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19 March 2013

Jakki Trenbath
Biodiversity and Vegetation Programs
Regional Operations Group
Office of Environment and Heritage
NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
59-61 Goulburn Street, Sydney

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Recommendation for listing Yellow Mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) as a Feral Native Species under Clause 17(2)(b) of the *Native Vegetation Regulation 2005* in the Lachlan Catchment Management Authority (CMA)

The Lachlan CMA understands that the CMA's of Border Rivers-Gwydir, Namoi, Central West and Murrumbidgee have submitted recommendations proposing the listing of Yellow Mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) as a feral native species under Clause 17 of the *Native Vegetation Regulation 2005*.

The Lachlan CMA also understands that the Invasive Native Species (INS) – Feral Native Species (FNS) Change Control Panel (CCP) have suggested upon review of these recommendations that all the NSW CMA's should consider listing Yellow Mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) as a feral native species under Clause 17 of the *Native Vegetation Regulation 2005*.

Recent consultation with Local Government Weeds Officers and a review of Yellow Mimosa distribution within the Lachlan catchment has confirmed the presence of Yellow Mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) in both the central Lachlan region and lower Lachlan adjacent to the southern Riverina region of the Murrumbidgee catchment. Local Government Weeds Officer's have also confirmed that much of the western region of the Lachlan catchment has not been surveyed for Yellow Mimosa and it is likely to be present.

The Lachlan CMA would like to recommend that Yellow Mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) be listed as a feral native species under Clause 17 of the *Native Vegetation Regulation 2005* for the Lachlan CMA area and provides the attached evidence in support of this submission.

Yours sincerely

Ian Shepherd
Acting General Manager
Lachlan Catchment Management Authority

Catchment Management Authority Lachlan

Yellow Mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) Feral Native Species Information for Listing

Under Cl.17 of the *Native Vegetation Regulation 2005*

March 2013

Feral Native Plant Species Listing under Clause 17 NV Regulation 2005

Under cl.17(2)(b) of the *NV Regulation* the Lachlan Catchment Management Authority (CMA) recommend Yellow Mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) be listed as a feral native plant species for the Lachlan catchment.

The current status of *Vachellia farnesiana* as a native in Australia is inconsistent between the States along with the extent of its natural range. Both Queensland and Western Australia regard this species as exotic or alien whilst NSW proposes that it "*probably arrived in Australia prior to European settlement"* (Kodela, 2006). It is regarded as either a potential or actual weed species in all states where it currently exists and is classified by local weed authorities as an environmental weed.

The following information provides advice to the INS-FNS Change Control Panel and supports the claim to list this plant as a feral native species for the Lachlan catchment.

1. Brief description of species

Yellow Mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) is a spreading shrub ranging from 1.5 to 4 m in height. The bark is smooth or finely fissured and grey-brown in colour. The branchlets can be zigzagged in shape and are often hairy towards the apex. With age, the branchlets become hairless and have prominent lenticels, which are small raised corky spots through which gaseous exchange occurs (Kodela, 2006). The leaves are compound and are especially hairy on the upper surface. The inflorescence comprises 22–95 flower heads that are bright yellow or orange-yellow in colour and there are 1 to 3 or more inflorescences in the axil of leaves. The seed pods are cigar-like in shape and are either straight to strongly curved.

Yellow Mimosa usually flowers from June to September, but the flowering period can be irregular. Yellow Mimosa is also referred to as Cassie, Farnese Wattle and Thorny Acacia (Kodela, 2006). The foliage and young green pods of Yellow Mimosa are palatable to cattle and sheep. The species grows in open woodland, shrubland and grassland, on alluvial clay soils and sandy loams, on open plains and near watercourses (Kodela, 2006).

The Problem

Yellow Mimosa's capability to behave as a weed, is increased by its ability to grow in a variety of soil types and vegetation communities, and because its seed pods are palatable to livestock. Yellow Mimosa was once promoted as a drought tolerant feeding supplement. Sheep used to keep plant numbers down, but the general move towards cattle has seen this situation change radically in recent years. The dense and thorny nature of mimosa bush restricts stock access to grazing, shade and watering areas. The sharp thorns can cause eye damage to stock when they are foraging for grass amongst the base of the plant. Stock seek out the protein-rich seed pods – the seeds pass through grazing animals (especially cattle) to be deposited randomly throughout the paddock, guaranteeing further spread. Each seed pod averages 10 very durable seeds.

Legal Requirements

Yellow Mimosa has not been declared a noxious weed by the Department of Primary Industries under the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993*. It is deemed to be a native plant as it is a pre-European introduction to Australia. Yellow Mimosa therefore currently requires approval under the *Native Vegetation Act 2003* in order to be cleared.

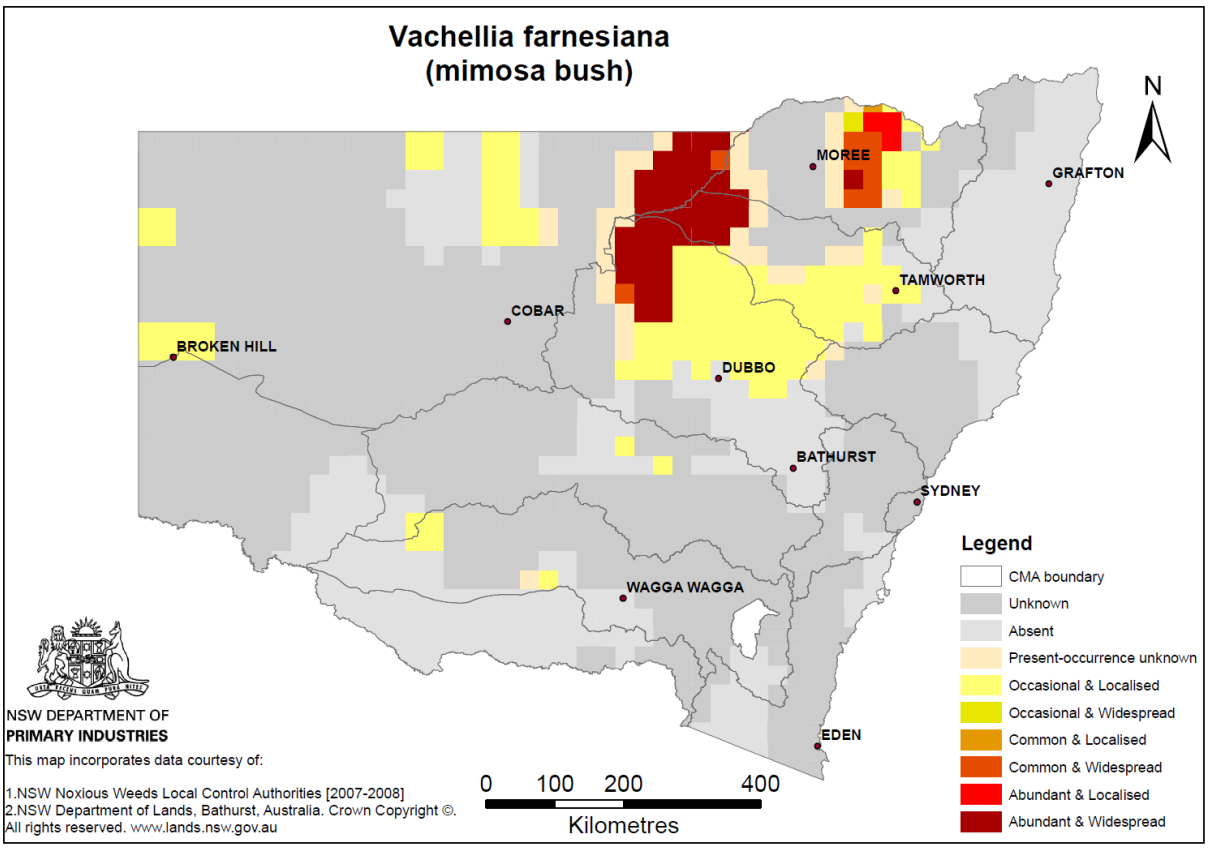
2. Identify natural range of species

Yellow Mimosa is widespread through the tropics and subtropics of central America, where it is native (Kodela, 2006). Its point of origin is Mexico and Central America (Clark, 1989). The species now occurs in Africa, Asia and Australia. Yellow Mimosa probably arrived in Australia prior to European settlement, although there is some uncertainty about this (Kodela, 2006). Yellow Mimosa now occurs in many parts of Australia. In New South Wales, Yellow Mimosa occurs in areas north of Jerilderie (Kodela, 2006) and in the southern Riverina region. Mapping has described the distribution of Yellow Mimosa as being occasional and localised in some regions of the Lachlan catchment, but largely an unknown distribution throughout most of the region. Its abundance and spread in the Central West, Namoi and Border Rivers-Gwydir catchments suggests increased possibility of further distribution through areas to the south (Refer to Frame 1).

The INS/FNS Change Control Panel in its recommendation report dated 6 November 2012 stated that "*the current expert advice indicates that Yellow Mimosa is likely to be indigenous (pre-European settlement) to Australia, but not for NSW. Thus the most suitable category for this species is 'Feral Native Species', with the southward migration of the species aided and abetted by its weedy characteristics, land use and possibly climate change.*"

Based on the above distribution and species characteristics, it is therefore reasonable to propose that Yellow Mimosa is outside its natural range and that it should be listed as a Feral Native Species for the entire Lachlan catchment.

Frame 1: Known distribution of Yellow Mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) in NSW.



3. Proposed management conditions that may restrict how clearing of the species may be undertaken

Yellow Mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) can only be cleared as a Routine Agricultural Management Activity (RAMA) if all of the following management conditions are met.

a. Clearing must be undertaken using Best Management Practices; and

b. Clearing on land described as Vulnerable Land (refer Frame 2) must not result in native groundcover or soil surface disturbance; and

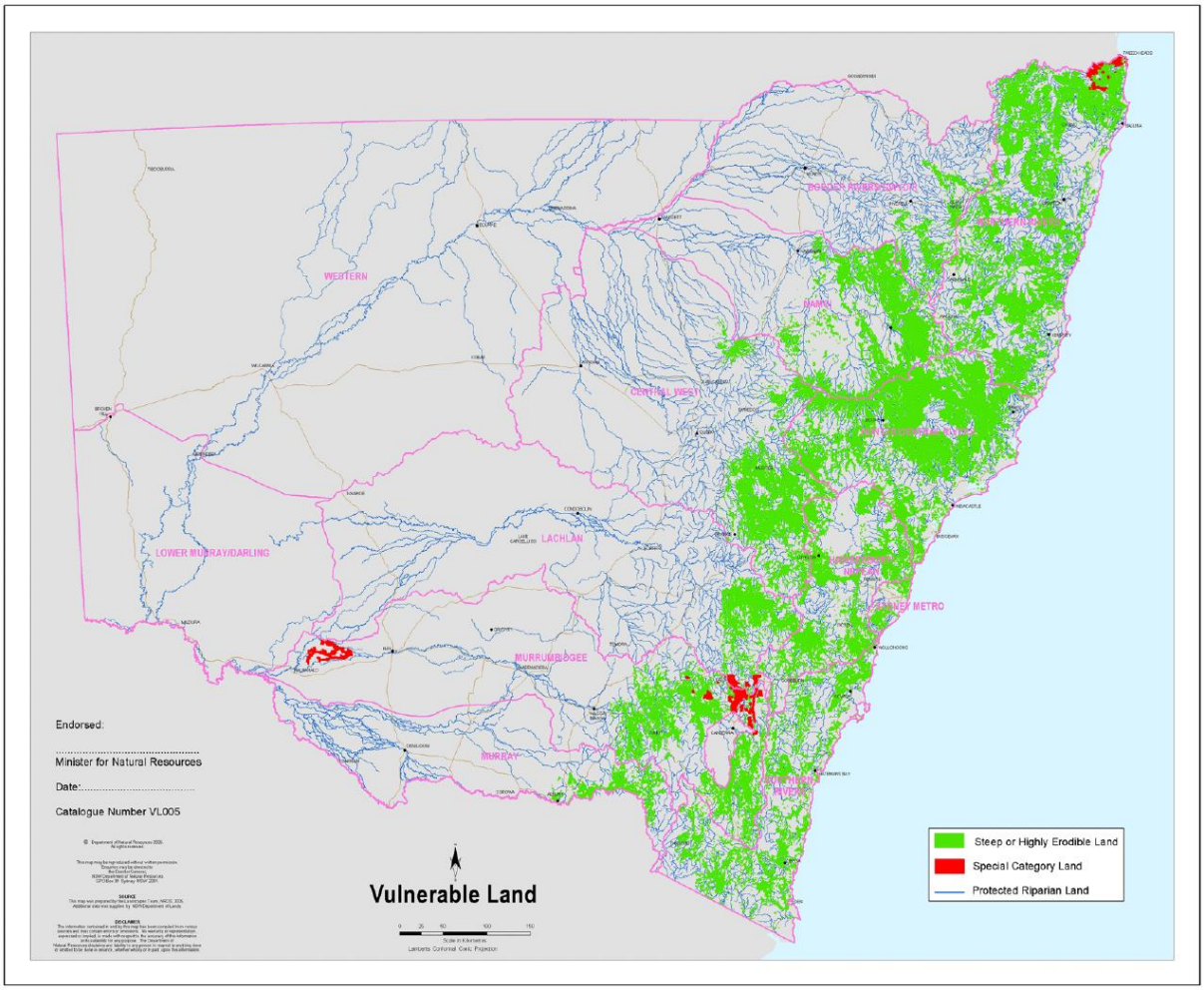
c. Clearing does not result in the introduction into the cleared area of any non-native vegetation; and

d. If clearing individual plants (e.g. chemical spot treatment, grubbing):
   i. The clearing is limited to clearing individual plants of feral native species; and
   ii. The clearing may be undertaken with nil to minimal soil surface disturbance; and
   iii. Any clearing of native groundcover must be incidental in extent.

e. If clearing plants at paddock scale with nil to minimal disturbance to soil and groundcover (e.g. chaining, slashing, stick raking with minimal soil disturbance):
   i. The clearing of native groundcover and disturbance to the soil surface must be limited to the minimum extent necessary; and
   ii. Clearing in a Threatened Ecological Community must not include clearing the key species of the threatened ecological community; and
   iii. Clearing of non-feral native species must not exceed 20 stems per hectare or 1% of the total number of trees and shrubs in the clearing area.

f. Any approvals required from other authorities have been obtained before removal of Yellow Mimosa (*Vachellia farnesiana*) has occurred.

Frame 2: Vulnerable Land map of NSW.



References

Clarke, H.D., Seigler, D.S., Ebinger, J.E. 1989. ***Acacia farnesiana* (Fabaceae: Mimosoideae) and related species from Mexico, the southwestern U.S., and the Caribbean**. Systematic Botany 14, 549-564.

Department of Natural Resources. 2006. **Vulnerable Land Map**. NSW Department of Natural Resources, Sydney.

Maher, M., Lewer, S., Eldridge, D. 2012. **INS-FNS Change Control Panel recommendation report**. NSW Office of Environment and Heritage, Sydney.

Kodela, P.G. 2006. **Flora Online - *Vachellia farnesiana* (L.) Wight and Arn**. in PlantNET - The Plant Information Network System of The Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust, Sydney, Australia (version 2.0). http://plantnet.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au

NSW Department of Primary Industries (undated). ***Vachellia farnesiana* (Mimosa Bush) Distribution Map**. Map incorporates data courtesy of: 1. NSW Noxious Weeds Local Control Authorities [2007-2008], 2.NSW Department of Lands, Bathurst.

Expert Panel Determination

The expert panel has determined that the species, *Yellow Mimosa* (*Vachellia farnesiana*) is eligible to be listed as a Feral Native Plant Species in the Lachlan CMA Area, with the management conditions in section 3.

_____	_____	_____
panel member signature	panel member signature	panel member signature

Reasons for the Expert Panels Decision

The Expert Panel outlines the reasons for their decision on the listing of the species as a Feral Native Plant Species in the area of the listing.

Management conditions (if any) that may restrict how clearing of the species may be undertaken

Expert Panel advises the management conditions that may restrict how clearing of a species is undertaken.