

# Business Plan Achievement Report

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2021-2022

1 June to 30 September 2021

## Whole of Region



## About

The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board's [Business Plan for 2021-22](#) sets out the focus areas and priority programs 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* gives an update on broader program management and planning across the Eyre Peninsula region in regards to our core programs; as well as providing information about implementing the Water Allocation Plan, managing Water Affecting Activities and the delivery of our regional Federally-funded projects. It also includes updates on our planning processes and general business support functions. For each sub-program the report covers:

- 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 some program elements.
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Further details of each of these programs can be found on the [Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board website](#) or by contacting **Susan Stovell** (*Manager, Planning and Engagement*) on 08 8688 3201.

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# Water

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Effective water allocation planning in prescribed water areas</i>	
<b>Implementation of the Water Allocation Plan (WAP)</b> , including mid-term (5 year) review	
<b>Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (GDE) monitoring</b>	
<i>Managing Water Affecting Activities (WAAs)</i>	
<b>Managing Water Affecting Activities (WAAs)</b> , including providing support for WAA enquiries, processing WAA permit applications and ensuring compliance with WAA policies and permits	

## Implementation of the Water Allocation Plan (WAP)

*The Water Allocation Plan (WAP) for the Southern Basins and the Musgrave Prescribed Wells Areas, Eyre Peninsula, was endorsed by the State Government on 28 June 2016. The WAP guides the management the extraction of groundwater from wells within two Prescribed Wells Areas (PWAs). The Southern Basins PWA is located between Coffin Bay and Port Lincoln on southern Eyre Peninsula, and the Musgrave PWA is located between Lock and Elliston on western Eyre Peninsula.*

*If you would like more information on the WAP, you can download a copy of the Water Allocation Plan for the Southern Basins and the Musgrave Prescribed Wells Areas by clicking [here](#).*

## Local government engagement for this period

- Board staff assisted Elliston Council enquiry regarding the take of non-prescribed groundwater.

## Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Water Allocation Plan implementation meeting number 11 will be held in the next period. These meetings include staff from both the Landscape Board and the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) who are responsible for delivering the technical aspects of the WAP.
- The mid-term review of the WAP will commence next quarter. This will be a high-level desk-top review only. The review will evaluate how effective the implementation of the WAP has been to date, and will identify any future amendments that may need to be considered by the Board.

## Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (GDE) monitoring

*One of the objectives of the Water Allocation Plan (WAP) for the Southern Basins and Musgrave Prescribed Wells Areas (2016) is to minimise the impact of licenced taking of groundwater on ecosystems that depend on the prescribed groundwater resources. The WAP aims to maintain these ecosystems, collectively known as Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs), at a low level of risk, and in the condition, and at the locations and extents they occurred at in 2016. Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board has therefore developed a program to establish a baseline and monitor changes in flora condition, groundwater level and salinity, at a group of GDEs (Red Gums and wetlands) within the Southern Basins and Musgrave Prescribed Wells Areas. More information about GDE monitoring, including report cards can be obtained [here](#).*

## Program highlights this period

Staff have finalised a plan to improve and expand the monitoring program for GDE Wetland sites. This monitoring will involve the use of a drone equipped with a multispectral camera and real-time kinematic

positioning system. This technology will enable us to accurately map the location of different vegetation types in the wetland, and hence determine any movement of vegetation types down slopes, which may indicate impacts of lowering groundwater levels. Staff have also acquired the relevant licensing to undertake the drone monitoring in October 2021.

### Local government engagement for this period

Staff liaised with the District Council of Elliston to get approval to undertake drone monitoring on land they manage.

### Upcoming priorities for the next period

The monitoring of the GDE Wetland and Red Gum sites for 2021 will be undertaken next quarter. We will also commence writing the annual report cards to make the findings of the monitoring available to the community.

### Managing Water Affecting Activities (WAA)

*Water Affecting Activities (WAA) are activities and works that can impact on the health and condition of water resources, water dependent ecosystems and other water users. Under the Landscape South Australia Act 2019, an approved permit is required to undertake a Water Affecting Activity.*

*Information for those planning to undertake a Water Affecting Activity is available in the factsheet [Permits - Water Affecting Activities](#). Our Water Resources Assessment Officer and other staff are always available to advise and help with WAA enquires. They also administer and process WAA permit applications and ensure compliance with WAA policies and permits.*

### Program highlights this period

- Across the region the following work related to Water Affecting Activities (WAA) has been undertaken by Board staff:
  - One new WAA permit application was received. Assessment of six applications was completed and these were approved. These include permit approvals for vehicle crossings, dam construction, as well as saline drainage to help manage waterlogging and salinity issues.
  - Two inspections of WAA completed works were undertaken.
  - One active compliance issue is being addressed.
  - Nineteen water salinity/pH tests were completed for landholders.
  - Eighteen WAA enquires were received and addressed.
- Regional Authorised Officers supported by the Water Resources Officer (WRO) based in our Port Lincoln office have been actively undertaking WAA assessments, WAA compliance and associated site visits. As part of the skills development for the regional officers, an additional training day was provided by the WRO. The day included visits to many WAA works sites around Lower Eyre Peninsula including dam, water crossing, mineral exploration, saline drainage, vegetation removal and drain clean-out sites.
- Construction of the ElectraNet Transmission line from Whyalla to Port Lincoln is now in full swing. Further WAA permits for the construction works have been processed and the Water Resources Assessment Officer has been collaborating with the principle contractor, Downer, with regard to site work alterations and WAAs in the continued works program. Works commenced at the northern end

of the transmission line several months ago and there are now worksites all the way down the proposed line corridor to Port Lincoln.

### **SA Water Best Practice Operating Procedure (BPOP) – Mains pipeline discharges of water and discharges from Knott’s Hill reservoir**

SA Water’s Best Practice Operating Procedure (BPOP) Application for discharges of water from mains pipelines and from the Knott Hill Reservoir infrastructure into watercourses was presented at Board Meeting Number 10 (24<sup>th</sup> August) and approved for a further three years. The following explains what a BPOP is and how it operates.

- SA Water need to discharge water from their main supply network on Eyre Peninsula semi-regularly for both planned and unplanned operational and maintenance requirements, and also from Knott’s Hill reservoir for general maintenance purposes. From time to time these discharge events occur into a watercourse where a water affecting activity (WAA) permit issued by the Board would usually be required.
- The Regional Landscape Plan allows for an entity or person to develop a BPOP which negates the requirement for individual WAA Permits. SA Water has a history of operating under a BPOP approved by the Board, and all works conducted under the BPOP have been compliant with the conditions and methodology outlined in therein.
- The BPOP includes a numerically scored field based risk assessment against each discharge activity and if a trigger score is high enough, a WAA permit is still required. For activities with a score less than the trigger value the activity can proceed in accordance with the detail of the proposed BPOP. This has resulted in many low risk activities taking place without a WAA permit being required.
- The issuing of a BPOP reduces the number of individual WAA assessments required to be completed for low risk activities. This reduces Board operational staff requirements and streamlines the WAA process for SA Water.

### **Local government engagement for this period**

- Staff have been liaising with the District Council of Elliston about their stormwater and flood mitigation upgrade project. We worked with DCE towards gaining two required WAA permit approvals for this project, including permits for:
  - The redevelopment of the Elliston Township Wetland including the installation of stormwater basins and a pump station to transfer stormwater out of the wetland area and to another wetland lake out of town.
  - The discharge of stormwater into a wetland lake adjacent to Elliston.
- Liaison with the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula around the Cummins Wanilla Basin Project is ongoing (see also [Cummins Wanilla Streamcare Group infrastructure upgrade project](#)).

### **Communications and community engagement for this period**

- A number of social media posts about water affecting activities reached a wide audience, including posts about:
  - a water workshop led by our Water Resources Officer held at Port Lincoln Primary School with a Year 7 ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)); and
  - during National Science Week in October we had a science spotlight [post about water testing](#).

# Sustainable agriculture

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Facilitating regenerative land management to improve soil health and vitality</i>	
<b>Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator (RALF) services</b>	
<b>Regenerative Agriculture Program (RAP)</b>	

## Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator services

The Australian Government, through the National Landcare Program, have funded the [Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator \(RALF\)](#) with core funding for five years to June 2023. The delivery of the RALF services is contracted to Agricultural Innovation and Research Eyre Peninsula (AIR EP).

### Program highlights this period

- Spring has been busy with Ag Bureau and farmer group Sticky Beak days. The RALF provides support to the Ag Bureau and farmer groups on the EP to help with planning and accessing speakers to attend these days. The groups that have held days include Buckleboo Farm Improvement Group, Verran-Roberts Ag Bureau, Franklin Harbor Ag Bureau, Lock/Murdinga/Tooligie Farming Group and Wudinna & Districts Farming Group, engaging a total of 274 farmers across all the days. Highlights included visits to EP Landscape Board small grant holders' demonstration sites, visiting genetically modified (GM) canola crops and hearing from the early adopters in the region.



Photo 1: The Verran Roberts Ag Bureau hearing from Cleve Rural Traders' Agronomist on the new Barley varieties that are on the market

- The RALF is supporting the delivery of the extension component of the National Landcare Program (NLP) funded [Resilient EP Project](#). The extension activities have included the support of the Regional Innovators Group meetings and small in field discussion groups at the project focus sites involving the landholder and neighbouring farmers and advisors. The RALF is also assisting the project extension officer with connecting with the Ag Bureau and farmer groups on EP for the opportunity to speak at their annual Sticky Beak days.
- Attendance and participation at the **SA Drought Hub Network meeting** held in Wudinna. The SA Drought Hub is part of a network of eight that have been launched nationwide, as part of the [federal government's \\$5 billion Future Drought Fund](#). The Wudinna meeting gave attendees the opportunity to share past drought experiences and discuss the tools that could be implemented in future scenarios. Our RALF is looking forward to working with the low rainfall drought node coordinator who will be based at the South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) Minnipa Agricultural Centre in the future.
- The Buckleboo Farm Improvement Group held an *"Ag Tech for the Future"* forum which the RALF was able to support with the planning, promotion, and evaluation of the event. It was a well-attended day with growers travelling from neighbouring towns to attend. They had a number of speakers ranging from harvester seed destruction representatives to developers of online software to help with input decisions.
- The Cleve and Cummins Women Together Learning (WoTL) crop walks were held in September. The RALF helped promote both days, and attended and spoke at the Cleve crop walk. The RALF explained their role and how they can assist the group moving forward, as well as updating the group on the current Board funding opportunities that may be of interest to them.
- The RALF provided support with delivery and planning for *"Resilient Ag for the Future"* event hosted by Ag Bureau SA Sustainable Ag Scholarship winner Ellen Zibell. This day was a great introduction for farmers who are wanting to improve soil health using a range of techniques that are aimed at increasing plant diversity and keeping cover on paddock all year round. This day was well attended with 65 farmers and Ag students attending throughout the day.

## Communications and community engagement for this period

- Continued extension of the NLP funded Mallee Seep project hosted by the Board. This has involved organising experts to speak at the Sticky Beak days associated with the project, as well as organising farmer visits to the sites. These activities have been able to engage 165 farmers and make them aware of the project and the increasing issue of Mallee Seeps in the Eastern District.
- The RALF also promoted and supported the delivery of other events, including:
  - promotion of the SARDI Minnipa Ag Centre annual field day;
  - promotion of Sticky Beak and Crop Walk dates in the weekly AIR EP newsletter;
  - promotion and support for the Lower EP Crop Walk hosted by AIR EP;
  - support for the Medium and Low Rainfall Research Development and Extension (RD&E) Committee meetings;
  - delivery and promotion of the Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA survey) *"Unlocking new opportunities and audiences for delivery of MLA products in Southern Australia farming"*; and
  - promotion of the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) grower update originally planned for delivery in Wudinna but moved to an online format.



Photo 2: Chris McDonough explaining to the Tuckey Ag Bureau how to monitor and manage Mallee seeps and scalds

## Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Continuing attendance at the upcoming Sticky Beaks day on Western Eyre Peninsula.
- Promoting the Small Grants opportunities for demonstrating the use of mixed species and soil amendments to increase soil health.
- Promotion of the Australian Government's \$22.3 million [Enhancing Remnant Vegetation pilot](#) which Eyre Peninsula has been selected to participate in.

## Regenerative Agriculture Program

*The [Regenerative Agriculture Program \(RAP\)](#) on Eyre Peninsula, funded through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, is a five-year (2018-2023) program that is now in its fourth year of delivery. The project aims to increase awareness, knowledge and the adoption of land management practices to restore soil pH levels, increase soil organic carbon levels and reduce the risk of nutrient loss from wind and water erosion by increasing soil cover. Through engaging farming systems groups and individual farmers to develop paddock based demonstration sites, it supports them to implement best practice management and practice change; and showcase the results to the broader farming community. There are currently eighteen demonstration sites established across the Eyre Peninsula.*

*Mallee seeps are an increasing issue in eastern Eyre Peninsula. This project also aims to increase the understanding of the extent and impact of these seeps in the environment. Farmers and farming communities are supported through web-based mapping programs, forums, workshops and one-on-one support.*

*Project delivery is contracted to Agricultural Innovation and Research Eyre Peninsula (AIR EP), Rural Solutions SA, and other service providers as required.*

## Program highlights this period

### Soil carbon demonstration sites

The soil carbon demonstration sites SC7 and SC4 were visited, and SC4 was also visited by the Verran-Roberts Ag Bureau. The landholder on whose property SC7 is located was impressed with the improvement in root growth seen with his tillage radish/vetch pasture forage crop following different ripping and amendment strategies and also shared it on [social media](#).



Photo 3:  
Farmer group (Roberts-Verran Ag Bureau) inspection of SC4 site and treatments, September 2021



Photo 4:  
SC4 soil pit dug for Roberts-Verran Sticky Beak day



Photo 5:  
SC7 Social media post following inspection with Sustainable Agriculture Officer



Photo 6: PB11 Multi-species cover crop established on shallow hillslope soils

### Mixed species crops and pastures for soil management program

- During the quarter, inspections of the sites established in the previous funding rounds at Ungarra (PB15 and PB12), Minnipa (PB13), Wharminda (PB3) and Tumbly Bay (PB11) were undertaken. Generally, these were in a good condition, and the collaborators were excited to be involved and enthusiastic about some of the outcomes they were seeing. Spring in the region has been somewhat drier, compared to a wet winter, which has delayed the implementation of any summer based crop establishment, but this may occur later.



Photo 7: PB11 Multi-species cover crop established on shallow hillslope soils



Photo 8: PB11 Peter Colman in his multi-species cover crop established on shallow hillslope soils

## Recent funding rounds

- There has been no uptake for the latest grant funding rounds. For the *Soil carbon funding round 4*, there were numerous enquiries, but no applications even after extending the original closing date for submissions by two weeks. Although we also had many enquiries about the *Plant-based grants (multi-species approach) round 6*, after also extending the closing date for submissions by two weeks, we only had one application, which unfortunately after being reviewed, didn't meet the necessary criteria.
- Due to this low uptake we have been working to find ways to improve uptake for future funding rounds. Working with the Eyre Peninsula Regenerative Agriculture Advisory Group (meeting at Port Lincoln on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021), it has been decided that the remaining funding rounds for both the *Soil carbon grants* and the *Plant based grants* will be conducted on an ongoing assessment and approval basis. It is hope that this will encourage more applications, and be more flexible and responsive to applications. We have also modified the application form to be much simpler and hopefully more user-friendly.
- With the most recent funding rounds awarded (*Soil carbon round 3*, and *Plant based round 5*), there was a requirement for a monitoring update to be submitted along with the second payment invoice by 30 September. All of these have yet to be submitted, but all participants have been contacted, and they have indicated they intend to submit both their reports and invoices.

## One-on-One site visits

- The Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) Rural Solutions have been contracted to deliver sixteen one-on-one site visits for the Regenerative Ag program. Site visits are available by request to landholders with a soil or production issue, following the visit they will receive a report on the issue with recommendations for action.
- Brett Masters, the Sustainable, Agricultural Consultant with Rural Solutions, in consultation with AIR EP staff, continued to conduct these visits this quarter. They have involved addressing issues including but not limited to dry saline land, Mallee seeps, erosion and cover issues, as well as acidity issues.

## South Australian Sustainable Agricultural Network

- The Sustainable Agriculture Officer, and the RALF officer attended the Sustainable Agricultural Network meeting in Adelaide (19-20<sup>th</sup> July). We discussed relevant agricultural and land management practices and projects with fellow participants and stakeholders from across different organisations and regions. Covid lockdown occurred during the period which disappointingly curtailed some of the networking and conversations, but it was still a useful time to discuss relevant issues and build our understanding of them. This continues to be a useful forum for collaboration and discussions in the sustainable agriculture practice in South Australia.

## Case studies

- Additional landholders have been contacted to be interviewed for upcoming case studies.

## RAP Mallee seeps

- Assistance has been provided to the NLP funded Mallee Seeps project. More information about this project can be found in the *Business Plan Achievement Report: Eastern District*.
- As part of this work, Chris McDonough (from Insight Extension) was assisted with the installation of a data logger on a Mallee seep piezometer at Midgee, north of Cowell. The Mallee seep became apparent following an 'NDVI' (Normalized Difference Vegetation Index) desktop analysis and mapping was conducted looking at Mallee seeps on the property.

## NRM Farm

- The NRM farm mapping platform has been suspended by the consortium who have been supporting it, therefore the EP Regen Ag Advisory Group has been investigating alternative programs or activities that might provide similar services and outcomes.

## Communications and community engagement for this period

- Results from one of the mixed species demonstration sites in the Cleve district were published on our website as a [case study](#) and promoted on [Twitter](#). The trial has proved overwhelmingly the benefits of planting a mixed species cover crop, preferably with a legume, to be grazed heavily for short periods and then allowed to re-grow.
- A 15 minute [regenerative agriculture film](#) from the Buckleboo Farm Improvement Group (BFIG). The film, created under a previous EP Landscape Board grant, features Buckleboo farmer Ellen Zibell and Cleve farmer Ben Randford talking about the principles of regenerative agriculture and their journeys in this field. The film was promoted on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) along with information about the latest rounds of regenerative agriculture grants being open.
- There have been multiple social media posts promoting the regenerative agriculture grants.

## Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Preparation for 2023 Regenerative Agriculture Forum.
- Preparation for multi-species workshops in 2022, including capturing and developing materials.
- Preparation for Soil Acidity workshops in the first quarter of 2022.
- Supporting small grant holders with establishing and monitoring any summer crops
- Supporting any new soil carbon and multi-species applications.

## Delivering the Eastern Eyre Soil project

*Funded by the EP Landscape Board, the short term, opportunistic project aims to increase soil cover of bare soils of Eastern EP over the 2020/21 summer, either by providing support to sow cover, undertake soil amelioration activities, or monitor existing cover crops to determine suitable species and understand the impact on the following winter crop.*

## Program highlights this period

- A number of activities have been undertaken through this project impacting a whopping 1,000 ha. Activities include:
  - remediation of eroded areas (levelling, ripping, delving) - 430 ha;
  - increasing vegetative cover in pasture systems (mixed species planting, cell grazing) - 420 ha; and
  - improving confidence in summer cover crops (soil moisture monitoring) - 130 ha.
- Farm group 'Sticky Beak days' have visited sites at Cowell and Wharminda to discuss treatments (mixed species and deep ripping) and outcomes to date.
- *Ameliorating previously eroded areas*  
Apart from in some isolated areas, levelling, ripping with inclusion plates and clay delving have resulted in improved soil cover. On the worst sites where soil cover didn't increase, landholders have double sown to improve plant numbers. Germination counts have shown that ripping with inclusion plates has had no detrimental impact on plant numbers.

- *Monitoring the impact of summer cover crops on following crops*
  - Soil moisture has been monitored at sites with and without summer cover crops to gain an understanding of the impact of summer cover crops. Initially, during the first two sampling periods lower levels of soil moisture were observed under summer cover crops (4 sites) compared to sites left to stubble. However, post-sowing, soil water measurements in 2021 were similar under stubble and summer cover crops, where the summer cover crop had been successfully terminated prior to sowing. This is in contrast to a summer cover crop that survived following spraying.
  - Nitrogen measured just after sowing was highest in the summer cover crop treatment that survived longer.
  - Biomass sampling in September 2021 has not shown a negative response to summer cover crops.
- *Improving pasture growth to increase soil cover*  
In this region low residual soil cover from volunteer pastures has been a major issue, increasing erosion risk in subsequent crops. Grants and technical support have been provided to landholders to trial mixed species pasture systems to improve residual soil cover.
- *Cover species on drift areas*  
Cereal rye has been used by several landholders to maximise soil cover.

### Communications and community engagement for this period

- Individual site visits and technical advice were provided to participating landholders.

### Upcoming priorities for the next period

- The project will be completed, with completion of sample analyses and production of the final report.

## Pest plants and animals, and impact-causing native species

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Supporting landowners to control prioritised <b>pest plants and animals</b></i>	
Development and review of regional pest management plans for priority pest plants and animals	On Track
Delivering high-level, regional and state-wide pest management activities and programs	On Track
<i>Collaborating to reduce threats from <b>impact-causing native species</b></i>	
Cataloguing current and emerging impact-causing native species, their impacts and extent in the region	On Track
Collaborating with other regions and agencies to develop policy frameworks, strategies or programs, with the aim of reducing threats from impact-causing native species	On Track

## Pest plants and animals

The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board works closely with land managers to find ways of reducing the number of pests, help restore native biodiversity and reduce losses in the agricultural industry. As part of the pest management program, the Board has developed twenty-one pest management plans for the management of priority pest plants and animals across the region. Here we report on region-wide and high level activities contributing to the achievement of the objectives of the pest management plans including, but not limited to:

- higher level progress towards pest management plan implementation and review;
- delivery of regional and state-wide control programs;
- new incursions or potential threats to the region at a high level;
- new trials or research, and information from external organisations such as PIRSA; and
- attendance at state-wide pest animal and plant network meetings, as well as South Australian Wild Dog Advisory Group (SAWDAG) meetings.

Implementation of actions identified in the current twenty one pest management plans is ongoing. Please refer to the **Pest plants and animals, and impact-causing natives** sections in the three **district Business Plan Achievement Reports** for key progress, operational activities and achievements in each district.

More information about pest plants and animals, and links to our pest management plans can be found [here](#).

### Program highlights this period

- There has been continued progress on updating all twenty-one pest management plans. This has included updating information as a result of updating the risk assessment matrix and acquiring comment from the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) Biosecurity. The risk assessment is conducted to determine the risk different pests pose in the Eyre Peninsula Landscape.
- The writing of annual district action plans has also started. These are being written to assist operational staff undertake different priority control activities for different pests in each district.

### Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Continue to progress updating pest management plans.
- Continue to progress writing annual action plans.

## Impact-causing native species

Under the [Landscape South Australia Act 2019](#), regional landscape boards have a role in helping to manage native species that are causing adverse impacts on the natural or built environments, people or primary production or other industries, with boards' main role to be promoting collaborative management and providing information. The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board is therefore working in collaboration with other regions and agencies to develop policy frameworks, strategies or programs, with the aim of reducing threats from impact-causing native species.

### Program highlights this period

- An initial assessment by hundred of impact causing native species has been started.

### Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Completion of the initial assessment by hundred of impact causing native species and generation of spatial heat mapping.
- A consistent state wide approach to addressing impact causing native species will be discussed at the upcoming Landscape SA Operation Managers Network meeting in November.

# Biodiversity

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Protecting and restoring prioritised coastal habitats</i>	
Delivering the National Landcare Program's <b>Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery (STAR) Project</b>	
Supporting partners to progress <b>Eyes on Eyre</b> activities, protecting priority coastal habitats and encouraging sustainable use	
Partnering with other agencies to advance <b>blue carbon</b> initiatives particularly focused on temperate saltmarsh restoration	
<i>Maintain and enhance biodiversity in prioritised ecosystems</i>	
Support the implementation of the <b>Cummins Vanilla Streamcare Group infrastructure upgrade project</b> and associated <b>PIRSA Regional Growth Fund infrastructure upgrade project</b>	
Continued implementation, review and improvement of the <b>biodiversity monitoring program</b>	
<b>Collaboration</b> with partners to source funding <b>for landscape-scale projects</b> in priority ecosystems. Specific projects underway include:	
<b>The RLP Fire Recovery Program</b>	
<b>Carbon + Biodiversity Pilot</b>	
<b>Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) Pilot</b>	
<b>Nomination of 'Sheoak Woodlands over calcrete' to be listed under the EPBC Act</b>	

## Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery (STAR) Project

The [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#) is being delivered thanks to funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program (NLP). The project focuses on temperate saltmarshes, part of a nationally Threatened Ecological Community, and the Hooded Plover, one of Australia's top 20 threatened fauna species. The project will be delivered until 2023. Priority works include access management, threat abatement, revegetation, weed management, improving hydrological flows, and removing marine debris. More information about the project can be found [here](#).

## Program highlights this period

### Region

#### Beach nesting birds

- Hooded Plover nesting territory monitoring
  - Fortnightly monitoring of Hooded Plover nesting territories across the region commenced for the 2021-2022 breeding season.
  - Under the STAR Project, sixteen nesting territories across the region are monitored by landscape officers and volunteers. All persons undertaking monitoring are trained by BirdLife Australia, as strict monitoring protocols must be adhered to so as to ensure monitoring activities have minimal impact on the nesting birds. Six of the nesting territories monitored are located in the Southern District, two in the Eastern District, and eight in the Western District.
  - Nesting territory monitoring is conducted to track the breeding success of this threatened species. The monitoring also enables the determination of site specific threats to Hooded Plover breeding

success, and hence identification of intervention (management) actions which can be undertaken to mitigate threats and hopefully raise the rate of fledgling success when implemented.

## Eastern District

### *Beach nesting birds*

- Winter Shorebird Count Whyalla Salt pans
  - BirdLife Australia volunteers and landscape officers conducted a late, winter National Shorebird count, at the Whyalla Salt pans on 20<sup>th</sup> August. The original count was postponed due to Covid-19 lockdown.
  - Highlights were 48 nicely coloured Red-Capped Plovers, including a nest with a ready to fledge chick. Six Red-Kneed Dotterel, and five vagrant Great Crested Grebe were also seen.
  - Shorebirds counted tallied 336 (22 species), other bird species counted tallied 128 (11 species). Overall 464 birds (33 species) were counted, less birds but more species than last year.



Photo 9: National winter shorebird count - BirdLife Australia volunteer and landscape officer counting birds at the Whyalla Salt pans



Photo 10: Red-Kneed Dotterel feeding in intertidal saltmarsh



Photo 11: A male Red-Capped Plover displays nicely coloured plumage for breeding

- Hooded Plover nesting territory monitoring

- Training for Hooded Plover monitoring was delivered to landscape officers in the Eastern District.
- Monitoring of Hooded Plover nesting territories commenced at Redbanks Beach and Port Gibbon being monitored by landscape officers and a BirdLife Australia trained volunteer respectively.
- No breeding has been recorded for this season as yet but we hope to see some nesting activity in the coming weeks.

### **Saltmarshes**

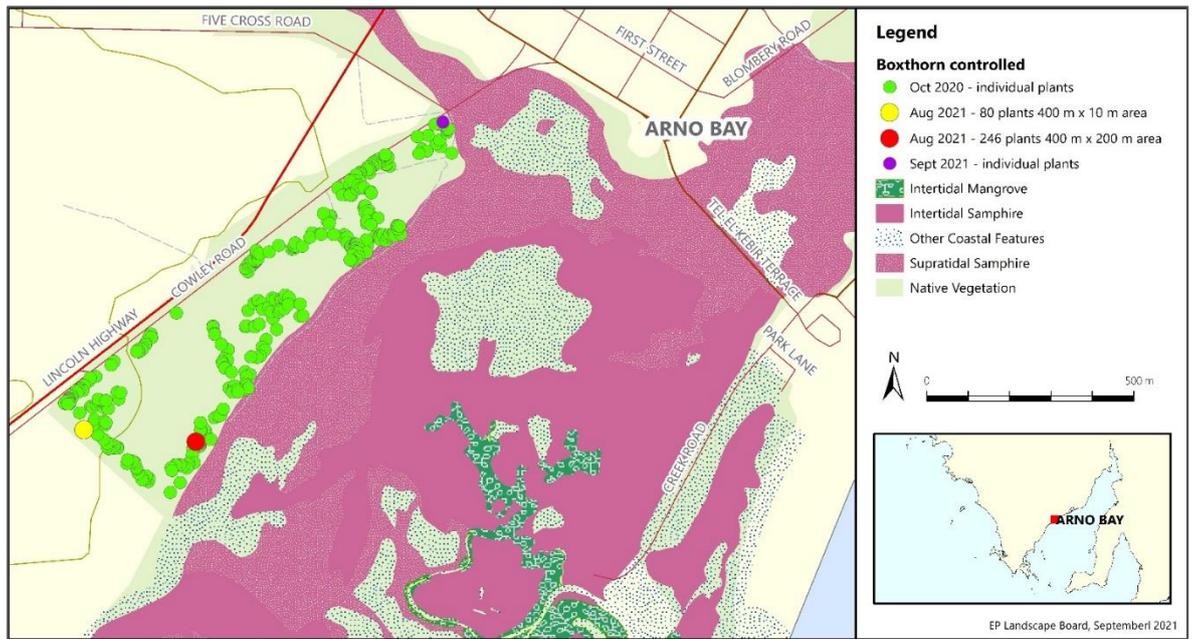
- Arno Bay African Boxthorn control

- Work was completed on controlling a large infestation of mature African Boxthorn plants in 22 hectares of native vegetation in a buffer zone surrounding supra and intertidal saltmarsh at Arno Bay.
- Initial work was carried out by five Landscape Officers over six days in October 2020, treating 365 Boxthorn plants using chainsaws and loppers to cut and swab with Vigilant herbicide. Boxthorns growing along fence lines were also treated with Regain granular herbicide.
- Follow-up work was recently carried out in August-September 2021 by a contractor. This work dealt with remaining huge Boxthorns along fence lines and plants missed in the initial work. An additional 246 plants in a section 400m long x 200m wide (boundary to creek), and 80 plants in a section 400m long x 10m wide (pipeline to creek) were treated, as well as individual plants in the North East corner of the reserve.
- Around 500 plants were controlled, with about 60 hours of work spent to complete the work.
- Follow-up inspection and control work will be required next year to treat any regrowth.
- This work will help restore habitat surrounding the saltmarsh, and will improve biodiversity to support fauna (particularly insects and birds) that are important to saltmarsh ecology.
- Boxthorns also harbor rabbits and foxes so eliminating them will help to control these pest animals.



*Photo 12:  
Arno Bay African Boxthorn –  
dead and dying boxthorn  
plants in 22 hectares of native  
vegetation where work has  
been completed in a buffer  
zone surrounding supra and  
intertidal saltmarsh*

Figure 1:  
Map showing African Boxthorn control in native vegetation buffer zone fringing the Arno Bay saltmarshes



- Mullaquana Road Gazania control

- Gazania has been sprayed on Mullaquana road and subsidiary roads in Whyalla with a mix of Lontrel broadleaf herbicide and pine oil surfactant with the intent to eradicate Gazania from vectors leading into saltmarsh.
- Thick infestations of Gazania were present along roadsides and there is a risk of the weed being further spread by roadside mowing carried out by Whyalla Council as well as vehicle and wind-borne spread.
- This work aims to buffer and prevent spread of Gazania protecting 23 hectares of saltmarsh habitat and preventing Gazania from out competing native vegetation that is important to saltmarsh ecology.
- A good knock down has been observed (Photo 13) but will likely require future follow up treatment to completely eradicate Gazania from this location.



Photo 13: Mullaquana Road Gazania control - showing treated and untreated roadside. The untreated area shown has since been treated



Photo 14: Landscape officer spraying out Gazania on Mullaquana Road verges, using a mix of Lontrel and pine oil

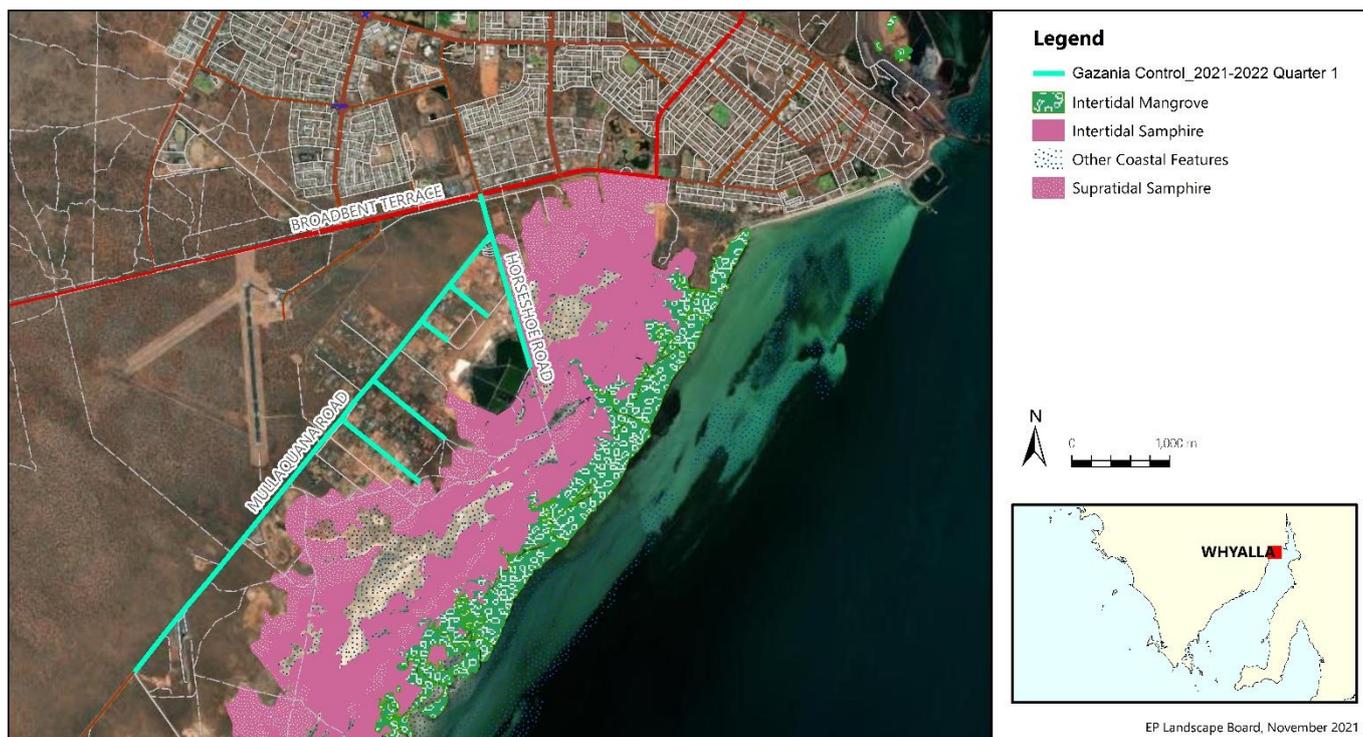


Figure 2: Map showing where roadside Gazania control work has been carried out on the saltmarsh fringes south of Whyalla.

- Ongoing quarterly Sediment Elevation Table (SET) monitoring was carried out in July by landscape officers and volunteer assistants at Cowleds Landing Sanctuary Zone (Eight-Mile Creek). This is being done as part of the blue carbon sediment coring and carbon accumulation monitoring project led by University of Adelaide researchers.
- Approvals have been granted for wayfinding signage and vegetation barriers to be installed at Murripi Beach and Eight-Mile Creek Beach. This will be done to help protect the vegetation.
- We have continued to provide support to the Crown Lands Office and contractors for the installation of signs at the edge of the Mullaquana residential area about responsible off-road vehicle use. These are being installed to help curb off road driving in the saltmarshes, with resultant vegetation damage.

## Western District

### Beach nesting birds

- Hooded Plover nesting territory monitoring
  - Remote camera monitoring continues at Venus Bay Conservation Park as a management tool to obtain data on the threats posed to the pair of Hooded Plovers on Entrance Beach. Analysis of data from 27 cameras in the Park is ongoing. Data is analysed to track predator movement and identify any feral cat hotspots near the nesting territory. A targeted feral cat shooting plan will be created based on this data.
  - Monitoring of Hooded Plover nesting territories in the Western District began in late July 2021. With exceptionally high tides the 'Hoodies' have had an interesting start to the breeding season with only one of the monitored pairs on the western EP having been recorded as nesting.



Photo 15: Hooded Plover nest with egg. This photo was taken by a volunteer with bird-nesting monitoring training during monitoring work. Photographing this species (including their eggs) comes with extreme risks to the birds, so we advise simply viewing from a distance.

### Saltmarshes

- **The Spit saltmarsh - African Boxthorn control**

Follow up African Boxthorn control to the buffer-zone around The Spit saltmarsh has been undertaken. Control within the saltmarsh area has also been implemented to help restore surrounding habitat and biodiversity and support fauna (particularly insects and birds) that are important to saltmarsh ecology. Seventy two African Boxthorn were targeted.

- **Blancheport - Gazania control**

A *Gazania* infestation along the boundary of the Blancheport saltmarsh area has been controlled by foliar spray method to prevent *Gazanias* further infiltrating the saltmarsh area and spreading to adjoining coastal bushland. This work will buffer 20 hectares of saltmarsh.



Photo 16: Volunteer obtaining GPS point of boxthorn once granular herbicide has been applied at The Spit Sapphire area

- **Bairds Bay – *Aeonium arboretum* control**

Follow up control to a buffer-zone around saltmarsh at Bairds Bay has been undertaken to control the spread of *Aeonium arboretum*. Three infestations were present at the same sites that were treated in 2020. Previous control work is having an impact, as infestations were smaller and easier to remove this year. This work aims to buffer and restore surrounding saltmarsh habitat and support fauna.

- **The Whirlpool samphire site cleanup**

A debris clean up at The Whirlpool samphire site on Scales Bay Road occurred over 1.11 hectares to remove building and house waste illegally dumped at the site. Combined with good winter rains, removal of waste will allow the site to regenerate.



Photo 17: *Aeonium arboreum* control at Bairds Bay



Photo 18: Household waste illegally dumped at The Whirlpool



Photo 19:  
Increased water clarity at The Whirlpool after completion of stormwater diversion works and good winter rains

## Southern District

### *Beach nesting birds*

- One of our landscape officers attended a Hooded Plovers regional co-ordinators meeting where it was revealed that Eyre Peninsula sadly had a terrible 2020-21 Hooded Plover breeding season. At monitored nesting territories across the region, eggs in only one in five nests successfully hatched, and of the eggs that did hatch, only one in five chicks reached flying age 35 days later. This meant that only six chicks reached fledgling stage at monitored territories. All of these were from nesting

territories in the Southern District. It is highly likely that in some areas the presence of foxes is affecting whether Hooded Plovers eggs hatch, and if they do, whether chicks will successfully fledge.

- A high presence of fox prints has been found on nesting beaches. We have therefore undertaken early intervention works across several nesting territories to help reduce the threat foxes pose to nesting Hooded Plovers, and hence hopefully improve nesting success. The intervention works comprised a four-week fox baiting program on private land adjoining the coast where the nesting territories are located (Photo 20).
- Two Hooded Plover chicks hatched at Point Boston. To help protect these chicks from predation, we have provided advice and support to adjoining coastal landholders to undertake fox baiting programs. We have also placed "Chick feeding zone ahead" signage on the beach to alert beach users to the presence of chicks (Photo 21).
- Hooded Plover nests and eggs are brilliantly camouflaged, which can unfortunately result in nests being trampled by beach walkers who haven't seen them. This is a particular risk where high tides push beach walkers up the beach into the foredunes where Hooded Plovers generally nest. At a Bolingbroke beach, where this is a significant threat, we have installed temporary fencing and signage (following BirdLife Australia's strict protocols) to help the public recognise and avoid the nesting area, and protect it from inadvertent trampling.



Photo 20: A fox bait station set up as part of the four-week fox baiting program. The small hole shows where a fox bait has been taken



Photo 21: 'Chick feeding zone ahead' sign erected at Point Boston to inform beach users



Photo 22: Signage and temporary fencing at a Hooded Plover nest to help the public recognize the nest and avoid it



Photo 23:  
Flagged Hooded Plover at  
Bolingbroke beach (taken  
by a landscape officer  
trained to do Hooded Plover  
monitoring)

## Communications and community engagement for this period

### Region

- We have had lots of social media about our work related to Hooded Plover monitoring and Hooded Plover conservation, including posts about the [start of Hooded Plover breeding season](#), the [first nest found](#), and [off-road vehicle threats to Hooded Plovers](#) at Sheringa [Facebook](#). Some posts reached more than 4,500 people.
- We also took advantage of the number of “special” days during this period to share information, including:
  - Threatened Species Day – [encouraging the protection of threatened Hooded Plovers](#);
  - National Science Week - sharing information about [Hooded Plover Monitoring](#) and [saltmarsh sediment testing](#); and
  - International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove –[promoting our STAR project](#), and keeping to the tracks in offroad vehicles to protect our saltmarshes.

### Eastern District

- **NAIDOC Week ‘Heal Country’ Saltmarsh Excursion**
  - As part of NAIDOC Week celebrations staff from Nicolson Avenue Primary School, Whyalla High School, the EP Landscape Board, and National Parks and Wildlife Service SA (NPWSSA), collaborated on a program of outdoor activities for students. To celebrate NAIDOC week an excursion to the Cowleds Landing Sanctuary Zone at Eight-Mile Creek Beach near Whyalla was held. This was attended by 90 students and staff.
  - The NAIDOC Week theme for 2021 ‘Heal Country’ calls for stronger measures to recognise, protect, and maintain all aspects of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and heritage. The outdoor activities provided an opportunity for young people to connect with Country while learning about the local environment and encouraging them to take a role in caring for Country and to become future leaders in land management.

Photo 24:  
NAIDOC WEEK  
Saltmarsh Excursion –  
Landscape officer  
explaining to students how  
coastal saltmarsh  
vegetation changes in  
inter-tidal, supra-tidal, and  
up-marsh zones



- Although many students had visited the Cowleds Landing Sanctuary Zone near Whyalla they knew very little about saltmarsh ecology and shorebirds. Students learnt about mangrove-saltmarsh ecosystems, and all the elements of these systems such as tidal creeks, sand and mud flats, and sea grass; as well as shorebirds and how we protect them through our STAR project. They were taught about the importance of these habitats, which provide a nursery area for many species such as snapper, blue swimmer crabs and whiting; and how they are also important foraging grounds for internationally important shorebirds species.
  - There were also beach detective activities with National Parks and Wildlife Service SA, nature art, mindfulness meditation, and yarns around the fire talking about what Connecting to Country and Healing Country means.
  - Students left with a good understanding of saltmarsh food chains and how saltmarshes function as fish nurseries and habitat for shorebirds. They were also introduced to the concept of Blue Carbon, how mangroves, saltmarshes, and seagrass meadows sequester and keep carbon safely locked up in the anaerobic sediments they grow in.
- **Saltmarsh Discovery Tours**
    - As part of [Whyalla's Annual Cuttlefest program of events](#) one of our landscape officers hosted two guided walks in the saltmarshes during the school holidays. With places for 30 attendees from the general public, the tours were aimed at family groups and were designed to be fun and educational.
    - Attendees gained a greater appreciation of the saltmarsh ecosystems which form a vital link between our land and oceans and are a driver of food webs that feed marine life, including our cuttlefish. Seeing shore crabs burrowing in intertidal saltmarsh and juvenile fish swimming in tidal creeks made it very easy for attendees of all ages to understand the importance of these habitats.
    - Attendees were also given a copy of the '*Samphires of the Eyre Peninsula*' plant identification book which they could use on the walk and take home to identify the fascinating salt tolerant samphire plants found growing in our Eyre Peninsula saltmarshes.



Photo 25: Off-road vehicle activity at Sheringa Beach.

Photo 26:  
Saltmarsh Discovery Tours - attendees take a closer look at Haswell's shore-crab *Helograpsus haswellianus*, a burrowing crab that lives in the saltmarsh and their zoeae (larvae) provide an important food source for juvenile fish

### Western District

- With increased visitation rates to the EP, community members from Perlubie have shown an interest in protecting resident beach nesting birds and shorebirds through education and awareness raising. Educational signage is therefore currently being printed about this and will be installed onsite in October 2021.
- A high level of off-road vehicle activity has been observed on Sheringa Beach and in the dune area. Educational signage is also being created for this site to inform 4x4 drivers of the damage caused by off-road driving, and advising driving below the high tide mark and keeping off the dune areas.

### Southern District

- A summary of the Eyre Peninsula Hooded Plover 2020/21 breeding season outcomes was published on a number of platforms, including a [media release](#) and an article in [Port Lincoln Times](#).

### Upcoming priorities for the next period

#### Region

- Hooded Plover nesting territory monitoring will be ongoing through to about April 2022.

#### Eastern District

- Murripi Beach and Eight-Mile Creek Beach way-finding signage, vegetation barriers and saltmarsh signs.
- Blue Carbon presentation to Local Government.
- Continued Sediment Elevation Table (SET) Monitoring at Eight-Mile Creek for Blue Carbon project.

#### Western District

- Install educational signage at Perlubie Beach and Sheringa Beach.

## Southern District

- Hooded Plover workshop with Barngala Community.
- Fox den destruction and cat trapping at key Hooded Plover nesting territories.
- Commencement of weed control at key saltmarsh project sites.

## Eyes on Eyre

*The 'Eyes on Eyre' concept was formulated in 2016 with a collective involving three organisations: the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association, Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board and Regional Development Australia Eyre Peninsula (RDAEP), coming together to form a working group to face the challenge of improving outcomes for the environment and visitors. The Department for Environment and Water have joined this collective as well. The aim of Eyes on Eyre is to enable more people to enjoy and appreciate the spectacular coastline and avoid impacts on the natural environment. This is being done by implementing a cohesive, region wide strategy for the sustainable management of visitor access. Eyes on Eyre will be delivered in a staged approach on an ongoing basis to see incremental positive change over time.*

### Program highlights this period

- The Eyes on Eyre (EonE) Steering Committee has been successful at acquiring \$500,000 of funding from the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) "[Parks 2025 initiative](#)". The funding needs to be spent in such a way that it improves the management of crown land. This includes crown land sites that are under the care, control and management of local councils. RDAEP will be managing the expenditure of the funds on behalf of the Eyes on Eyre Steering Committee.
- EonE have identified that an online booking system has the greatest opportunity to address the identified visitor management issues at scale and have just started to work with local government to hopefully run a pilot at a couple of sites this summer.
- Board staff recently submitted an expression of interest to the Landscape SA Landscape Priorities Fund for funding to support work on EonE. The application was titled "*Eyes on Eyre – restoring the health of Eyre Peninsula's coastal environment*" and requested \$710,000 over three years.

### Local government engagement for this period

- There is ongoing engagement with all local councils on Eyre Peninsula.

### Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Continue to liaise with coastal councils to help them deliver camping node infrastructure upgrades and the proposed online booking system at a couple of pilot sites this summer.

## Blue Carbon

*The EP Landscape Board is working to support the implementation of the [Blue Carbon Strategy for South Australia \(2020-25\)](#), partnering with other agencies to advance blue carbon initiatives, particularly focusing on temperate saltmarsh restoration.*

### Program highlights this period

- The Blue Carbon Strategy Implementation Across-agency Group meeting number 2 was held. The group provides technical advice to guide the implementation of the [Blue Carbon Strategy for South Australia](#) (2020-25).

## Cummins Wanilla Streamcare Group infrastructure upgrade project

The Cummins Wanilla Basin contains a vast network of surface water and groundwater drainage channel systems that have been developed over many decades to support agricultural production and address issues such as dryland salinity, waterlogging, erosion and sedimentation. Up to 85,000 hectares of Eyre Peninsula farming land in the basin is increasingly being affected by poor drainage. To address these and other issues in the catchment, the Cummins Wanilla Basin Streamcare Group commissioned the development of a [basin management plan](#). They have also secured \$250,000 in funding from the State Government's [Regional Growth Fund](#) to support the implementation of the plan, through the maintenance and development of priority drainage infrastructure required to maintain the function of the catchment, improve hydrology for the purpose of supporting agricultural production and address issues such as dryland salinity, waterlogging, erosion and sedimentation.

This funding is being made available to landholders in the affected area through a grants program administered by the EP Landscape Board on behalf of the volunteer Streamcare Group. Landholders, land managers and councils within the basin are eligible to apply for grants of between \$2,000 and \$30,000 to complete work that upgrades and maintains existing drainage infrastructure. Grant recipients need to commit at least a 50% matching contribution which can include in-kind contribution through their labour and use of machinery costs.

### Program highlights this period

#### Cummins Wanilla Basin Drainage Grants Round 1

- Delivery of the two projects funded under Round 1 of the grants program was completed.
- As part of the Warunda Road Drainage Project, the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula (DCLEP) have replaced old culverts and drainage pipes, and installed new drainage pipes under the road, and regrading of low lying areas to improve flow towards these drains. This will reduce water logging on properties adjacent to the road, reduce runoff onto the road and improve downstream flows.
- The second project, completed on private land, entailed refreshing water runs / grader drains, installing additional drains to direct flow to the natural creek, and cleaning existing dams to improve water quality and holding capacity. This work will reduce water logging and reduce issues with increasing salinity from water logging, and improve water security for primary production.



Photo 27: New culvert and drainage works on Warunda Road



Photo 28: Refreshed grader drain

## Cummins Wanilla Basin Drainage Grants Round 2

- Round 2 of the grants program was launched, with applications closing on 24<sup>th</sup> September. In this round, \$50,000 was available for landholders to improve catchment hydrology.
- Only one application was received for this round.

## Communications and community engagement for this period

- The opening of Round 2 of the Cummins Wanilla Basin grants was [advertised](#) and [promoted](#) on social media.

## Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Applications for Round 2 project will be assessed and awarded to successful applicants; and on-ground delivery will commence.

## Biodiversity Monitoring Program

*As part of our Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) plan, the Board established the Biodiversity Monitoring Program, in 2015-2016. This Biodiversity Monitoring Program will result in 329 sites across the region being monitored (using the Bushland Condition Monitoring (BCM) methodology) on a ten year rotational basis. To supplement this important monitoring a Citizen Scientist network has been established to undertake annual bird surveys at some of these sites.*

## Program highlights this period

- Bushland Condition Monitoring has been undertaken at twenty six sites across Eyre Peninsula by staff as part of the [Biodiversity Monitoring Program](#).
- Plant samples have been sent to the State Herbarium for identification, and data will be entered into the state-wide Biological Database of South Australia (BDBSA). Once data has been entered and collated, reports will be provided to land owners.
- This year's monitoring included eleven 'performance' sites, where on ground actions were carried out ten years ago. These sites are monitored to determine the long term impact of on-ground management actions. Once the 2021 data has been entered, it will be interesting to analyse the change in condition over the last ten years at these sites.
- For more details on the monitoring completed in each district, refer to the individual district [Business Plan Achievement Reports](#) for this quarter.

## Communications and community engagement for this period

- Staff have supported members of the Citizen Scientist network to undertake bird surveys etc. and enter data into the various portals (including the new [Iconic Bird sighting portal](#)).
- Staff have discussed Bushland Condition Monitoring with the land managers who own the sites where the monitoring has occurred.

## Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Staff will finalise the data collected at the Bushland Condition Monitoring ready for it to be entered into the state-wide database.

- Staff will continue to support the Citizen Scientist network and get the information they collect publically available on the Biological Database of SA.
- Complete the internal review of the Biodiversity Monitoring Program.

## Collaboration on landscape-scale projects

*The EP Landscape Board collaborates with multiple organisations, from federal through to local level, to source funding to deliver landscape scale projects which contribute to the conservation and enhancement of prioritised ecosystems.*

### **RLP Fire Recovery Program**

*Funded under the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, fire recovery works are being undertaken in the Middleback and Secret Rocks fire grounds which were impacted by the 2019 bushfires. Works include priority pest plant, pest animal, and overabundant native herbivore control, as well as controlling access and undertaking erosion management. The fire recovery program will assist the recovery of threatened species including Malleefowl, Sandhill Dunnarts, Chalky Wattle and Yellow Swainson Pea.*

### Program highlights this period

- Some works planned for the 2020-2021 financial year could not be delivered, as low rainfall resulted in little regrowth in the area by the June 2021. An extension to the project for the 2021-22 financial year has therefore been approved, to facilitate the delivery of on ground actions in the most appropriate manner and which could not be completed previously.
- Overabundant herbivore (kangaroo), rabbit, fox and cat control is being undertaken on a monthly basis by a qualified contractor. This is difficult to implement across a fire ground, but is essential to allow vegetation to recover post fire, particularly for more palatable species. Monthly control will continue until May 2022. A small amount of weed control has also been implemented to deliver on milestones required by the Australian Government.
- Staff have been assisting landholders to obtain funds from the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) to replace heritage agreement fencing burnt in the fires.



*Photo 29:  
New grasses and seedlings are covering the formerly burnt out area*

## Communications and community engagement for this period

- Ongoing communication is occurring with four land managers affected by the fires.
- A [media release](#) and [Port Lincoln Times](#) article showcased the recovery at the Kimba fire ground, 18 months after wildfire in the region.

## Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Continue overabundant herbivore (kangaroo), rabbit, fox and cat control.
- Continue to support landholders to replace heritage agreement fencing burnt in the fires.

## Carbon + Biodiversity Pilot

*The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board region has been chosen as one of six pilot regions across Australia for the program which is part of the [Agriculture Stewardship Package](#) being delivered by the Australian Government Department for Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE). [This pilot](#) will develop arrangements to reward farmers for increasing biodiversity and storing carbon by undertaking revegetation. The Board will assist the Department for Agriculture, Water and Environment with pilot design and promote the opportunity to farmers on Eyre Peninsula.*

## Program highlights this period

- In June, Board staff assisted ten farmers submit applications to the Australian Government for the Carbon + Biodiversity Pilot. Nine of these farmers have made it through to the second stage and have therefore received a draft contract which they are now discussing individually with Australian Government staff. Board staff are still assisting the nine farmers through the process.

## Communications and community engagement for this period

- Staff are assisting nine farmers in relation to this project

## Upcoming priorities for the next period

- The nine farmers will continue to be supported through the pilot process.

## 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. The Australian National University is also supporting the delivery of this project.*

## Program highlights this period

- On the 15<sup>th</sup> of September the Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment announced this pilot and confirmed that Eyre Peninsula would be one of the six pilot regions from across Australia for this project.
- Staff were involved in discussions with DAWE to provide advice on project design before the application period opened on 29<sup>th</sup> September.
- Applications were open from 29<sup>th</sup> September until October 27 for landholders who wanted to apply to be part of the pilot. In each of our districts landscape officers helped to [spread awareness](#) about the pilot and supported landholders with applications.

## Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Staff will assist delivery of this pilot by:
  - promoting the program;
  - answering any questions farmers might have;
  - supporting farmers through the application process; and
  - undertaking on-site assessment of proposed projects short-listed by the Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. Assessment will include verification of the vegetation type and assessment of vegetation condition.

## Nomination of 'Sheoak Woodlands over calcrete' to be listed under the EPBC Act

*Sheoak Woodlands over calcrete are an ecosystem that has degraded significantly since European settlement. After many years of conservation works by farmers and the gathering of data by WildEyre enough evidence was available for a threatened ecological community nomination to be submitted (by the Eyre Peninsula Natural Resources Management Board) to the Australian Government in January 2018. The Australian Government started the assessment of this nomination in 2020.*

## Program highlights this period

- Staff have continued to respond to further information requests from the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment concerning the listing.

## Communications and community engagement for this period

- We promoted the call for comment on the proposal for EPBC listing of the Sheoak Grassy Woodlands over calcrete vegetation community ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)). This reached over 1,800 people on Facebook.

## Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Respond to any further queries from Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment staff concerning the application.

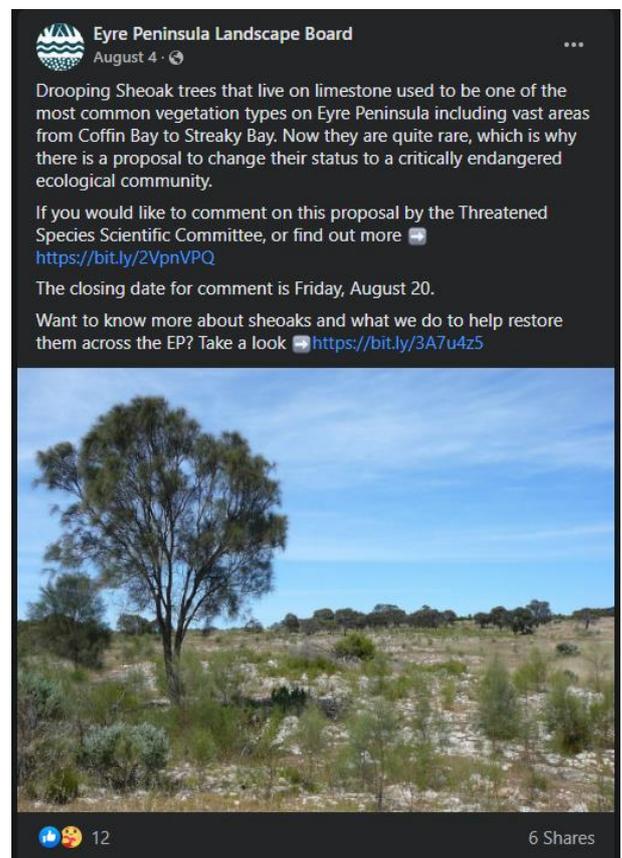


Photo 30:  
Social media post about community consultation for EPBC listing of Sheoak Grassy Woodlands over calcrete vegetation community

# Community

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Community at the centre and actively engaged in landscape management</i>	
Review and improvement of the <b>citizen science program</b> ; providing meaningful opportunities for volunteers and groups to get involved and value the natural environment	
Supporting Aboriginal and community groups, Local Government, farming groups and schools to progress natural resource activities through the provision of the <b>Grassroots Grants program</b>	
<i>Effective decision-making and Local Government engagement</i>	
Effective <b>leadership and governance</b> of the Board and its business, to meet legislative requirements, including:	
<b>Board meeting highlights</b>	
<b>Referrals</b> (including Stormwater management) received and responded to	

## Citizen Science Program

The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board supports [citizen science](#) as an innovative and exciting way of engaging the community, while increasing our knowledge of Eyre Peninsula’s natural environments. We support a number of projects that community members can get involved in.

### Program highlights this period

- In May and June we ran a photo competition looking for photos that showcase Eyre Peninsula’s landscapes and our priorities of sustainable agriculture, water, pest plants and animals, biodiversity and community. Winners were announced on 29 June, and with winning photos promoted through July of this quarter. These beautiful photos can be seen [here](#) on our website.
- We have had numerous sightings reported through our citizen science program this quarter, including, two king tide reports, and two koalas, one goanna, one Malleefowl, and ten echidna sightings. Sadly, many echidna have been reported dead on highways around the region. We strongly encourage people to be aware of wildlife when they are driving.



Photo 31: Corey Anne Wait received second prize in the Landscape / Scenery division for her photo of her children enjoying some fun time on hay stacks after they finished shifting the bales just prior to rain at Yallunda Flat



Photo 32: Photo of echidna snuggled next to a diesel tank and shed, submitted to our [epechidnas](#) citizen science portal by Eden Telfer

## Communications and community engagement for this period

- We have promoted our citizen science programs through multiple social media posts this quarter, including:
  - promoting Cowleds Landing Sanctuary Zone [Pix Stix sites](#) as part of the Cuttlefest promotions ([Twitter](#));
  - with King Tides predicted in early July, we had multiple posts encouraging the public to report sightings via our [citizen science portal](#) (more than 1,900 people reached) ([Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)); and
  - we tapped into Save the Koala Say to promote our EP citizen science [koala project](#) ([Facebook](#)).

## Grassroots Grants Program

*The Grassroots Grants program supports individuals, volunteers, community groups and other organisations working on a not-for-profit basis, with local landscape management projects. Grants are awarded annually. Reporting on support provided by Board staff to grant applicants, as well as monitoring of grants awarded and acquitted is included in the **Grassroots Grants program** sections in the district quarterly reports.*

## Program highlights this period

- The Board's open call for applications for the 2021-2022 Grassroots Grants program closed on 23 June, with 19 applications received, valued at \$133,123 (GST exclusive).
- These applications were assessed against defined criteria. The final pool of recommended grants includes 14 applications valued at \$101,485 (GST exclusive), with a further \$88,308 third party contribution (in-kind or other funding).
- Nine of the successful applications are from the community sector, four are from the agriculture sector and one is from local government.
- Table 1 on the following page gives a summary of the successful applications.
- Grant agreements have been prepared for all successful applicants, and work has commenced on majority of the projects. Progress on individual projects is reported in our district [Business Plan Achievement Reports](#) for this quarter.

## Local government engagement for this period

- Grassroots Grants have been awarded to one local government project from the City of Whyalla, *Point Lowly and Santos Escape Road - Irrigation and vegetation protection projects*.

## Communications and community engagement for this period

- Successful applications were [announced](#) in August.

## Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Ongoing support will be provided for grant recipients.
- A report card summarising the outcomes of the 2020-2021 round of grants will be produced over the next two quarters.

Table 1: EP Landscape Board Grassroots Grants - 2021-22 successful applicants

	Project Title	Organisation	Amount Funded
1	Growing for coastal ecosystem restoration	Lower Eyre Coastcare	\$8,000
2	Microplastics training for national data collection	Sleaford Progress Association	\$4,100
3	Caring for Your Soil	WoTL Ltd	\$8,000
4	Coast access and revegetation of Venus Bay foreshore	Kenny Venus Progress Association Inc	\$6,000
5	Cultural Education Environmental Centre (CEEC)	Yangi Pty Ltd	\$4,400
6	Big Swamp monitoring and management	Big Swamp Community Centre Incorporated for the Bigswamp Conservation Group	\$10,000
7	Protecting our soils through improved grazing management	WoTL Ltd	\$9,600
8	Site care at RDASA Inc. - Port Lincoln Centre	Riding for the Disabled Association SA Inc - Port Lincoln Centre	\$10,000
9	Revegetation of paddocks	Veronica Eileen Skipworth	\$1,972
10	Point Lowly and Santos Escape Road - Irrigation and vegetation protection projects	Whyalla City Council	\$10,000
11	Restoring Eyre Peninsula (EP) Blue Gum woodlands and managing saline soils.	MR & AC Hannemann	\$9,913
12	Re-invigorating the Minnipa Women's Pioneer Park with waterwise native plants	Minnipa Progress Association	\$5,000
13	Revegetation of Fowlers Bay sand dunes	Fowlers Bay Progress Association Inc.	\$4,500
14	Entering the significant environmental benefit offsets market - A case study	Nature Foundation	\$10,000
			<b>\$101,485</b>

## Leadership and governance

### Planning

- Our regional Landscape Plan, 2021-2026 and Business Plan, 2021-2022, have been approved and are available [here](#).
- We will now commence to revise the Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) Plan to align with the new Landscape Plan.

### Board meeting highlights

#### Program highlights this period

The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board only met once during the quarter. The meeting, which included a joint lunch with the Wudinna Council, was held on 24 August, at the Wudinna Community Club.

Highlights from the meeting included:

- A presentation showcasing the last two years' of work and upcoming priorities for the Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery (STAR) project.
- A briefing on the development of the State Landscape Strategy, which is currently being drafted in line with the requirements of the [Landscape South Australia Act 2019](#). Once the strategy is formally drafted consultation will be undertaken with key stakeholders across the State.

- An update from PIRSA was given about the [SA Wild Dog Trapping program](#), The EP Landscape Board, as well as other Boards from around the state contribute to this program on an annual basis.
- The next round of the Landscape SA Landscape Priorities Fund opened in August. The Board therefore considered a range of landscape scale project proposals that had been scoped and selected those which we will submit Expressions of Interest for to the Fund.
- The Board considered a range of Water Affecting Activities for the period with briefing around reoccurring flood issues in the Lower Eyre Peninsula and draft SA Water Best Practice Operation Procedures.
- The Board formally adopted the recommendations from the Risk, Audit and Finance Committee meeting, which was held on 4 August 2021.
- The Board also noted a range of standing items including:
  - the previous Business Plan Achievement Reports for the last quarter of 2020-21;
  - the Communications and Media Report, which highlighted all media activity for the period;
  - briefings in regard to the seasonal outlook of the agriculture sector and progress made in the delivery of the region's Regenerative Agriculture Program, and
  - the quarterly Work Health and Safety Report for the period.
- The Board decided not to have a meeting in October, and confirmed the date and location for the next meeting, which will be held in Cowell on 7 December 2021.

### **Referrals (including stormwater management)**

*The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board has formal referral responsibilities (such as commenting on development applications or stormwater management plans) and informal responsibilities (such as providing feedback on associated legislative changes, significant discussion papers or plans). These matters need to be responded to in a timely manner and often require the consolidation of feedback from across the organisation.*

### **Program highlights this period**

- There were a total of eleven referrals commented on (including no comment) in this period, which included:
  - three native vegetation clearance applications;
  - a response to the South Australia Natural Resource Committee's (NRC) review of the Native Vegetation Act 1991;
  - a response to the eligibility for listing of Drooping Sheoak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) grassy woodland on calcrete of the Eyre Yorke Block Bioregion as a threatened vegetation community under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act;
  - proposed tourist accommodation on Section 273 Flinders Highway, Talia;
  - a South Australian Productivity Commission Tourism Regulation Review;
  - the proposed Port Bonython Code Amendment;
  - the Whalers Way Orbital Launch Complex Proposal Environmental Impact Statement;
  - a consultation paper: Streamlining the Emissions Reduction Fund – Environmental Plantings Pilot; and
  - a draft Carbon Farming Roadmap for South Australia.

### **Local government engagement for this period**

- Upon request we provided comment to the District Council of Elliston regarding proposed tourist accommodation on Section 273 Flinders Highway, Talia.

### **Upcoming priorities for the next period**

- Board staff will continue to provide feedback in a timely manner relating to the Board's formal and informal referral responsibilities.

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T: Cleve                  0428 282 077

T: Streaky Bay           08 8626 1108  
T: Elliston               08 8687 9330  
T: Wudinna               08 8680 2653  
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