

Business Plan Achievement Report

2nd Quarter 2021-2022

1 October to 31 December 2021

Western District






About

The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board's [Business Plan for 2021-22](#) sets out the programs, and component sub-programs or work activities for 2021-2022, which are funded and delivered by the Board to achieve the goals and vision of the [2021-2026 Eyre Peninsula Regional Landscape Plan](#).

This *Business Plan Achievement Report* provides an update on delivery of all our Board-funded programs in the Western District during the last quarter. It includes reporting on the following for each sub-program:

- Program highlights;
- Local government engagement;
- Communications and community engagement undertaken; and
- Upcoming priorities for the next quarter.

Each sub-program is assigned a status, based on its current progress.

	On track to deliver key programs.		On track to deliver most programs. May be some delays.		Unlikely to deliver some program elements
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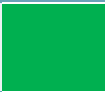

For projects in the District Councils of Ceduna, Elliston, Streaky Bay, Wudinna and Far West Coast areas, further details of our work and programs can be found on the [Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board website](#) or by contacting **Liz McTaggart** (*Team Leader, Landscape Operations - Western District*) on 08 8626 1108.

Note: For updates about delivery, in the Western District, of Regional Projects such as the [Regenerative Agriculture Project \(RAP\)](#) and the [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#) refer to the *Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region*.

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Sustainable agriculture

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Reducing the risk of land degradation to protect the region's valuable soils</i>	
Delivering district level sustainable agriculture services , including: Monitoring and managing land management compliance	
Providing support to build awareness of the importance of erosion protection and improvement of land management practices	

For updates on our [Regenerative Agriculture Project \(RAP\)](#) and [Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator \(RALF\)](#) services, please refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**. More information about our sustainable agriculture program, as well as useful information and resources for land managers can be found [here](#).

Delivering district level sustainable agriculture services

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Landscape officers attended Sticky Beak Days at Charra / Goode and the Far West. The Sticky Beak Days provide us with a good opportunity to see what the landholders are doing, what the latest techniques are etc. While there, we also inform landholders about upcoming funding opportunities such as the Enhancing Remnant Vegetation Project (refer to our *Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region* for more information about this. It is also a good opportunity to discuss issues and provide advice on things such as native vegetation clearance, new wild dog legislation, weed identification etc.



*Photo 1:
Farmers inspecting
equipment at Coorabie
during Far West Sticky
Beak Days*

Photo 2:
Farmers inspecting Wheat
Crop at Coorabie



- Board staff are involved in a medium term monitoring program on a property between Lock and Elliston measuring the change in native grassland species assemblage as a result of the farmer changing from a set stocking regime to a rotational grazing regime. After a number of years it is hoped this data will provide evidence around increased profitability, sustainability and ecosystem health as a result of this change and encourage other farmers to move down the same path. Monitoring this quarter shows there has not been much improvement in the grassland since 2019 due to the dry summer.
- We continue to provide free water salinity and pH testing for landholders. Landholders requiring this testing can find more information about this on our website [here](#). There have also been a number of enquiries from community members regarding rainwater quality and storage. These have been directed to private testing services.
- We continue to provide fox baits and weed identification advice to landholders as requested. With a wetter than average spring, landholders are experiencing high weed numbers and plant diversity.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Autumn fox baiting groups and distribution days will be held.
- We will attend the upcoming South Australia Research and Development Institute (SARDI) Harvest meetings in late February to early March.

Pest plants and animals, and impact-causing native species

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Supporting landowners to control prioritised pest plants and animals</i>	
Implementing regional pest management plans for priority pest plants and animals	On Track
Supporting landowners with their pest control responsibilities, including weed identification, best practice control advice and property planning assistance	On Track
Delivering targeted pest animal baiting programs and weed control campaigns, monitoring, permitting and compliance works	On Track
<i>Collaborating to reduce threats from impact-causing native species</i>	
Assisting landowners to connect with relevant authorities and providing information about impact-causing native species and control options	On Track
Cataloguing current and emerging impact-causing native species, their impacts and extent	On Track
Collaborating to reduce threats from impact-causing native species	On Track

For updates about pest plant and animal, and impact-causing native species control activities implemented in the Western District as part of the [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#) refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**. Updates on development of our regional pest and impact-causing natives management plans can be found in the same report.

Program highlights this period

Pest plants

- **Summer grasses**
 - Monitoring and control of roadside summer grasses (**Buffel Grass** and **Fountain Grass**) has been conducted across the Central and Western Eyre Peninsula region. The positive impact of annual control of these grasses is evident with Buffel Grass becoming harder to find each year.
- **Innocent Weed** was also monitored and controlled in the Western Region.
- **Gazania** control was implemented on the approaches to Smoky Bay, Ceduna and Denial Bay.
- **Aleppo Pine** control has been ongoing along roadsides in central Eyre Peninsula.
- **Century Plant** - Working with the Port Kenny/Venus Bay Progress Association Century Plant control was undertaken in the Venus Bay township. This supported the completion of some of the preliminary works the Progress Association are undertaking as part of their 2021-2022 Grassroots Grant (Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board funded) project 'Coast Access and Revegetation of Venus Bay Foreshore' (see *Community* section later in this report).



Photo 3: Prickly Pear and Century Plant infestation

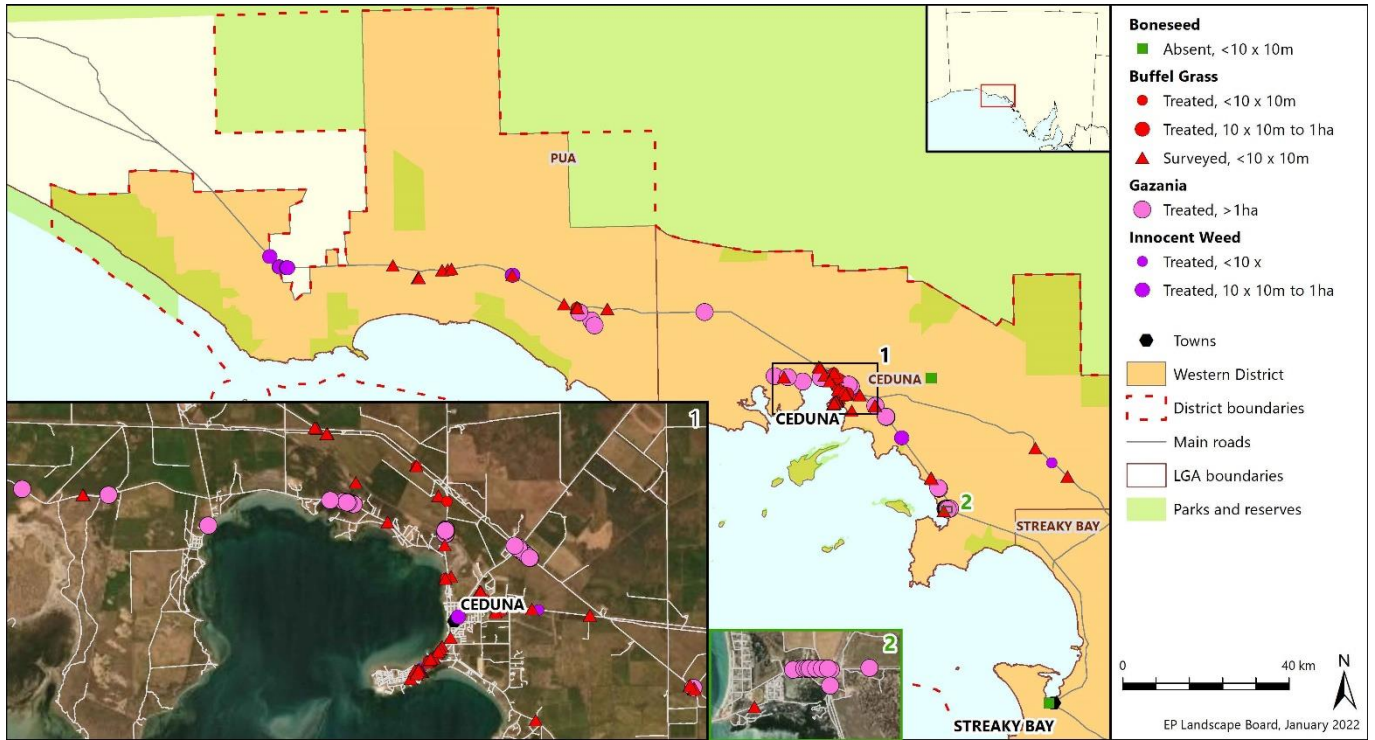


Figure 1: Priority pest plant control for the period 1 October to 31 December 2021 – Far West region¹



Figure 2: Priority pest plant control for the period 1 October to 31 December 2021 – Central and West Eyre Peninsula region¹

• **Boneseed**

- All known Boneseed sites in Western Eyre Peninsula were checked and all seedlings found were removed. We are increasingly progressing towards eradication of this weed, with less than 15 seedlings found across 240 historic sites in an area of approximately 150 ha (see Figure 2, inset 1).

¹ Note: "Absent" indicates sites where infestations have previously occurred and were controlled. Sites are revisited to check efficacy of control and recorded as "absent" where pest plant have not recurred. This indicates success of our control programs.

- Thirty Boneseed seedlings were removed in Venus Bay township as part of the eradication program.
- **African Boxthorn** – Implementation of the African Boxthorn Management Plan for the Wudinna Local Reserves has been ongoing, with control (chainsaw cut and swab) of most of the larger trees remaining in the Mt Wudinna Recreation Reserve.

Pest animals

- **Rabbits** – Samples from seven rabbit carcasses received from landholders have been sent to the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) Biosecurity Waite Campus laboratory for testing to confirm presence of rabbit haemorrhagic disease (RHD), also known as rabbit calicivirus. Results from the testing has not yet been received. We also use the results to understand and advise landholders about the local spread of this biocontrol virus.

- **Feral goats**

Feral goats (*Capra hircus*) are a major agricultural and environmental pest. Competing with sheep and native animals for pasture, they contribute to land degradation through soil damage, overgrazing pasture plants, spreading weeds and increasing erosion, as well as damaging fences. The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board therefore has, and implements, our [Feral Goat Regional Management Plan](#), the aim of which is to reduce the impacts of goats on the environment and primary producers. Under this plan we monitor feral goat populations and impacts, identify when control is warranted to protect assets, and implement targeted control measures. Under this plan, the following activities related to feral goat management in the Western District have been undertaken:

- Feral Goat feedlot fence inspections were undertaken in the Elliston district. Fences were found to be well maintained and managed by the landowner.
- Monitoring for the presence of feral goats was undertaken on two properties in central Eyre Peninsula. Six feral goats were confirmed to be present on one property, and the landowner has now removed these. No feral goats were sighted on the second property, where there have been feral goats present in the past.
- Monitoring for the presence of feral goats was also undertaken on properties in north western Eyre Peninsula. No goats have been found in the area yet. While there have historically not been feral goats in this area, in the last few years there have been occasional reports of sightings. These reports are increasing in frequency and cover a wider area, with only small mobs, ranging from a handful to about 30 goats being reported.

We strongly encourage anyone to report sightings of goats to any of our offices, and/or on [FeralGoatScan](#). This is especially important if you are seeing goats moving into areas where you don't usually see them.

- **Foxes**

- Landscape officers contributed to two coordinated fox bait manufacturing days, and one bait bagging day at Paney Station in the Gawler Ranges. Nearly 30,000 horse meat fox baits were manufactured. These will be distributed to landholders in the Western and Eastern districts over the next twelve months.
- Landscape officers attended the PIRSA fox bounty collection held at Kyancutta in October, where they provided free 1080 fox baits for landholders, and also provided advice on integrated fox control strategies.

Impact-causing native species

- **Wild dog**

- Wild dog monitoring is ongoing in the West.
- Wild dog activity on the Iluka grid on the Hall Road has been low. Only a few dogs have been sighted, with none crossing the grid.
- There are however still wild dogs inside the dog fence and it is suspected that there is also breeding occurring inside the fence, as an adult male, adult female and three young dogs were trapped in one area on one property.
- There were also the usual wild dog sightings and with a couple of wild dogs shot.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- We promoted our attendance at PIRSA's fox bounty collection days at Kyancutta on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Summer grass control on highways will be ongoing.
- Baits for wild dogs will be manufactured at Nundroo. These baits will be for wild dog baiting on the dog fence in the Far West, west of Penong.
- Wild dog trapping workshops will be held at Coorabie and Koonibba.
- Fifteen fox baiting groups / distribution days will be held in the Western District.
- Our Wudinna-based Landscape officer will assist in the management and eradication of several isolated infestation of Prickly Pear and Century Plant located within the Wudinna District Council LGA.

Biodiversity

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Protecting and restoring prioritised coastal habitats</i>	
Supporting community to undertake coastal management works in line with the Coastal Action Plan	
<i>Maintain and enhance biodiversity in prioritised ecosystems</i>	
Supporting community and landholders to improve the health and condition of threatened ecological communities, native vegetation and threatened species	
Implementation of the biodiversity monitoring program	
Collaboration with partners to source funding for landscape-scale projects in priority ecosystems. Specific projects underway include:	
Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) Pilot	

For updates about delivery of our landscape-scale and region-wide biodiversity projects and programs, including activities in the Western District, refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**. This report includes information on:

- the [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#);
 - *Blue Carbon*
 - the *Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) pilot*;
 - and others.
- *Eyes on Eyre*;
 - the *Biodiversity Monitoring Program*;

Maintain and enhance biodiversity in prioritised ecosystems

Program highlights this period

White-Bellied Sea Eagle and Eastern Osprey monitoring

- Two landscape officers assisted the National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) SA with a survey of local population numbers of White-Bellied Sea Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucogaster*) and Eastern Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus cristatus*) along the coast from Venus Bay to Streaky Bay. The survey was undertaken by water craft and involved revisiting previous known nesting sites. The data collected will be compared to previous survey data to determine the health of local population numbers of both species and any evident trends.
- Due to the low numbers of breeding pairs, both the White-Bellied Sea Eagle and the Eastern Osprey are considered endangered in South Australia. There has also been a decline in the number of occupied territories over the past 50 years. Both species are highly sensitive to disturbance during the breeding season (summer), and people appearing above their nests along cliff edge trails or at view-points, can cause Sea Eagles and Ospreys to leave their nests, putting the success of any eggs at risk. In some areas walking tracks are closed during the summer months, but as a rule of thumb, people should remain at least 2,000 m away from White-Bellied Sea Eagle nests and 1,000 m from Eastern Osprey nests during the summer months. The use of drones in the vicinity of nests is strictly prohibited.
- More information about these species can be found [here](#).



Photo 4: National Parks and Wildlife Services SA officer conducting White-Bellied Sea Eagle and Eastern Osprey surveys along the west coast



Photo 5: A pair of Eastern Ospreys near Point Westall



Photo 6: Eastern Osprey nest near Venus Bay



Photo 7: Pair of White-Bellied Sea Eagles near Cape Blanche

Malleefowl monitoring

- Each year we monitor known Malleefowl sites across the Eyre Peninsula to aid the [National Malleefowl Recovery Team](#). Malleefowl monitoring was undertaken across the Lock and Pinkawillinie Conservation Park grids. A combined total of 66 mounds were checked. Unfortunately no active mounds were recorded. Six landscape officers were assisted with the monitoring by a volunteer community member at Lock, and by three *Working on Country* rangers at the Pinkawillinie Grid.



Photo 8: *Working on Country* rangers assessing an inactive Malleefowl mound at Pinkawillinie

Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) Pilot

This is the [second pilot](#) which is part of the [Agriculture Stewardship Package](#) being delivered by the Australian Government Department for Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE). It aims to improve existing native vegetation on farms and is trialling mechanisms to pay participating farmers to manage and enhance significant remnant native vegetation on-farm, through activities such as installing fencing to exclude grazing, carrying out weeding, pest control and replanting.

- During October landholders submitted applications to be a part of this pilot. Following this, during December staff undertook on-site assessments of proposed projects short-listed by the Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (DAWE). In the Western District five site assessments were undertaken with landholders. The site assessments involved ground-truthing vegetation associations and conditions, along with verification of the suitability of management actions proposed under the applications.



Photo 9: Pildappa Rock revegetation site



Photo 10: Pildappa Rock existing picnic area

Local government engagement for this period

- The recent influx of tourism and associated high demand for camping on the Eyre Peninsula has resulted in increasing impacts from camping on the native vegetation and natural amenity at the Pildappa Rock Recreation Reserve, Wudinna. To mitigate and manage these impacts, the Wudinna District Council (WDC) have commenced work on developing a Pildappa Rock Recreation Reserve Master Plan for the upgrade of the site. The Master Plan is focussed on moving camping away from the rock base to a nearby location, restricting the immediate site to day visitors only, upgrading facilities, developing defined walking paths and enhancing the native vegetation through revegetation. Consultation on the Plan has commenced. We have provided feedback to WDC on the Plan, and will continue to assist WDC with advice and input around native vegetation and revegetation work. This will be ongoing.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- As part of the local real estate boom in the Streaky Bay area, lifestyle blocks continue to be purchased by interstate buyers. This has led to a continuing number of enquiries regarding revegetation options, weed control advice and information on soils. Information has also been provided on potential grant funding opportunities.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Under the auspices of our Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery (STAR) project, we will be conducting the annual shorebird surveys as part of BirdLife Australia's National Shorebird Monitoring Program.

Community

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Community at the centre and actively engaged in landscape management</i>	
Supporting Aboriginal and community groups, Local Government, farming groups and schools to progress natural resource activities through the provision of the Grassroots Grants program	

*This section provides information about the delivery and acquittal of Grassroots Grants in the Western District, and support provided by Board staff to grant applicants. For updates about the [Grassroots Grants](#) application process, successful applicants the award of Grants, and overall management of the Grassroots Grants program, refer to the **Grassroots Grants program** section in the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**.*

2020-2021 Grassroots Grants

Whirlpool Wetland Recovery and Visitor Management Project – District Council of Streaky Bay Program highlights this period

- The District Council of Streaky Bay's 'Whirlpool Wetland Recovery and Visitor Management Project', funded under the Board's 2020- 2021 Grassroots Grant funding round is now complete. Interpretive signage has been installed. The signage is being used as a tool not only for information, but also to discourage unauthorised camping and direct visitor flow.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Completion of the works to improve visitors' experience at the Whirlpool near Streaky Bay was promoted on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



Photo 11:
Interpretive signage installed at the Whirlpool completing the project

2021-2022 Grassroots Grants

Three projects funded through the Board's 2021-2022 Grassroots Grants program are being delivered in the Western District (Table 1).

Table 1: EP Landscape Board Grassroots Grants - 2021-22 successful applicants in the Western District

	Project Title	Organisation
1	Coast access and revegetation of Venus Bay foreshore	Port Kenny / Venus Bay Progress Association Inc
2	Re-invigorating the Minnipa Women's Pioneer Park with waterwise native plants	Minnipa Progress Association
3	Revegetation of Fowlers Bay sand dunes	Fowlers Bay Progress Association Inc.

Landscape staff provide ongoing support for the delivery of these projects. Some of the work completed on these projects during the last quarter include:

Coast Access and Revegetation of Venus Bay Foreshore

This project aims to protect and enhance the fragile coastal vegetation of the Venus Bay foreshore. This will be achieved through track rationalisation, pest plant control, revegetation, fencing, provision of defined access and parking areas, and community engagement.

Program highlights this period

- Preliminary on-ground works for this project have commenced, with landscape officers working with the Port Kenny / Venus Bay Progress Association to control Century Plant in the Venus Bay township. The removal of the pest species will enable the next stage of the project to commence which will involve fencing off remnant vegetation, track rationalisation and revegetation.

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T: Port Lincoln 08 8688 3200

T: Streaky Bay 08 8626 1108

*Team Leader Landscape Operations - Western: Liz McTaggart
Landscape Officer: Libby Hunt*

T: Elliston 08 8687 9330

Landscape Officer: Ian Quinn

T: Wudinna 08 8680 2653

Landscape Officer: Sam Morley

T: Ceduna 0428 252 442 or 0409 849 820

Landscape Officer: Andrew Sleep

Landscape Officer: Alex Fraser

E: EPLBAdmin@sa.gov.au

Report prepared by:
Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board

www.landscape.sa.gov.au/ep/home



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