



# WEST TIPPERARY GIANT HOGWEED CONTROL PROGRAMME UPDATE FOR SPRING 2026

The Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPRO) through its Farming for Water EIP project, and in partnership with dairy cooperatives, Teagasc, beef processors, Tipperary County Council, farmers, landowners, the local community and other stakeholders is recommencing the action plan to control the spread of, and eradicate, a giant hogweed infestation in West Tipperary and also to improve water quality in the area. This is year 2 of the project which saw giant hogweed removal contractors inspecting and treating 11.3km of the Cappawhite Stream and 6km of the Toem Stream in 2025. These severe hogweed infestations occur along sections of the Toem, Cappawhite and Cahernahallia tributaries of the upper Mulkear/Dead River catchment in the Cappawhite area and can have a serious impact on water quality, ecology and biodiversity.

## THE PLAN FOR 2026

Over the coming weeks a further programme of treatment is scheduled in the affected areas through the Farming for Water EIP and other funding mechanisms. Contractors will first be surveying areas to identify exactly where hogweed is growing, followed by treatment on agricultural lands with the cooperation of farmers and agricultural landowners. In order for the project to succeed it is vital that all landowners that have giant hogweed participate and support the programme and apply to the Farming for Water EIP project for assistance. Agricultural advisors will be in contact with farmers in the area to help them apply to the project and avail of funding to undertake other measures that can improve and protect water quality in the overall river catchment.



## ABOUT THE FARMING FOR WATER EIP

The Farming for Water EIP, which has its headquarters at Rossmore Neighbourhood Centre in Tipperary Town, is a project that aims to support farmers in placing “the right measures in the right place” by taking a targeted approach to manage risk to water quality from their farms. It is guided by the catchment science information from LAWPRO and implemented by the Agricultural Sustainability Support and Advisory Programme (ASSAP) programme. The Farming for Water EIP project takes a multiple benefits approach focusing on water quality but also addressing biodiversity and climate issues. The work also helps to create a broader understanding of issues affecting water quality in the catchment.



Images: National Biodiversity Data Centre



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## GIANT HOGWEED IDENTIFYING FEATURES

**Height:** The size of giant hogweed (*Heracleum Mantegazzianum*) makes it easy to identify, as it can grow up to 5-6m in height.

**Stem:** The main stem is large, usually with purple blotches, hollow and can have hairy bristles and be 5-10cm in diameter.

**Flowers:** White or rarely pink, flowering from June to August. There can be up to 50,000 (1.5 cm) seeds per plant. Leaves:

Serrated & sharply divided; can grow to 3m in length & 1.5m wide.

**NOTE:** Giant hogweed should not, however, be confused with common hogweed which is evident in ditches along many local roadways.

## THREATS

Giant hogweed poses a threat to human health due to production of a hazardous sap that can cause severe burns and scarring by sensitising the skin to light (UV radiation). It can cause serious skin burns and other health issues. Children are particularly at risk. Its large surface area means it shades out native species and its high volume of seed production means that it easily propagates. Seed can remain viable up to fifteen years after initial separation. The species, found mostly on river banks, can also increase soil erosion along the banks thereby undermining water quality.

## SEASONAL CHANGE

**SPRING:** Expanded leaves and the plant is over 15cm in height.

**SUMMER:** Large flowering head can be seen.

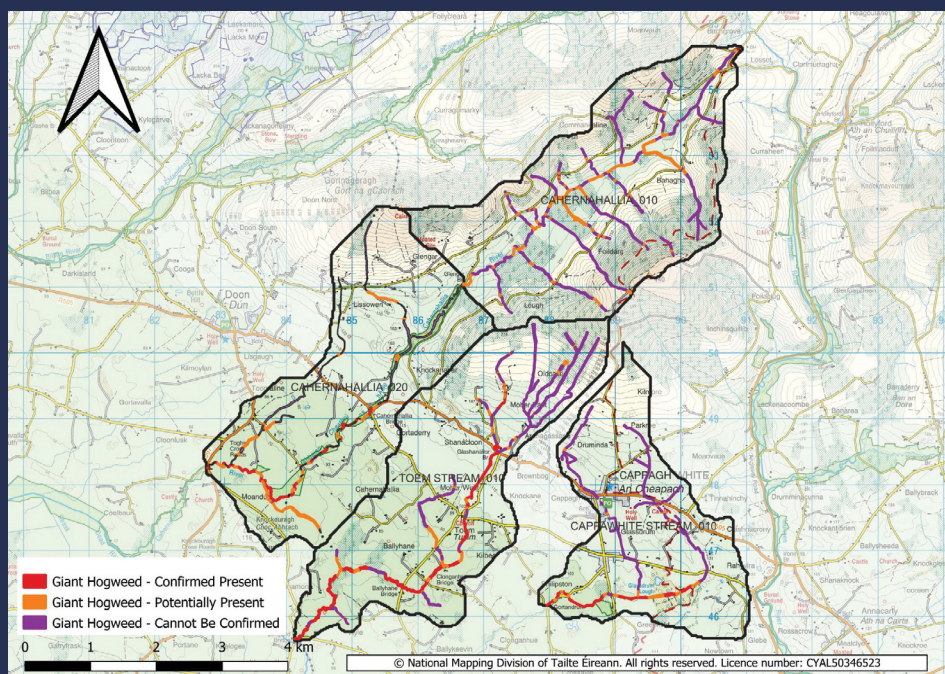
**AUTUMN:** Green areas of the stem lose their colour and turn yellowish-brown.

Flowers are replaced by seeds.

**WINTER:** Dies back in winter leaving river banks vulnerable to erosion.

## WHAT AREAS ARE AFFECTED?

The map below outlines the affected areas along Cahernahallia tributaries of the Upper Mulkear/Dead River catchment in the greater Cappawhite area.

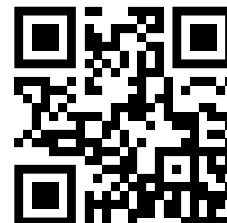


## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Speak to your advisor today or check out the Farming for Water website

[www.farmingforwater.ie](http://www.farmingforwater.ie) for further information.

Phone our office on **062 33063** - Office hours 9:00am - 4:30pm.



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