

Business Plan Achievement Report

4th Quarter 2021-2022

1 April to 30 June 2022

Whole of Region





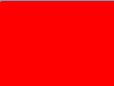
About

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>	
Implementation of the Water Allocation Plan (WAP) , including mid-term (5 year) review	
Groundwater Dependent Ecosystem (GDE) monitoring	
<i>Managing Water Affecting Activities (WAAs)</i>	
Managing Water Affecting Activities (WAAs) , 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](#).

Program highlights this period

- The Board endorsed the findings of the WAP mid-term Evaluation Report at their May meeting. A summary of the results from the WAP evaluation process is therefore now being prepared and will soon be published on the Board's website.
- The WAP Implementation Plan is also now being amended to include identified implementation improvements and longer-term considerations. Some of the implementation improvements that will be actioned in the short to medium term include:
 - Improving communications about the WAP to help the community better understand the WAP and answer questions they have in relation to specific matters. This will include updating the Board's website and existing frequently asked questions for the WAP, through to releasing specific information updates on a range of topics, such as allocations, seawater intrusion, salinity etc. .
 - Publication of annual allocation information on an annual basis in a more easily accessible and understandable format.
 - Promotion of water wise messaging.
 - Getting a better understanding of the connection of key Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems to groundwater systems.

Details of the longer term considerations and actions will soon be available in the *Summary Mid-term Evaluation Report* on our website.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- The WAP was featured in a paper published in April 2022 in the journal *Water's* special edition "*Integrated Water Assessment and Management under Climate Change*". The paper, written by Simone Stewart and Graham Green from the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) is titled: [The Importance of Legislative Reform to Enable Adaptive Management of Water Resources in a Drying](#)

[Climate](#). The WAP was also showcased by DEW in March 2022 at the *International Conference on Water Resources Management and Sustainability: Solution for Arid Regions*, where DEW representatives were included in the Australia delegation to promote water practices.

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

- We have commenced writing the annual report cards on the monitoring conducted at two wetland GDE sites during the spring of 2021. These report cards will be completed during the next quarter and made available to the community on our website.
- We have initiated a study to confirm definitively whether the Red Gums are using local groundwater. This will be done by looking at stable chemical isotopes that occur in the local groundwater, and which are a “signature” for a groundwater source, and comparing these to the isotopes occurring in tree sap. The study will be undertaken by Flinders University.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- We promoted the findings of our 2021 annual Red Gum GDE report cards on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). The report cards, which summarise the findings of the monitoring completed during the spring of 2021 at five Red Gum GDE sites, are available on our website [here](#).

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Finish writing the 2021 annual report cards for the two wetland GDE sites.
- Work with Flinders University to undertake isotope testing to determine the source of water used by Red Gums at selected Red Gum monitoring sites.
- Plan the spring 2022 monitoring of Red Gum and wetland GDE sites.

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.

Photo 1:
New stock water dam in
the Lake Wangary
Catchment



Program highlights this period

- Across the region the following work related to Water Affecting Activities (WAA) has been undertaken by Board staff:
 - Three new WAA permit application was received.
 - Assessment of three applications were completed and these were approved. These include permit approvals for dam construction, as well as saline drainage to help manage waterlogging and salinity issues.
 - Two inspections of WAA completed works were undertaken, including a new stock water dam.
 - One active compliance issue is being addressed.
 - One compliance issue involving a solid structure constructed through a watercourse has been resolved through voluntary compliance.
 - Nineteen water salinity/pH tests were completed for landholders.
 - Eighteen WAA enquiries were received and addressed.

Local government engagement for this period

- **District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula (DCLEP) – Katies Lane watercourse crossing on Minniribbie Creek**

The Katies Lane ford crossing on Minniribbie Creek, south of Wangary, floods annually. When the crossing is flooded the road is closed by DCLEP. This can be necessary for up to a few months over winter.

Adjacent to the creek crossing, a landowner has repaired his fence and treated some erosion following flood damage. The community raised some concerns with DCLEP that these works may be increasing flooding at the crossing. To evaluate whether this is the case, a DCLEP Works Manager and the EP Landscape Board Water Resources Officer undertook an inspection of the crossing under



Photo 2:
Flooded Katies Lane ford crossing on Minniribbie Creek. Inspection undertaken with DCLEP Works Manager to look at the current condition of the site. Road is closed annually when flooded for up to a few months at a time

normal flood conditions. They confirmed that the fence repair and erosion treatment works are not altering the hydrology of the crossing and exacerbating annual flooding.

DCLEP were going to close the road following the inspection. They will continue to monitor the crossing, and will inspect it after any significant flow or flood events. If there are any issues observed, DCLEP will advise the Board, and we will work to resolve any issues arising at the creek crossing.

- **District Council of Elliston**

Landscape officers met with the Council Works Manager to inspect progress on the Elliston Wetland Redevelopment and the town's stormwater upgrade project. The works are progressing well with the main wetland pool and stormwater transfer pump and infrastructure in place and operating. This project is expected to reduce flooding in the town during storm events.



Photo 3:
District Council of Elliston– Wetland Redevelopment and Stormwater Project: main wetland pool, stormwater transfer pump and infrastructure in place

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Our publication [A guide to building and managing dams](#) has been updated and is available on our website. Limited hard copies are also being printed and will be available from our Port Lincoln office. This update of this guide was promoted on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Sustainable agriculture

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Facilitating regenerative land management to improve soil health and vitality</i>	
Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator (RALF) services	
Regenerative Agriculture Program (RAP)	
Severe weather response – Significant rain events January 2022	

Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator services

The Australian Government, through the National Landcare Program (NLP), 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

- The RALF attended the *National Regional Agricultural Landcare Facilitator Conference* held in Canberra in May. The conference provided the opportunity to network with RALFs from across all states and production systems. The conference included speakers from across Australia discussing a range of topics, including engaging youth in sustainable agriculture, podcasting, composting, positive actions for a changing climate, and peer-to-peer learning experiences. This was the first face to face conference held since 2019. Our RALF is eager to bring her learnings from the conference to bear here on the Eyre Peninsula.
- Facilitation support was provided for the Regenerative Agriculture Program multi-species workshop held at Yallunda flat on 21st June. Twenty local farmers attended the workshop, where there was great discussion around the use of multi-species in the lower Eyre Peninsula environment. There was also an interstate presentation via Zoom from a Victorian grower with more than ten years of multi-species cropping experience.
- The RALF facilitated the '*Managing Mallee Seeps Workshop*' held on 15 June at Rudall. The hands-on workshop was attended by nine landholders, all of whom have Mallee seep affected land. It covered identifying Mallee seeps, best practices for managing Mallee seeps and returning affected land back to profitable production, as well as providing advice on managing threatened areas after the big wet. The practical component included a site visit to an untreated Mallee seep and demonstration on how to assess and monitor a seep, as well as a second site visit to see a seep in recovery after treatment.

This workshop, delivered as a part of the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board Mallee Seeps project, marked the conclusion of the National Landcare Program funded portion of the project. The EP Landscape Board has committed to fund the project for a further 12 months through their Severe Weather Recovery Fund, and the project will now run to 30 June 2023. For more information about the workshop and the *Mallee Seeps Project*, please refer to our *Business Plan Achievement Report: Eastern District – 4th Quarter 2021-2022*.



Photo 1:

The RALF and Dr Chris McDonough, consulting agronomist, demonstrating how to install a piezometer for monitoring the levels of a perched water table in a Mallee seeps situation near Kielpa

- The RALF provided support for various projects and committees, including:
 - support for the South Australian Drought Hub/Australian Government Future Drought Fund projects which are being delivered by AIR EP, which include, but are not limited to, early sowing demonstrations, strip and disc farming systems demonstrations, pasture demonstrations and dry saline land demonstrations;
 - support for the National Landcare Program Resilient EP Project's in-field discussion groups held at the project's focus sites; and
 - support for the AIR EP, Low and Medium Rainfall Research, Development and Extension Committee meetings.
- The RALF also has ongoing involvement with other projects, including:
 - the [Soil CRC](#)'s (the Cooperative Research Centre for High Performance Soils) Knowledge Sharing project, surveying farmers at soil-themed events and completing process diaries at AIR EP and EP Landscape Board events; and
 - the AIR EP young farmer network mapping project, which includes the development of a podcast series.
- The RALF was also instrumental in planning for the upcoming Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry's (previously Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment) visit to the Eyre Peninsula to showcase the Regenerative Agriculture Program and the Regional Agricultural Landcare Facilitator program. This visit will take place in early July 2022

Communications and community engagement for this period

The RALF worked on promoting:

- federal grant opportunities including the Future Drought Fund, [SA Drought Hub](#); and
- the *Pest Plant and Animal Control Masterclass* for landholders and community members, held in Arno Bay in June by the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA), supported by National Parks and Wildlife Services and EP Landscape Board.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

During the next period the RALF will focus on:

- promoting the Regenerative Agriculture Program Small Grants opportunities for '*Demonstrating the use of mixed species to increase soil health*';
- supporting the Sustainable Agriculture Officer with promotion and coordination of upcoming events for 2022; and
- supporting sixteen Ag Bureaus and farmer groups with crop walks or sticky beak days over the late winter/spring period, as well attending these events.

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 soli cover. Through engaging farming systems groups and individual farmers to develop paddock based demonstrations 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

- Three more small grants for demonstrations were approved for the 2022 winter season, bringing the total number of demonstration sites established in 2022 to eight.
- There have been some good monitoring reports submitted from the small grant participants for the 2021-2022 season, which given the diversity of approaches taken, makes interpretation challenging, but with all the logistical challenges of the last 12 months, is a credit to the participants.

Restoring soil pH project

- Workshops planned for the 4th quarter were delayed due to the storm impacts in the target area (Kimba) earlier in the year. However, planning has already started for the monitoring component of the program, as well as for an Acid Soils Forum. We have commenced discussions with different presenters about the material that might be appropriate for this forum.

- The Multi-species Pasture and Cover Crop Workshop held at Yallunda Flat on 21 June was well attended (20 people) and received. The workshop was held following requests from farmers that they would like to hear and share about how to better use multi-species to deliver production and land protection goals. We heard from local and interstate speakers (over zoom) and from the experience in the room.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Farmers Connect EP issue number 16 was distributed in May 2022. We included an article on acid soils and liming, which hopefully will continue to keep the topic on farmers' management radar.
- Two new local demonstration site case studies were produced and uploaded to the Board's website; one on multi-species pastures in highly sloping sites (Colman, Tumby Bay) (available [here](#)) and the other on improving sub-surface acidity (Turvey, Greenpatch) (available [here](#)). These case studies are important way of sharing learnings from demonstration sites with the farming community. In addition to providing information on how these farmers have tackled site specific problems, they provide information on key learnings which can be transferred to other sites.
- The multi-species workshop was promoted through a [media release](#), as well as on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Assistance will be provided for the monitoring of small grant sites, particularly the sites newly established.
- A plan will be developed for the allocation of the final multi-species small grants, with the option to run an event promoting these sorts of practices being considered.



Photo 2: Multi-species Pasture and Cover Crop Workshop held at Yallunda Flat, 21st June 2022



Photo 3: Organised small discussion groups at the Multi-species Workshop at Yallunda Flat – participants were asked to 'walk and talk' following an information session, to discuss what they heard and how this might apply to their own situations

Severe weather response – Significant rain events January 2022

In the aftermath of the significant rain events in late January 2022, which caused severe damage across north eastern Eyre Peninsula, the EP Landscape Board recognised the need to provide dedicated resources to support landholders with their flood recovery efforts. Tim Breuer was appointed Severe Weather Recovery Coordinator, and has since been directing efforts to provide support to landholders impacted by the floods.

Program highlights this period

- A grant has been awarded to Karinya Ag as part of the Grassroots Grants Program, Severe Weather Recovery Grants. The grant was awarded to assist with a program set up by Karinya Ag to control weeds across the farming businesses, which have had increased pest plant emergence and spread since the January extreme rainfall event. The grant will be used to purchase extra spot spraying equipment which will supplement existing weed control activities.
- Weed identification services and best practice control advice has been provided to landholders who have had some unexpected weeds pop up in areas not usually seen. The extra soil moisture seen as a result of the huge rainfall in January has produced higher than normal amounts of weeds emergence and has resulted in much more effort required to control weeds both at broadacre scale as well as on roadsides and reserves.
- Of the funding allocated by the EP Landscape Board for support to landholders affected by the severe rainfall event, \$20,000 has been allocated to extend the National Landcare Program (NLP) funded [Overcoming the Rising Degradation of Mallee Seeps on Eastern Eyre Peninsula](#) project for a further 12 months. It was decided that due to the large rainfall event it was likely that some emerging seeps, as well as some existing seeps may be more likely to develop as moisture from the rain event moves through the soils over the next six to twelve months resulting in a worsening of seeps in the affected area.

Extending the monitoring and management of the trial sites will provide further data and management options as well as give further indication as to the effectiveness of treatments trialled at the demonstration sites. There will also be further opportunity to extend this knowledge and practice to landholders and to help build knowledge and capacity of industry professionals in the assessment and management of Mallee seeps.



Photo 4:

African Lovegrass and other summer grasses have been prevalent since the January rainfall event. It is expected that further weed issues will arise during spring.

- A grant has been provided to successful applicant AIR EP for the provision of soils technical advice to severe weather affected farmers on Eastern EP. As a result of the severe weather event in January many farms have suffered from erosion, soil nutrient leaching, changed soil characterisation, pooled water and soil deposition. While some issues have been rectified and others managed with short term fixes, it is likely that many other soils issues will arise, and/or existing issues with short term fixes will need further attention and may require further input from technical experts in the near future. This program will enable farmers to access technical advice and on-farm visits to assist with planning and remediating soils issues arising from the extreme event.

Support will also be available to landholders to plan and conduct extensive soil testing on their properties in an effort to gauge how much nutrient has been lost and where and how to best address this issue.

This service will also provide a point of contact for storm affected farmers within the targeted areas and be a conduit to enable the sharing of resources and information direct to farmers, as well as linking farmers into other industry or government services that are available to support them, when required (e.g. landscape officers for pest and weed control advice etc.).

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Three EP extreme weather community recovery group meetings were attended during this period. The group has been set up to ensure that through a multi-agency approach, all of the issues arising from the severe weather event have been identified, that the most suitably equipped agencies can provide support for affected landholders, and to ensure that resources are allocated appropriately and that no duplication of work occurs.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Monitoring and management of Mallee seep trial sites will be continued, and extension activities will be planned and delivered.
- The Severe Weather Recovery Coordinator will continue to attend and actively participate in the EP extreme weather community recovery group.
- We will continue to work with landholders on pest plant and animal control needs arising from the extreme rainfall event.

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

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.*
- *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 sections, and impact-causing natives** 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 on the Eyre Peninsula, and links to the EP landscape board pest management plans can be found [here](#).*

Program highlights this period

- For the management of priority pest plants, district action plans are developed annually to guide the delivery of works that will support achieving the aims of our regional pest plant management plans. Staff undertook the “evaluation of success” for some of the district 2021 annual action plans for pest and weed management. This has helped staff define what was done well and what needs improvement.
- In conjunction with conducting these evaluations, we are also working to establish ways to better evaluate the impact of our work. We are currently in the process of adopting a new set of tools (app based) to improve our capture of data related to pest plant management, including survey effort or extent, pest plant presence / absence, and treatment works.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- All SA landscape boards collaborate to achieve statewide outcomes with respect to pest plant and animal control. As part of this collaboration, an [article](#) about statewide pest plants was developed and published collectively by all SA landscape boards, and was promoted on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

- We do extensive media work, mainly on social media platforms, to increase community awareness about priority pest plants and animals in the EP landscape region. This quarter, some of the pest plant species we focussed on included:
 - Buffel Grass and White Weeping Broom ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#));
 - African Boxthorn ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#));
 - Italian Buckthorn, also known as *Rhamnus* ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)); and
 - Bridal Veil ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)).

We have also had some focus on rabbits, as rabbit numbers have been high with good vegetation after good summer rains. Media included a social media post about reporting feral rabbits and contacting us for control options ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)), and a video of a rabbit warren blaster in action was shared ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)) to promote a masterclass on controlling pests, held in Arno Bay in June.



Photo 5: Buffel Grass



Photo 6: White Weeping Broom



Photo 7: African Boxthorn



Photo 8: Italian Buckthorn (*Rhamnus*)



Photo 9: Bridal Veil

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- We will continue to progress writing annual action plans tailored for each district and evaluating success of additional 2021 annual action plans. Plans for these priority species; wild dogs, Buffel Grass, Feral Deer and Feral Goats will be reviewed and updated.
- We will be evaluating the efficacy of the new data collection tools, and using the additional data collected to start developing report cards on the delivery of our pest plant management 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

- The Board engaged with other partners and participated in two of *Kangaroo Partnership Project* workshops. This project brings together the range of parties interested in discussing and progressing practical and innovative approaches that have the potential to optimise kangaroo management in South Australia.

Biodiversity

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

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

Eastern District

Beach nesting birds

- A **Beach Nesting Bird class** was held at the Cleve Area School to introduce year 4/5 students to beach nesting birds found in the local area. The workshop was presented by a Cleve landscape officer, with 52 students in attendance, two teachers and two student support officers.

The session introduced the students to beach nesting birds found on the local coast line including the Hooded Plover. It covered their local adaptations, habitat features and characteristics. Threats to the survival of beach nesting birds were also discussed and the impacts of four wheel drives, beach users, dogs and feral predators were also discussed in depth.

Following the workshop participants were able to identify Hooded Plovers, Sooty Oystercatchers, Pied Oystercatchers and Red-Capped Plovers. The students had developed some knowledge of beach nesting birds, their habitats and characteristics. The students had also developed a comprehensive understanding of how to minimise human impact on beach nesting birds. Students and teachers were

very engaged and it was mentioned that it would be great if we could possibly come back and run the session again with other classes.

- A **Beach Nesting Bird workshop** was held at the Whyalla Library as part of the Library's School Holiday Program. Families had fun playing games and being creative while learning all about Beach Nesting Birds. All children were accompanied by a parent or guardian, thus diversifying the audience. Nine children and five adults attended the session.

A Birdlife beach nesting bird presentation was given and a short video shown at the beginning of the sessions, then interactive activities were undertaken including a craft activity creating a beach nesting bird habitat, beach nesting bird versions of snakes and ladders and chatterbox games.

Participants learned that Oyster Catchers, Red-Capped Plovers and Hooded Plovers live on Eyre Peninsula beaches and breed in the summer months when people use beaches the most. They also learned about the threats of disturbance, trampling, and predators (including our pet pooches), and that sadly only 1 in 10 hooded plover nests hatch, and 1 in 5 chicks survive until they can fly.

Participants were encouraged to help boost the survival of beach nesters by observing 'Sharing the Shoreline' signs, staying below the high water mark, keeping dogs on a leash, giving nesting birds and chicks space, and watching where they walk as eggs and chicks are well camouflaged and hard to see.

Saltmarshes

- **Restoring Hydrological Flows** - a third 900 mm diameter culvert with 5 metre headwalls has been installed under an SA Power Networks' service track at Arno Bay. Work was carried out by independent contractors Schwarz Excavations and Civil Pty Ltd in partnership with SA Power Networks, the owners of the power line service track. The new culvert will increase tidal flow and connection to 13.3 hectares of intertidal and supratidal saltmarsh on the western side of the service



Photo 10: Cleve Area School learn about beach nesting birds, like the hooded plover, that nest on our beaches and how we can help their eggs and chicks survive



Photo 11: Kids had fun creating beach nesting bird habitats as part of School Holiday Workshop at the Whyalla Library

track. This will lead to improved health and diversity in this part of the saltmarsh where tidal connection was previously limited by the number and size of existing culverts.



Figure 1: Arno Bay - a third culvert has been installed under an SA Power Networks service track completing the work of restoring tidal flows to saltmarsh



Photo 12: Arno Bay culvert upgrade, before (left) and after installation (right)

- Ongoing **Sediment Elevation Table (SET) monitoring** was conducted at Eight-Mile Creek for a blue carbon project.

- **Saltmarsh Cleaned-up** – dumped rubbish and marine debris was removed from 26 hectares of saltmarshes at Cowleds Landing Sanctuary Zone (Eight-Mile Creek). Landscape officers partnered with the Whyalla and Districts 4WD Club to fill a large trailer and ute with about four cubic metres of rubbish, which was taken to the Whyalla Waste Transfer Station to be sorted and recycled where possible. Landscape officers hosted a BBQ following the event and shared information about the importance of saltmarshes and STAR project work.



Photo 13: Landscape officers partnered with the Whyalla and Districts 4WD Club to clean-up saltmarshes at the Cowleds Landing Sanctuary Zone (Eight-Mile Creek) area near Whyalla

Western District

Beach nesting birds

- Two EP landscape officers and two volunteers from the Western District attended the **Birdlife Biennial** conference. This gave us the chance to network with volunteers from other regions, learn about monitoring trends and intervention work to improve nesting outcomes for beach nesting birds. A presentation on the intervention work to improve Hooded Plover nesting outcomes and Hooded Plover overwintering surveys being undertaken on the Eyre Peninsula was given by the Acting Operations Manager for the EP Landscape Board.
- To protect the Hooded Plover breeding site at Entrance Beach, with the aim of improving Hooded Plover nesting outcomes, **intervention work** is being undertaken at Venus Bay Conservation. Four Felixer Grooming Traps have been strategically relocated along the inside and outside of the predator proof fence, in an attempt to reduce feral cat numbers. Felixer Grooming Traps are autonomous devices that can specifically target and cull feral cats in the wild. They use rangefinder sensors to distinguish target cats (and foxes) from non-target wildlife, and spray targets with a measured dose of poison. Cats, being fastidious groomers, can be expected to lick enough of that poison from their fur to ensure death.
- **Overwintering surveys** at Lake Newland, Lake Hamilton and Seagull Lake were undertaken during June, to monitor where Hooded Plovers are sheltering and feeding during wild winter weather. Ten Hooded Plovers, including two juveniles, were observed at Lake Newland, and eight, including one juvenile, were observed at Lake Hamilton. None were found at Seagull Lake. Data collected during these surveys provides valuable habitat information and a glimpse into where the Hooded Plovers may be gathering during exceptionally high tides and cold, windy weather when beaches are inaccessible. To add value to the overwintering surveys, all other wetland and shorebirds observed are also counted, and these records are provided to BirdLife Australia. All data will ultimately be entered into the [Biological Database of South Australia](#) (BDBSA) (promoted on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)).



Photo 14: Hooded Plover adult and juvenile, observed at Lake Hamilton during overwintering surveys



Photo 15: Volunteer at Lake Newland conducting Hooded Plover overwintering surveys



Photo 16: EP Landscape Board team and volunteer, braving the cold to conduct hooded Plover overwintering survey at Lake Hamilton

Saltmarshes

- **Revegetation** of degraded areas of temperate saltmarsh near the Venus Bay Township was undertaken. This revegetation work was designed to also function as a trial for determining the impact of different conditions on plant survival and growth rates. Samphire tubestock were planted over 25 hectares, with plantings strategically located in varying soil types, topography and salinity zones. We will monitor the rate of success in contrasting conditions, and this will help us design future plantings.

A second samphire planting event was undertaken in the Acraman Creek Conservation Park with assistance from Aboriginal Rangers from the Far West Aboriginal Corporation. Tubestock was planted over 30 hectares.

- **Pest animal control** was undertaken via 1080 rabbit baiting at Seagull Lake and The Spit near Streaky Bay, to minimise rabbit population numbers surrounding the samphire. Rabbit control strategically targeted active warrens and hot spot areas identified from diggings and scats. Minimising rabbit activity assists the fragile temperate samphire habitat to be at optimum health. Fox and African Boxthorn control was also undertaken at The Spit.



Photo 17: Revegetation using samphire tubestock near the township of Venus Bay



Photo 18: Undertaking rabbit control at The Spit, free feeding baited oats around active warrens and "rabbit hot spots"

- **African Boxthorn control** was undertaken at the Blancheport Samphire area near Streaky Bay, as a follow up to Gazania and African Boxthorn control undertaken in September 2021. African Boxthorn were controlled using a cut and swab method over 33 hectares, whilst Gazanias were treated along the roadside edge with foliar spray. A high kill rate has been experienced.

It is important for us to control these species, as both outcompete native species, and their spread could result in loss of diversity in native vegetation. Gazanias form dense mats which exclude native plants, and with their deep rhizome root system they outcompete native plants for nutrients and water. African Boxthorn forms dense impenetrable thickets which also exclude native plants. Removal of these two priority weed species from these sites helps improve vegetation condition and ecosystem function.

- Far West Coast Rangers worked with us to complete on **pest plant control** and **marine debris removal** at Shelly Beach, near Ceduna. The removal of rubbish and pest plants from the saltmarsh area will allow this threatened ecological community to grow and function properly (promoted on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)).
- **Monitoring outcomes** of our work is important. To understand the effectiveness of, and long term outcomes from, works undertaken under the STAR project to protect and restore threatened saltmarsh communities, we monitor all saltmarsh sites where work has been undertaken. Many vegetation monitoring and survey techniques would require us to walk through the vegetation, risking damaging what we have been working hard to restore. We are therefore instead using drones to monitor saltmarsh recovery. Taking drone imagery of sites at regular intervals allows us to observe changes in vegetation over time, without the risk of damaging any plants by walking through these sensitive areas.

During this last quarter landscape officers surveyed a number of saltmarshes on the west coast of Eyre Peninsula, including the saltmarsh at Seagull Lake, which is showing good signs of recovery, after being ripped twice and then fenced off to prevent vehicle access.



Photo 19: Cat cage set by contractor amongst coastal bushes with Cape Euler (Hooded Plover nesting territory monitored and managed under the STAR project) in background.



Photo 20: Hooded Plover overwintering survey team at Greenly East lakes. Thanks to all our volunteers who braved the cold and wet.

Southern District

Beach nesting birds

- Fortnightly monitoring of seven Hooded Plover nesting territories in the southern district, was completed by landscape officers and volunteers for the 2021/22 nesting season. We were ecstatic to learn that 23 Hooded Plovers fledged from nesting territories in the southern district over the nesting season. Six of these fledglings were from nesting territories monitored and managed through the STAR project.
- A coordinated fox baiting program on private properties adjacent to more than 15 km of coastline south of Tumby Bay was completed. This program benefitted six known Hooded Plover nesting territories in this area, including two priority nesting territories which are monitored for the STAR project.
- A feral cat trapping program was undertaken by an experienced contractor (Photo 19) along a 15 km section of coastline south of Tumby Bay at the end of June, prior to the start of the Hooded Plover breeding season from late July. Trapping intensity was increased using 32 cages over 10 nights when weather was cold and wet. Four female feral cats were caught, reducing the breeding population of cats in the area and reducing the risk of predation from cats on several breeding pairs of Hooded Plovers.
- Hooded Plover overwintering surveys were completed at Lake Hamilton, Lake Malata, Lake Greenly, Greenly East lakes and Sleaford Mere in the Southern district. Six volunteers were engaged to assist landscape officers with surveys. Hooded Plovers were observed at all survey areas in the southern district, including a flock of 20 juveniles and adults together at the Greenly East lakes. We were very excited to find this flock, which is the largest found in the region during the two separate overwintering surveys (2020 and 2022) conducted to date. A total of 55 Hooded Plovers were observed across all survey areas in the region.

Saltmarshes

- Follow-up rabbit control over more than 250 ha was completed in coastal saltmarsh areas at two sites near Tumby Bay. A baiting program using poisoned oats (Photo 21 and Photo 22) was undertaken by staff and followed up with fumigation and closing warrens (Photo 23). This pest animal work reduces grazing and disturbance pressure caused by rabbits on the coastal saltmarsh ecosystem and buffering native vegetation.



Photo 21: Poison oat trail

Photo 22: Landscape officers laying poison oat trail at Second Creek

Photo 23:
Landscape officers
fumigating rabbit warrens
at Second Creek



- Eighty five hectares of coastal saltmarsh and buffering vegetation was surveyed north of Tumby Bay and African Boxthorn (*Lycium ferocissimum*) were controlled by local contractors (Photo 24). In the saltmarsh zone, the pest plants were cut and swabbed to minimize off-target damage in this sensitive area. In the coastal buffer zone, foliar spray was used as the area was more open and there was therefore less risk to off-target species. In total, 762 African Boxthorns were controlled, reducing this threat and providing improved integrity to this threatened coastal saltmarsh vegetation community.
- Revegetation work was completed at Salt Creek (Photo 25) and Kellidie Bay Conservation Park, to help restore native vegetation, providing a buffer to areas of threatened coastal saltmarsh. Plants included Acacia and Eucalypt species from a local grower, as well as Melaleuca and She-oaks grown by the Lower Eyre Coastcare Association.



Photo 24: Sprayed African Boxthorns in saltmarsh coastal buffer zone north of Tumby Bay



Photo 25: Contractor placing a protective tree guard around a new plant at Salt Creek, southern Eyre Peninsula

Local government engagement for this period

Western District

- Discussions were held with the District Council of Elliston regarding planting at Venus Bay.

Southern District

- Staff have commenced discussions with the Tumby Bay District Council to develop a project to rehabilitate and manage the saltmarsh near Tumby Bay township.
- Staff worked with the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula to seek approvals to install a Pix Stix monitoring post at the Tulka Creek mouth. [Pix Stix](#) enable members of the community to take a photo of the target area and forward it to the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board via email or text. The result is a series of photos taken by the community of the same location over time to monitor recovery. These images will be loaded onto the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board's [Pix Stix website](#).



Photo 26:
Outlook from Pix Stix at Tulka during a high tide

The Tulka Creek Saltmarsh provides an important link between land and sea, protecting the coastline from erosion and filtering runoff from the land before it enters the marine environment. Native plants growing here provide important habitat and feeding ground for juvenile fish as well as internationally important migratory and resident shorebird species.

Communications and community engagement for this period

Region

- A [statewide Landscape SA story](#) about five important South Australian landscapes was shared and promoted on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). The temperate coastal saltmarshes of the Eyre Peninsula were featured in the story. These saltmarshes, which are listed as a nationally Threatened Ecological Community, play a vital role in protecting our shorelines, act as blue-carbon sinks, and are important fish nurseries and bird habitat. We are working to protect and restore these systems through the STAR project.
- As usual we have been sharing the news about our STAR project with the community. Some of the stories included:
 - A [media release](#) about the saltmarsh clean-ups and revegetation was promoted [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and resulted in media interviews with [ABC Eyre Peninsula](#) @44.50mins and [Spencer Gulf Nightly News](#) @7.55mins, a [5cc news item online](#) and radio bulletins, and a [Stock Journal article](#).
 - Our posts about the last known Hooded Plover nesting attempt for the 2021-2022 breeding season at a beach near Coffin Bay ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)) reached more than 1,000 people.
 - Media release (STAR project): [Hooded Plover winter surveys](#) underway to learn more about them. Sent to media, loaded on our website, promoted on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Spencer Gulf Nightly News story on June 17 at [3:40 minute mark](#). Port Lincoln Times [article](#). [5cc news](#). EP Advocate article in newspaper (June 23 edition).
 - We have been encouraging the public to report sightings of Hooded Plovers, on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

Western District

- Discussion were held with Kenny Venus Progress Association regarding samphire tube stock planting at Venus Bay.
- Hooded Plover information signs were installed at Sheringa beach and Mount Camel beach.
- As part of a shorebird and coastal habitat workshop series, a workshop was held for students at Streaky Bay. One of the activities included making a giant Hooded Plover (promoted on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#)).

Photo 27:
This life-size Hooded Plover model was created by family daycare children in Streaky Bay during a shorebird and coastal habitat workshop



Southern District

- A presentation was delivered to 31 members of the Southern Eyre Bird Club in Port Lincoln. The EP Landscape Boards achievements through the STAR project were shared, focussing on
 - Predator Control intervention work to help nesting Hooded Plovers at priority sites on Eyre Peninsula.
 - Winter inland Hooded Plover Survey work.
 - Nest site intervention to improve breeding outcomes for Hooded Plovers
- Hooded Plover trail markers have been added to the Investigator Trail in the Lincoln National Park as part of a collaboration with the National Parks and Wildlife service. The markers alert the public when they are entering a known Hooded Plover nesting territory (beach). These have been installed at six known nesting territories in the park.
- A *Shorebird Flock* pop up display was installed on the Port Lincoln foreshore as part of the [SALT festival](#). This was a collaborative project with the Lower Eyre Coastcare Association (Photo 30). In addition to the flock where people could walk amongst it and see different shorebirds, Karen Carr (artist) from Squashed Cocky shared her talents by drawing some amazing beach nesting birds along the concrete wall adjacent to the pop up flock display, encouraging others to also add their drawings alongside. Information on beach nesting birds was shared with those who visited, with take home bags available at each session. A colouring competition was also held as part of the event. The event was shared [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



Photo 28: Southern Eyre Bird Club members at a presentation about the STAR project



Photo 29: Hooded Plover trail marker installed at MacLaren Point north beach showing the QR code linked to the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board's STAR project web page



Photo 30:
Visitors to the pop up flock installed on the Port Lincoln foreshore

Upcoming priorities for the next period

Region

- Fortnightly Hooded Plover nesting territory monitoring for the 2022-2023 breeding season will commence in late July 2022 at priority monitoring sites

Eastern District

- Annual Winter National Shorebird Counts will be undertaken at the Whyalla Saltpans, Franklin Harbour and Lucky Bay.
- Eight-Mile Creek and Murripi Beach way-finding signage, beach access, and saltmarsh vegetation protection and interpretive signs projects are planned.
- African Boxthorn and fox control will be undertaken at Franklin Harbour Conservation Park, and at Arno Bay in saltmarsh buffer areas, where rabbit control work will also be implemented.

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 Whyalla and 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. Funding for the project has been secured from multiple sources. Most recently \$500,000 was acquired from the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) "Parks 2025" initiative and \$710,000 has been secured from the [Landscapes SA Landscape Priority Fund](#).

Program highlights this period

- Staff have continued to work with the Eyes on Eyre Working Group and coastal councils to help them deliver camping node infrastructure upgrades and the online booking system using the \$500,000 acquired from the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) "Parks 2025" initiative. Agreements have been signed with the District Councils of Elliston, Franklin Harbour and Lower Eyre Peninsula for works at Walker's Rock, Point Gibbon and Fishery Bay respectively. Works include sheeting of campsites, fencing to exclude vehicles from sensitive areas and revegetation activities.
- **"Eyes on Eyre – restoring the health of Eyre Peninsula's coastal environment"**
 - Staff started the delivery of the Landscapes SA Landscape Priorities Fund project titled "Eyes on Eyre – restoring the health of Eyre Peninsula's coastal environment". The \$710,000 project will be delivered over three years. The project will mainly focus on campground improvement works to create a minimum and consistent standard across the region, while addressing environmental issues. Works are expected to include elements such as track rationalisation, revegetation, targeted control of pests and weeds, and installation of regionally consistent signage.
 - An expression of interest opportunity was provided to eligible councils to apply for up to \$200,000 per site to undertake works. The application period closed on the 12 May 2022. Applications were received from the City of Whyalla, the District Council of Cleve, the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula, and the District Council of Streaky Bay. Negotiations are ongoing to finalise what activities will be funded but this process should conclude in July 2022. There will likely be a second funding call in 2022.



Photo 31: Detailed concept plan for extension of Walker's Rock campground to include approximately 35 new sites. (plan developed for RDAEP and the District Council of Elliston by Birdseye : Studios).

Local government engagement for this period

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

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Staff will continue to deliver the Landscapes SA Priorities Fund project and assist with delivery of the funding acquired from DEW which is being managed by RDAEP.

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

- We continue to attend the cross-agency Blue Carbon Coordination Group. This Group includes representatives from the Department for Environment and Water and, all Landscape Boards and SARDI. It is a valuable forum where we share information about the latest work being done in the state in this area, and resources and tools to support work in the blue carbon projects sphere.
- We are collaborating with the District Council of Franklin Harbour, Department of Infrastructure and Transport, DEW and the Coastal Protection Board on a blue carbon scoping project at Franklin Harbour. The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board and Coastal Protection Board have committed funding to commission a feasibility study for the project.

Stage one of the project is some baseline scoping to look at the possible upgrade of the culvert passing under Lincoln Highway at Franklin Harbour to improve tidal connection to the wetlands located landward of the highway. This would result in improvement in condition of the wetland and also increase in the extent of mangroves, with the resultant increase in the amount of blue carbon captured in the mangroves and wetland. The feasibility study will entail detailed survey and hydraulic modelling of the area to get a better understanding of the extent to which the mangroves and wetland would increase with improved hydraulic connectivity to the ocean.

Local government engagement for this period

- Franklin Harbour District Council have been engaged about the culvert upgrade project proposal and blue carbon project.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- We will continue to attend the cross-agency Blue Carbon Coordination Group.
- The first meeting of the Cowell Causeway Blue Carbon Scoping Project Steering Committee will be held.

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

- One project from Round 3 has been started and will be completed over the next quarter. When completed, under this project 'Glengyle and Oleo Salt Creek Line Clean Out' approximately 4.5 km of existing deep and shallow drainage will be cleaned out and watercourse two crossings will be improved. Some of the drainage in this area utilises road gutters and these will also be cleaned out and improved. There are a series of culverts that will also be cleaned



Photo 32: Completed drainage works in the Lake Wangary Catchment



Photo 33: Completed drainage works in the Lake Wangary Catchment

out, relayed or replaced, with some of this being done in conjunction with additional works from the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula.

Road verges in some places have been built up with earth from road grading, blocking surface flow from paddocks to the roadside drains. Sections of these built up earth mounds will be removed to reinstate flow from adjacent paddocks.

It is anticipated that the completed project will help the drainage system to flow better and help alleviate salinity and waterlogging issues.

- Three round 3 projects have been completed with the majority of works for these projects anticipated to improve the flow in drains and help alleviate salinity and waterlogging issues. Completed activities include cleaning out of existing drains, installing and extending new shallow drains to existing drains, cleaning out, relaying or replacing culverts and widening and deepening of existing drains. The projects completed are:
 - Project 1 – *Giddings Drain Cleanout* – Approximately 1.9 km of existing deep and shallow drainage was cleaned out and one crossing was improved. The drainage system has been improved to better facilitate drainage from a section of the property that has a history of salinity and waterlogging issues, which in recent years has been getting worse.
 - Project 2 – *Sarunic Drain Cleanout* – Approximately 5.5 km of existing shallow drainage was cleaned out and one crossing was improved.
 - Project 3 – *Pillana Downs Drainage Upgrade* – Approximately 2.5 km of existing shallow drainage was cleaned out and approximately 1.5 km of new shallow drainage was installed and connected to the existing drains. Two sections of this property are extremely flat and poorly drained, the improved drainage system will help to alleviate salinity and waterlogging issues.
- Round 3 of the Cummins Wanilla Basin Drainage Grants was opened late last year and will remain open until February 2023. There has however been continued low interest in the grant. More advertising and media in spring this year is hoped to generate some higher interest and more applications for the funding. Even though a significant effort has been made over the life of the project to engage with landowners to get involved, we still do not have an understanding of why there has been minimal interest in the grant scheme.



Photo 34: *Cleanout of a road culvert and drain in the Lake Wangary Catchment*



Photo 35: *Cleanout of a road culvert in the Lake Wangary Catchment*

Local government engagement for this period

- The District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula were engaged about being involved in the grant scheme and have indicated that a couple of project applications are likely to be submitted.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- We will continue to work with the Cummins Wanilla Streamcare Group to deliver this project.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Work to increase uptake of the funding program by the community.
- Respond to enquiries about the project.
- Assist the community in project planning and grant funding applications. .
- Assess applications.
- Monitor and work proactively with grantees on delivery of their approved projects.

Biodiversity Monitoring Program

As part of our Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) plan, the Board established the Biodiversity Monitoring Program in 2015-2016. Under this program 300 sites across the region are being monitored on a ten year rotational basis, using the Bushland Condition Monitoring methodology. 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

- All data from the spring 2021 Biodiversity Monitoring Program surveys has now been entered into the state-wide database by Nature Conservation Society of SA staff. As a result we now have 200 sites across EP that monitor change in resource condition and an additional 100 sites that monitor a change in response to on ground works. These 300 sites will now each be monitored every 10 years on a rolling schedule.
- Planning for which sites need monitoring in Spring 2022 has begun.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Planning for sites that need to be monitored in Spring 2022 will continue.

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

- Overabundant herbivore (kangaroo), rabbit, fox and cat control was undertaken on a monthly basis by two qualified contractors across the fire ground. 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 ceased in June 2022 with the project finishing and all funding expended. A final report has been written for the project which will be shared on our website.
- 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. These works have now been completed.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Ongoing communication is occurring with four land managers affected by the fires.
- There was a [media release](#) about the project in May 2022. This resulted in two radio and one television interview, with one story on the Spencer Gulf Nightly News on May 25 ([story at 2:30 mark](#)) and a live interview with ABC EP drive program on 24th May, as well as an article in the [Stock Journal](#). It was also promoted on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- The project is now complete.

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) (now Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)). [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 2021, Board staff assisted ten farmers with completion and submission of applications to the Australian Government for the *Carbon + Biodiversity Pilot*. Nine of these farmers made it through to the second stage of the pilot and received offers from DAWE to undertake their proposed works. After considering the offers, only three of the farmers are taking their offers up. Board staff are still assisting the three farmers through the processes required for initiating their projects, including registration with the Emissions Reduction Fund. Two farmers have completed their site registration with the Emissions Reduction Fund. They have now started their revegetation works.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Staff have been assisting farmers in relation to this project.
- A [Media release](#) in June 2022 about this project resulted in an interview with ABC EP; and EP Advocate article on June 15; and Spencer Gulf News story (at [2:15 min mark](#)).

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- We will continue to support the three farmers with project delivery.

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) (now Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)). 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.

Program highlights this period

- In December staff undertook on-site assessments of proposed projects short-listed by the Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. Assessments included verification of the vegetation type and assessment of vegetation condition. Information collected was forwarded to the Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. Staff continue to assist some farmers answer clarification questions from the Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (now Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)).

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Staff have been assisting farmers in relation to this project.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Staff will assist any farmers who are made offers from the Australian Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment (now Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)).

Biodiversity Credit Exchange (BCE) Program

This program is being delivered by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) and the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board on behalf of the Native Vegetation Council (NVC). This program gives eligible land managers access to funding to manage and protect areas of native vegetation on their land to generate biodiversity credits. For more information about the program refer to our website [here](#).

Program highlights this period

- The agreement with the Native Vegetation Council for the EP Landscape Board to deliver this project was signed on 2 May 2022. Board staff started planning work to deliver this project in early June 2022. This has included preparing media release information, application guidelines and an expression of interest form in conjunction with DEW staff on behalf of NVC. Applicants can register their interest in between 1 - 27 of July 2022.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- The [media release](#) about the program was made public on 30 June 2022 followed by some social media ([Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)). A radio interview was also undertaken by staff.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- In between 1-27 of July we will assist possible applicants with any questions they may have about the program. Then in August/September we will conduct site assessments for priority applications.

Community

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Community at the centre and actively engaged in landscape management</i>	
Review and improvement of the citizen science program ; 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 Grassroots Grants program	
<i>Effective decision-making and Local Government engagement</i>	
Effective leadership and governance of the Board and its business, to meet legislative requirements, including:	
Board meeting highlights	
Referrals (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

- We completed a project to have all data, from all our citizen science projects entered into the [Biological Databases of South Australia](#) (BDBSA). This data is now available to the public through [NatureMaps](#), and will also become available through [ALA](#), the Atlas of Living Australia. More than 3,000 data records were entered under this project. We wish to thank everyone who has submitted sightings to us through our web portals. Please keep reporting your sightings. Communications and community engagement for this period
- We promoted our citizen science program on a number of occasions, including these posts on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
- Some of the highest tides of the year, king tides, occurred on the Eyre Peninsula in May and June. We encouraged the public to report these tides through our citizen science [King Tides project](#) ([Facebook and Twitter](#)). This resulted in an ABC EP interview for news stories on June 15 and a story on [5cc news page](#) and [Facebook](#).

Six reports and with photos of king tide sightings were received from the community, including the report and photos (See below) from Ralph Jones about the Arno Bay boardwalk.

Thank you to all community members who submitted photos. These photos will help us develop a long term record of the impact and levels of King Tides on the Eyre Peninsula.

- During National Volunteering Week, we shared [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) posts about the benefits of volunteering, as well as a [statewide Landscape SA story](#) about this. If you are keen to volunteer with us to help protect and manage our landscapes, please contact your nearest EP Landscape Board office, or reach us on our email at EPLB.Admin@sa.gov.au.



Photo 36: Photo of King Tide at Arno Bay boardwalk submitted by Ralph Jones. Strong water flow rates and wave action which had not previously affected this back dune area were occurring.

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 Business Plan Achievement Reports](#).

Program highlights this period

2021-2022 Grassroots Grants

- Majority of the 2021-2022 Grassroots Grants projects were successfully completed during the fourth quarter. Of the fourteen grants initially awarded, eleven projects are now complete and one project was cancelled. The contract period for the remaining two grants has been extended as unforeseen conditions prevented completion of on ground works. Works completed under the grants ranged from on-ground works such as revegetation, track rationalisation and pest plant management, to delivery of capacity building workshops. For details of the completed projects please visit our district [Business Plan Achievement Reports](#) for this quarter.

2022-2023 Grassroots Grants and Storm Recovery Grants

- The Board's open call for applications for the 2022-2023 Grassroots Grants program closed on 22 June, with 13 applications received, valued at \$141,218 (GST exclusive).
- These applications were assessed against defined criteria. The final pool of recommended grants includes 11 applications valued at \$102,218 (GST exclusive), with a further \$137,480 third party contribution (in-kind or other funding).
- Nine of the successful applications are from the community sector, three 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.
- During the 2022-2023 Grassroots Grants application round, applications could also be made for [Storm Recovery Grants](#). These grants, of up to \$5,000, were available to landholders or farming groups impacted by the severe weather events of January 2022. A single application for these grants was received, with the application coming from the Eastern District.

The grant application was successful, and a grant has been awarded to Karinya Ag to assist with a program to control weeds across farming businesses which have seen increased weed emergence and spread since the January extreme rainfall event. The grant will be used to purchase extra spot spraying equipment which will supplement existing weed control activities.

Local government engagement for this period

- Grassroots Grants have been awarded to one local government project from the Wudinna District Council, *Pildappa Rock Recreation Reserve Revegetation Project*.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Successful applications were [announced](#) on 6th June. ABC EP interviewed the Chair of the EP Landscape Board, Mark Whitfield, about the grants for news bulletins, and the media release was picked up by the [Port Lincoln Times](#), [Stock Journal](#) and [EP Advocate](#).

Table 1: EP Landscape Board Grassroots Grants - 2022-23 successful applicants

	Project Title	Organisation	Amount Funded
1	Raising weed awareness at Ungarra	Ungarra & Districts Hall & Progress Association	\$5,000
2	Big Swamp Wetlands Citizen Science Project	Big Swamp Community Centre Incorporated for the Big Swamp Conservation Group	\$5,000
3	Creating a Butterfly Garden and Trail at Navigator College	Navigator College	\$5,000
4	Protecting coastal sand dunes at Carrow Wells	Port Neill Progress Association	\$15,000
5	Lower Eyre Peninsula Home School Landcare Workshops	Lower Eyre Peninsula Home Schoolers Group Sponsored by the Lower Eastern Eyre Peninsula Landcare Management Committee Inc.	\$4,920
6	<i>Acacia whiteleyana</i> re-population	Tumby Bay Area School	\$3,698
7	Restoration of Wedge Island – Stage 1: The thin edge of the Wedge.	Wedge Island Management Association Inc.	\$15,000
8	Vegetation protection and rehabilitation, Greenly Beach	Lower Eyre Coastcare	\$15,000
9	Weed control and vegetation protection and rehabilitation, Coffin Bay Foreshore	Lower Eyre Coastcare	\$8,500
10	Pildappa Rock Recreation Reserve Revegetation Project	Wudinna District Council	\$15,000
11	Protecting Our Soils Through Improved Grazing Management – Part 2	WoTL (Women Together Learning) Ltd	\$10,100
			\$101,485

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Ongoing support will be provided for grant recipients.
- A report card summarising the outcomes of the 2021-2022 round of grants will be produced over the next two quarters.

2021-2022 Grassroots Grants – Regional Projects

Entering the significant environmental benefit offsets market - A case study

There are numerous unrealised opportunities for Eyre Peninsula land managers to enter the Significant Environmental Benefit (SEB) Offset market and gain improved natural resource management outcomes and diversified income streams. Through this project, the Nature Foundation will develop and publicise a case study explaining the practical details of establishing a SEB offset site including financial implications which have, to date, proven to be a significant barrier to entry into this market. This information will provide impetus for Eyre Peninsula land managers to investigate these opportunities on their land.

Program highlights this period

- Staff have assisted the Nature Foundation and a farmer successfully establish a 70 ha SEB offset site near Coult, and have developed this as a case study which can be shared with other. This is an excellent outcome. The case study has been completed.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- There was one social media post describing the project.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Although the project is now complete, we will be doing some media around the case study to inform other land managers.

Leadership and governance

Board meeting highlights

Program highlights this period

- The Board held one Board meeting during this quarter in Elliston on 3 May 2022. Highlights from the meeting included:
 - K Hollamby, Flood Recovery Coordinator for PIRSA, provided a presentation in relation to the flood recovery efforts on EP.
 - G Neave from TSA Management and S Klein of SA Water, provided an update in relation to the desalination project site selection on the Eyre Peninsula.
 - The Board approved the Draft Budget 2022-23 and the Business Plan for the 2022-2023 period. Budget information can be seen in our [2022-23 Business Plan](#). The Plan outlines the programs that the Board will invest in for the next 12 months, to achieve our strategic areas. It includes details of income and expenditure and landscape levy information.

Local government engagement for this period

- Western District staff gave presentations of ongoing work to the District Council of Elliston.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- The Board agenda papers include an overview of all communications and engagement activities for the full quarter.
- Minutes for previous meetings are available on our website [here](#). Minutes for the latest Board meeting will be made available once they are endorsed at the August meeting.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- The next Board meeting is scheduled for 16 August 2022, in Whyalla.

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 five referrals commented on in this period, which included:

- Updating the Water Affecting Activity Control Policy;
- the National Established Weed Priorities Framework;
- Preliminary Advice re the proposed Elliston Community Waste Water Management Scheme;
- the Draft EPBC (Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation) listing assessments for two birds; and
- a proposed Elliston Community Waste Water Management Scheme.

Local government engagement for this period

- District Council of Elliston

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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03 August 2022

T: Port Lincoln 08 8688 3200

Landscape staff based in Port Lincoln providing support for our operations across the Eyre Peninsula

General Manager Eyre Peninsula: Jonathan Clark

Manager **Business Support**: Susan Stovell

Finance Officer: Lynn Smith

Administration and Finance Officer: Phil Rawling

Governance and Administration Officer: Jasmin White

Acting Landscape **Operations** Manager: Liz McTaggart (Streaky Bay Office)

Senior Water Resources Assessment Officer: Dave Cunningham

Manager **Planning and Engagement**: Susan Stovell

Planning and Assessment Officer: Andrew Freeman

Communication and Engagement Officer: Katrina Phelps

Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Officer: Michelle Clanahan

For details of our **Operations Staff** in our Port Lincoln and other offices, please refer to our [Business Plan Achievement Reports](#) for the Southern, Eastern and Western Districts.

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Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board

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