Media Release

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Professional Abseillers to Help Regenerate Lennox Headland

In a first for the Ballina shire, professional abseillers will be used to kill the noxious weed bitou bush and help restore native Kangaroo grass on the cliff faces of Lennox Headland.

James Brideson, Natural Resource Extension Officer for the Ballina Council, said that because of the 64m high steep cliff face, environmental regeneration work is very difficult.

“Using people who can abseil is one of the only ways to undertake specific regeneration work on Lennox Headland,” he said.

“The professional abseillers will be spraying parts of the headland cliff face with a specific herbicide designed to target bitou bush but not harm the remaining native grass. They will also undertake plantings of the kangaroo grass (*Themeda grassland*) at the same time on the cliff face ledges,” Mr Brideson said.

“Bitou bush is such an invasive species. It chokes the native grasses growing on Lennox Headland,” he said.

“The native grass, which is part of the Themeda grasslands community on sea cliffs and coastal headlands on the NSW North Coast, is listed as an endangered ecological community under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995, so this project is very important to help reinstate the original vegetation of the headland,” Mr Brideson said.

“This bitou bush control and grassland and littoral rainforest restoration project is part of the Ballina Council’s plan to restore the vegetation on Lennox Headland and also a part of the NSW Bitou Bush Threat Abatement Plan.

“We have researched and found a sketch from the NSW State Library from 1860 by the artist and surveyor Edward Forde, which shows a wall of littoral rainforest from Skennars Headland through to the Lennox Headland with large sections of grassland on the cliff tops and faces of Lennox Headland. These grassland areas match up with our current mapping of the Themeda grassland community.

“The sketch is the oldest record we have of what the original vegetation composition looked like and we are using that as a guide in our restoration project,” Mr Brideson said.

Funding for this project has come from the Ballina Council and the Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority through the NSW Bitou Bush Threat Abatement Plan.

“We are hoping to secure future funding to be able to do similar weed eradication and regeneration work on Skennars Headland,” Mr Brideson said.

Weather permitting the professional abseiling team will start work on Lennox Headland on Friday 12 June.

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