audit	Committee/Accountant/Auditor	Governance
August	CoM meeting	Committee	Update CoM and request input to high level Op's
	Cactus & Cochineal monitoring & distribution	Landowner's/Shires/Stakeholders	Declared cactus management
September	Ground Baiting program	Pastoralists, media, shires & roadhouses, (3-14 days prior)	Wild dog management
	Newsletter	GNRBA members	Pastoralist awareness
	Trap training	GNRBA members	Pastoralist engagement & training
	Cactus & Cochineal monitoring & distribution	Landowner's/Shires/Stakeholders	Cactus management
	Annual Report	GNRBA members & DPIRD	Governance
	AGM & Field Days	Pastoralists & relevant stakeholders/Industry providers (DPIRD, RNRM, Shires etc)	Pastoralist & stakeholder engagement & training
	Cactus & Cochineal monitoring & distribution	Landowners/ Shires/ Stakeholders	Declared cactus management

November	<del>Small ground baiting on Nullarbor (if required)</del> Cactus & Cochineal monitoring & distribution	<del>Pastoralists, media, shires and roadhouses (3-14 days prior)</del> Landowner's/Shires/ Stakeholders	<del>Wild dog management</del> Declared cactus management
December	Operational Plan/budget LFH ground support	GNRBA CoM & DPIRD Pastoralists Ammunition suppliers	Governance LFH Management
January	Newsletter LFH ground support	GNRBA members Pastoralists Ammunition supplier	Pastoral awareness LFH Management
February	CoM meeting LFH ground support	Committee Pastoralists Ammunition suppliers	Update CoM and request input to high level Op's LFH Management
March	Ground baiting LFH Aerial program Cactus & Cochineal monitoring & distribution	Pastoralists, media, shires & roadhouses (3-14 days prior) Relevant Pastoralists & stakeholders Landowner's/Shires/ Stakeholders	Wild dog management LFH management Declared cactus management
April	<del>Trap training</del> CoM meeting Cactus & Cochineal monitoring & distribution	<del>GNRBA members</del> Committee Landowner's/Shires/ Stakeholders	<del>Pastoralist engagement &amp; training</del> Update CoM and request input to high level Op's Declared cactus management
May	Cactus & Cochineal monitoring & distribution	Landowner's/Shires/ Stakeholders	Declared cactus management
June	<del>Ground/Aerial baiting</del> Newsletter	<del>Pastoralists, media, shires &amp; roadhouses (3-14 days prior)</del> GNRBA members	<del>Wild dog management</del> Pastoral awareness

## **ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE**

The GNRBA by submitting the Group's 2021/2022 Operational Plan consents to the transfer of ~~\$680,000~~ \$420,578.00 (ex GST) from the Declared Pest Account to GNRBA for the control of declared pests on pastoral leases in the local government districts of Coolgardie, Dundas, Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Laverton, Leonora, Ngaanyatjarraku, Sandstone, Wiluna and Yilgarn.

Administration and Governance of the GNRBA traditionally consumes 30% of the budget, which includes a full time Chief Executive Officer (CEO), and a part time Executive Assistant which the GNRBA has found to be critical for success as it has evolved. One of the priority roles of the CEO is to source and secure external funding to supplement the DPA to justify such administration support.

The GNRBA are currently in the process of CEO succession, which is costly exercise for any organisation, and will work diligently to keep administration at or below 30% with what funds do prove to be available for the financial year.

The GNRBA will prepare an audited financial statement and annual report comprising the implementation of its 2021/2022 Operational Plan and Budget by 31 October 2022.

## **LINKAGES/ALIGNMENTS**

Links to regional, State and national management plans:

The GNRBA Operational Plan is aligned with:

Rangelands NRM Strategic Plan 2015-18

National Wild Dog Action Plan (2015)

WA Wild Dog Action Plan (2016-2021)

Rangelands Wild Dog Policy (2005)

Wild Dog Management Best Practice Manual (2006)

National Codes of Practice for species management

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's) for ground and aerial shooting

### **Attachments:**

1. GNRBA Wild Dog Management Plan 2020-2024



GNRBA Wild Dog  
Management Plan 20:

2. GNRBA Large Feral Herbivore Management Plan 2020-2024



GNRBA LFH  
Management Plan 20: