Impact Assessment Record

Scientific Name: *Pereskia aculeata* Mill. Common name: leaf cactus

QUESTION	COMMENTS	RATING	CONFIDENCE
	infestations" (CRC Weed Management, 2003). "It overshadows all other vegetation and even big trees could collapse under the mass of the tangled branches" (de Beer, 1988). Monoculture within the canopy layer.		
(c) low value EVC	EVC= Lowland Forest (Lc); CMA=East Gippsland; Bioreg= East Gippsland Lowland; CLIMATE potential=H "Listed as a noxious weed in conservation areas in South Africa due to its formation of dense infestations" (CRC Weed Management, 2003). "It overshadows all other vegetation and even big trees could collapse under the mass of the tangled branches" (de Beer, 1988). Monoculture within the canopy layer.	**H**	**MH**
11. Impact on structure?	"Listed as a noxious weed in conservation areas in South Africa due to its formation of dense infestations" (CRC Weed Management, 2003). "It overshadows all other vegetation and even big trees could collapse under the mass of the tangled branches" (de Beer, 1988). This vine has the capacity to form monocultures affecting all layers.	**H**	**MH**
12. Effect on threatened flora?	No information found.	**MH**	**L**
Fauna			
13. Effect on threatened fauna?	No information found.	**MH**	**L**
14. Effect on non-threatened fauna?	Dense infestations that smother native trees (CRC Weed Management, 2003) could reduce habitat and food for native fauna.	**MH**	**MH**
15. Benefits fauna?	"It bears …edible fruits 25-45mm in diameter, which are popular with birds" (CRC Weed Management, 2003). Its thorny branches may also protect small birds from predation.	**MH**	**MH**
16. Injurious to fauna?	"Heavily spined" (Moran & Zimmermann, 1991).	**H**	**H**
Pest Animal			
17. Food source to pests?	May provide habitat and a food source for pest bird species (see Q. 15).	**ML**	**MH**
18. Provides harbor?	May provide harbor for small birds (see Q. 15).	**ML**	**MH**
Agriculture			
19. Impact yield?	"Listed as a noxious weed in forestry in South Africa due to its formation of dense infestations" (CRC Weed Management, 2003). It "clambers over…commercially planted forest trees…and may eventually kill them" (Moran & Zimmermann, 1991). Given how difficult this plant is to control (CRC Weed Management, 2003), this could have a major impact on quantity of produce.	**MH**	**MH**

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QUESTION	COMMENTS	RATING	CONFIDENCE
20. Impact quality?	This plant is not noted as a weed of other agricultural systems in CRC Weed Management, (2003) and is not likely to impact on the quality of forestry products.	**L**	**MH**
21. Affect land value?	The labor-intensive nature of controlling this species, due to dense infestations that are thorny and that can regrow from stumps, leaf and stem fragments (CRC Weed Management, 2003), would probably reduce the value of badly infested land. Photographs from ARC in South Africa (pers. comm.) show extensive infestations that have entirely smothered acres of land.	**H**	**MH**
22. Change land use?	Commercial forests may no longer be viable in the presence of this weed (see Q. 19).	**H**	**MH**
23. Increase harvest costs?	The South African experience has shown that infestations are difficult to remove, involve meticulous human labor, and require "a great deal of follow-up treatment" (CRC Weed Management, 2003).	**H**	**MH**
24. Disease host/vector?	Not noted as a host for agricultural diseases (CRC Weed Management, 2003).	**L**	**MH**

References cited:

CRC Weed Management 2003, *Weed Management Guide- Leaf cactus* – Pereskia aculeata, CRC Weed Management, Australia.
de Beer H 1988, 'Pereskia,' *Farming in South Africa, Weed Series*, Agricultural Research Council, South Africa.
Leuenberger, BE 1986, '*Pereskia* (Cactaceae),' *Memoirs of the New York botanical Garden*, Vol. 41, p. 1-141.
Moran VC & Zimmermann HG 1991, 'Biological control of cactus weeds of minor importance in South Africa,' *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment*, vol. 37, p 37-55.

Revisions

Date Revised by Revision