



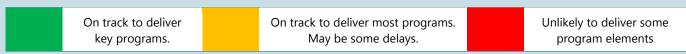
# **About**

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

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

- · 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.



For projects in the Port Lincoln City Council and District Councils of Tumby Bay and Lower Eyre Peninsula areas, further details of our work and programs can be found on the <a href="Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board">Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board</a> website or by contacting **Ben Smith** (*Team Leader, Landscape Operations - Southern District*) on 08 8688 3243.

**Note:** For updates about delivery, in the Southern District, of Regional Projects such as the <u>Regenerative</u> <u>Agriculture Project (RAP)</u> and the <u>Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery (STAR) Project</u> refer to the <u>Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region</u>.

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Sustainable agriculture

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

For updates on our <u>Regenerative Agriculture Project (RAP)</u> and Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator (RALF) services, please refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**.

More information about our sustainable agriculture program, as well as useful information and resources for land managers can be found <u>here</u>.

# **Delivering district level sustainable agriculture services**

### **Program highlights this period**

• Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board (EP Landscape Board or the Board) staff attended the Agricultural Innovation and Research Eyre Peninsula (AIR EP) *Medium Rainfall Research, Development and Extension Committee* meeting. A range of local issues were discussed. The meeting also included a site visit to local properties undertaking crop trials focusing on sowing methods and timing.

### Communications and community engagement for this period

• Free salinity and pH testing of water samples is available to landholders at our Port Lincoln and Tumby Bay offices. This service was promoted on <a href="Twitter">Twitter</a> and <a href="Facebook">Facebook</a>. More information about salinity and pH testing, and water quality guidelines for different uses is available <a href="here">here</a>.

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

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

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

# **Program highlights this period**

### **Pest plants**

**Summer Grasses** (<u>Buffel Grass</u>, <u>Fountain Grass</u>, <u>Feathertop Grasses</u>)

 High rainfall has resulted in germination of these invasive grasses at a number of sites across lower Eyre Peninsula. Landscape staff have been controlling roadside sites, while providing support to landholders around appropriate control methods on private property.

#### **Bridal Veil**

 Landscape officers have undertaken surveys and control of <u>Bridal Veil</u> on roadsides across lower Eyre Peninsula. Priority sites include Green Patch, Coffin Bay and Lake Hamilton. Landholders with known infestations have also been contacted, and follow up compliance work will continue throughout winter. If you have Bridal Veil on your property <u>this video</u> shows how to control it.

#### **Boneseed**

 Landholders with known infestations of <u>Boneseed</u> have been contacted to remind them of their obligations to control this priority pest over the coming months.

### Gorse

 Landscape officers have undertaken surveys and control of <u>Gorse</u> on roadsides across lower Eyre Peninsula. Landholders with known infestations have also been contacted and site visits undertaken, with voluntary compliance achieved from majority of landholders. If you have Gorse on your property <u>this video</u> shows how to control it.



Photo 1: Feathertop Grass on private land



**Photo 2**: Feathertop Grass on roadsides



**Photo 3:** Landscape officers undertaking roadside bridal veil control



**Photo 5:** Gorse in flower at Greenpatch private property



**Photo 4**: Gorse in flower at Greenpatch private property



**Photo 6:**Phina broom at Beras Beach in February

# A healthy white weeping broom at Bergs Beach in February 2022. This plant has since been controlled and is now dead

### **White Weeping Broom**

• Two landholders at Bergs Beach with <u>White Weeping Broom</u> have undertaken voluntary compliance by controlling the plants present. Plants have also been controlled in the coastal crown land.

### **African Boxthorn**

Under the Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery (STAR) Project, 85 hectares of coastal saltmarsh
and buffering vegetation was surveyed north of Tumby Bay and 762 <u>African Boxthorn</u> plants were
controlled by local contractors. For information about this work refer to the STAR Project section in
our <u>Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region</u>.

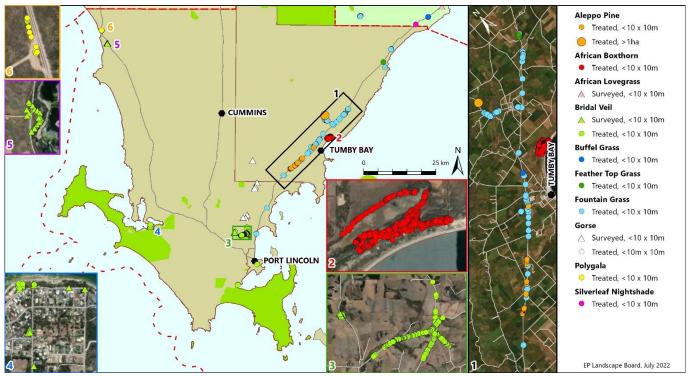


Figure 1: Priority pest plant control for the period 1 April to 30 June 2022

#### **Pest animals**

#### **Rabbits**

- EP landscape officers worked collaboratively with Limestone Coast landscape officers to share knowledge on the latest rabbit control technology, including the use of rodent blasters to assist with warren destruction.
- As part of the STAR Project, follow-up rabbit control was completed over more than 250 ha in coastal saltmarsh areas at two sites near Tumby Bay. A baiting program using poisoned oats was undertaken by staff and followed up with fumigation and closing warrens.

#### **Foxes**

- Landscape officer assisted landholders in ordering and setting up canid pest ejectors, known as CPEs, as an alternative to traditional fox baiting methods on properties across lower Eyre Peninsula. CPEs are considered safe for most non-target species because a certain pull force is required to activate them. A CPE consists of a stake to hold it in the ground, a piston mechanism and a capsule of 1080 solution that sits inside a bait head that is encased in meat to entice a feral predator, such as a wild dog or fox. When the feral predator pulls on the meat, it triggers the piston, which squirts or ejects the 1080 solution into the animal's mouth.
- Also as part of 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.

#### **Feral cats**

A feral cat trapping program was undertaken by an experienced contractor along a 15 km section of
coastline south of Tumby Bay at the end of June, as part of the STAR Project. 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.



Photo 7: Cat cage set by contractor amongst coastal bushes



**Photo 8:** EP landscape officer fumigating rabbit warrens at Second Creek

### Local government engagement for this period

- Landscape officers supported staff and contractors from the City of Port Lincoln to plan a rabbit control program at multiple sites within Port Lincoln. Pindone oats were used and rabbit numbers will be monitored over the coming months.
- Landscape officers met with the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula (DCLEP) to discuss options for weed control on council-managed Crown Land in Coffin Bay. Council committed \$10,000 towards priority weed control for 2022-2023, and this has been further leveraged through a Grassroots Grant with Lower Eyre Coastcare.

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

- Landscape officer met with Port Lincoln Children's Centre (PLCC) to discuss their plan for Bridal Veil control in their parks and reserves this winter.
- With Gorse flowering, and thus easily detectable, we had social media posts (<u>Facebook</u> and <u>Twitter</u>) to spread awareness about this priority weed.

# **Upcoming priorities for the next period**

- Follow up on compliance of landholders with infestations of Bridal Veil and Boneseed.
- Roadside control of Boneseed.
- Rabbit control at priority sites during spring (subject to rainfall and subsequent feed availability).

# **Biodiversity**

### Focus areas and priority programs

**Status** 

#### Protecting and restoring prioritised coastal habitats

Supporting community to undertake coastal management works in line with the Coastal Action Plan

Birdlife Australia's Federally-funded National Landcare Program (NLP) project Protect the Hooded Plover, on the southern Eyre Peninsula

#### Maintain and enhance biodiversity in prioritised ecosystems

Supporting community and landholders to improve the health and condition of threatened ecological communities, native vegetation and threatened species

Implementation of the biodiversity monitoring program

Collaboration with partners to source funding for landscape-scale projects in priority ecosystems. Specific projects underway include:

#### **Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) Pilot**

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

- the Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery (STAR) Project;
- Blue Carbon
- the Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) pilot;

and others.

- Eyes on Eyre;
- the Biodiversity Monitoring Program;

# **Protecting and restoring coastal habitats**

## **Program highlights this period**

#### **Moonlight Bay Sand dunes**

Maintenance of erosion control fencing installed at a sand dune rehabilitation area was maintained

by contractors to ensure the erosion control fencing is functioning correctly. Where required, small repairs were made to enable the fence to continue to capture sand during the winter months. Brush material was also added to a blowout area to supplement hay bales previously installed to increase the area's ability to capture sand.



Contractors repairing fencing at Moonlight Bay

### Communications and community engagement for this period

• An EP Landscape Board volunteer continues to complete maintenance work out at Moonlight Bay, and has completed eight working bees over the past three months managing tree guards, vegetation, collecting and removing litter and weeding the area.

# **Upcoming priorities for the next period**

• Sediment Elevation Table (SET) monitoring will be completed at Tumby Bay in July

# Birdlife Australia's Federally-funded National Landcare Program (NLP) project Protect the Hooded Plover, on the southern Eyre Peninsula

In addition to the Hooded Plover monitoring and conservation work we do under our STAR project, the Board is also contracted by BirdLife Australia to deliver Hooded Plover monitoring and conservation work under their federal-funded NLP <u>Protect the Hooded Plover</u> project. Under this project staff and volunteers monitor an additional eight priority Hooded Plover nesting sites, plan and implement intervention actions at these sites when needed to protect nesting birds and chicks, and help coordinate and deliver the National Hooded Plover Biennial Count for southern Eyre Peninsula.

# **Program highlights this period**

- Fortnightly monitoring of the eight priority Hooded Plover nesting territories monitored under this
  project was completed in April for the 2021-2022 nesting season. Twenty three chicks successfully
  fledged over the nesting season from Hooded Plover nesting territories in the Southern District. This
  was a phenomenal achievement considering how busy the beaches were over summer. Seven of
  these fledglings were from three sites monitored and managed as part of this project.
- Fox control intervention work adjacent to the Black Rocks, Cape Hardy and Bolingbroke south nesting territories was completed. Bait uptake was lower than anticipated, likely due to the increased summer rain and high food availability.



Photo 10: Fledged juvenile Hooded Plovers at Redcliffs Camp beach



**Photo 11:**Volunteers linking in to hear from Renee Mead from BirdLife at the End of Season Debrief Meeting

### Local government engagement for this period

 A Hooded Plover Response Plan for the Tumby Bay Council area has been developed and endorsed by the Tumby Bay Council. This will provide a clear plan for everyone involved in managing nesting territories in the future.

### Communications and community engagement for this period

- One of our landscape officers assisted BirdLife Australia with planning a 2021-2022 Hooded Plover
  nesting season debrief meeting with trained volunteers. This meeting was held at the EP Landscape
  Board office in Port Lincoln, with some people linking in via MS Teams also. The meeting provided an
  opportunity for volunteers to hear about how Hooded Plovers faired across South Australia, Victoria
  and New South Wales. Volunteers could also share their experiences, concerns and observations.
- Reporting was submitted via the BirdLife Australia Hub to communicate achievements and progress on this project in the Eyre Peninsula region.
- One of our landscape officers continue to coordinate volunteers involved in monitoring and intervention work at priority Hooded Plover nesting territories across the Southern District.

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

- Coordinate volunteers ready for the 2022-2023 breeding season and resume nesting territory monitoring in late July 2022.
- Commence planning for the Hooded Plover Biennial Count in November.
- Assist BirdLife Australia with organising a start of season meeting with volunteers.

# Maintain and enhance biodiversity in prioritised ecosystems

### **Program highlights this period**

• Whibley Wattle (*Acacia whibleyana*) is one of our most threatened species, growing only around Tumby Bay area. With only one population survey conducted in 2017, we don't know how the population is trending – increasing, decreasing or stable?

In June, a new Whibley Wattle population survey was completed by local contractors capturing the location and overall health status of all five sub-populations. The data collected will be mapped and analysed next quarter to provide an initial population trend for this threatened species. It is envisaged another population survey in five years will provide a better understanding on its long-term survival.

### **Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) Pilot**

- Five landholders from across southern Eyre Peninsula were successful with their Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) project applications from assessment rounds one and two.
- Round three assessments were delayed due to the Government entering caretaker mode, but an announcement is expected soon.
- Successful applicants have given permission for the ERV team to pass their project information on to the local Landscape Board.
- Staff have provided support to successful landholders to ensure landholders didn't miss any deadlines for correspondence back to the assessment panels.

**Community** 

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
Community at the centre and actively engaged in landscape management	
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>	

This section provides information about the delivery and acquittal of Grassroots Grants in the Southern District, and support provided by Board staff to grant applicants. For updates about the <u>Grassroots Grants</u> application process, successful applicants the award of Grants, and overall management of the Grassroots Grants program, refer to the **Grassroots Grants program** section in the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**.

### 2021-2022 Grassroots Grants

Six projects funded through the Board's 2021-2022 Grassroots Grants program were delivered in the Southern District (Table 1).

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

	Project Title	Organisation	Completed
1	Growing for coastal ecosystem restoration	Lower Eyre Coastcare Association	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
2	Microplastics training for national data collection	Sleaford Progress Association	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter
3	Caring for Your Soil	WoTL Ltd	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter
4	Cultural Education Environmental Centre (CEEC)	Yangi Pty Ltd	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter
5	Big Swamp monitoring and management	Big Swamp Community Centre Incorporated for the Big Swamp Conservation Group	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter
6	Site care at RDASA Inc Port Lincoln Centre	Riding for the Disabled Association SA Inc - Port Lincoln Centre	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter

Our landscape staff provided ongoing support for the delivery of these projects, all of which have now been successfully completed.

### Growing for coastal ecosystem restoration

Lower Eyre Coastcare Association and Lake Wangary School have been working for over a decade undertaking revegetation work around the coastline of Lower Eyre Peninsula, including at sites like Greenly Beach during the annual Greenly Day event. Students grow all the local native plants in a nursery at the school, but in recent years have lost plants and had problems with slow growth due to the decreasing quality and quantity of groundwater available for use at their nursery. The aim of this project, delivered by Lower Eyre Coastcare, is therefore to improve the water supply system for their native plant nursery, through the installation of a rainwater harvesting system, including a tank, pump and new irrigation system. This should allow the school to grow more plants, thereby increasing the extent of revegetation work they can support annually.

### **Program highlights this period**

Lower Eyre Coastcare Association held their Greenly Day after initial delays due to poor weather.
 Nine-hundred plants were planted at sites near Greenly Beach with over 90 volunteer hours committed.

### Big Swamp monitoring and management

This project, delivered by the Big Swamp Conservation Group, aims to expand community knowledge and understanding of Big Swamp as a dynamic ecosystem, to assess the condition of the swamp and to identify issues that may be affecting the health of this important wetland. It involves education, monitoring of water quality, investigating methods for controlling Couch grass, pest plant control, revegetation and monitoring of waterbirds and other research.

### **Program highlights this period**

• The Big Swamp Conservation Group completed a number of activities that will expand the community's understanding of the Big Swamp ecosystem. This included installation of fencing to assist with couch grass management, revegetation and ongoing water quality monitoring.

#### Site care at RDASA Inc. - Port Lincoln Centre

This project aims to improve the paddock areas of the Riding for the Disabled Association SA Centre, Port Lincoln, through pest plant control, revegetation with native plants, erosion control, debris removal and access management with fencing. This will improve this area which provides much needed amenity for people with disabilities, specifically for horse riding and related activities such as sport, active recreation and basic therapy.

### **Program highlights this period**

• Port Lincoln Riding for the Disabled completed a number of activities to improve the environmental condition of their facilities just out of Port Lincoln. This included seeding paddocks with native grasses, weed control and revegetation of native trees.

### 2022-2023 Grassroots Grants

The Board's open call for applications for the 2022-2023 Grassroots Grants Program closed on 22 April 2022. Thirteen Grassroots Grant applications were received, with the majority of these from the Southern district. Nine Grassroots Grants have been awarded to groups in the Southern District, and one more grant was awarded for work to be implemented in both the Western and Southern Districts. Details are given below (Table 2: EP Landscape Board Grassroots Grants - 2022-23 successful applicants in the Southern DistrictTable 2). For more details about the other 2022-2023 Grassroots Grants refer to the *Grassroots Grants program* section in the *Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region*.

Table 2: EP Landscape Board Grassroots Grants - 2022-23 successful applicants in the Southern District

	Project Title	Organisation
1	Raising weed awareness at Ungarra	Ungarra & Districts Hall & Progress Association
2	Big Swamp Wetlands Citizen Science Project	Big Swamp Community Centre Incorporated for the Big Swamp Conservation Group
3	Creating a Butterfly Garden and Trail at Navigator College	Navigator College
4	Protecting coastal sand dunes at Carrow Wells	Port Neill Progress Association
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.).
6	Acacia whibleyana re-population	Tumby Bay Area School
7	Restoration of Wedge Island – Stage 1: The thin edge of the Wedge.	Wedge Island Management Association Inc.
8	Vegetation protection and rehabilitation, Greenly Beach	Lower Eyre Coastcare
9	Weed control and vegetation protection and rehabilitation, Coffin Bay Foreshore	Lower Eyre Coastcare
10	Protecting Our Soils Through Improved Grazing Management – Part 2	WoTL (Women Together Learning) Ltd

Landscape staff will provide ongoing support for the delivery of these projects. Details of what these projects will deliver is given below.

### Raising weed awareness at Ungarra

Ungarra & Districts Hall & Progress Association

This project will focus on controlling feral Aleppo pine seedlings and African Boxthorns along the Lipson-Ungarra Road. A contractor with appropriate licences will undertake the pest plant control, but it is also planned that the school/community undertake a "weed-busters" session to contribute to this control. A weed swap will enable students to learn more about local weeds and their control, and native plants will be planted in the school bush block to increase its biodiversity.

### **Big Swamp Wetlands Citizen Science Project**

Big Swamp Community Centre Incorporated for the Big Swamp Conservation Group

This is an extension of the Grassroots Grants project funded in 2021-2022, and will support work for the management and improvement and conservation of the Big Swamp. The monitoring and management program commenced in 2021-2022 will be continued. Key works to be delivered include:

- completion of development of the site management plan;
- ongoing water quality data collection to support management plan development; and
- revegetating habitat.

### Creating a Butterfly Garden and Trail at Navigator College

### Navigator College

A butterfly garden and trail will be created within the "Bush Block" on Navigator College grounds that will facilitate pollination and insect diversity. Students, with guidance from teachers and supporting environmental organisations, will develop a garden and trail within an existing remnant that will enhance the local biodiversity. Work will restore the understory to encourage pollinators, with particular emphasis on Butterflies, back into the area while educating students on the importance these species and their role within terrestrial ecosystems. The works will include constructing raised beds, propagating and planting local natives, and signage.

### Protecting coastal sand dunes at Carrow Wells

Port Neill Progress Association

Works will be undertaken to protect sand dunes and sites of aboriginal significance at Carrow Wells beach. This will included installation of fencing, rationalisation of walking tracks to the beach using bollards, fencing and revegetation, repair and rationalisation of walkways from camping areas with adequate parking and camp sites, and construction of barriers to prevent vehicle access to the beach.

### Lower Eyre Peninsula Home School Landcare Workshops

Lower Eyre Peninsula Home Schoolers Group

This will be a series of eight interactive workshops held for the Lower Eyre Peninsula Home-school children and their families, many of whom are landholders. The workshops will introduce various environmental topics, focusing on increasing knowledge and practical skills related to

- 1. Introduction to bird Watching,
- 2. Native plants eucalypts and wildflowers,
- 3. Coastal care marine debris,
- 4 Propagation- seed collection, pre-treatments and propagation,
- 5. Vertebrate pest Control- foxes, rabbits and cats,
- 6. Weed management weed ID, weed swap, herbarium
- 7. Sustainable gardening soils, composting, native bees and butterflies, and
- 8. Revegetation and nature play.

This is a wonderful opportunity to introduce some the next generations on landcare.

## Acacia whibleyana re-population

Tumby Bay Area School

Year 7 students at Tumby Bay Area School will investigate the threats to the endangered *Acacia whibleyana* and plant seedlings to help re-populate the species in the local region. Seed collection and hand seeding will also increase biodiversity at this site to support the threatened wattles. Works will include installation of an access gate, planting and weed control.

### Restoration of Wedge Island - Stage 1: The thin edge of the Wedge.

Wedge Island Management Association Inc.

This project aims to strategically manage a variety of weed species that are impacting on the structure and function of the plant communities on Wedge Island and to also manage weeds that are likely to impact on the island's unique biodiversity. A professional bushcare organisation will be engaged to lead the delivery of weed management activities across the island. This will not only provide increased weed management capacity for the Wedge Island community, but will also provide best practice training opportunities for the islanders supporting the delivery of this restoration project. Volunteer islanders (and possibly other volunteers) will also be employed to increase the weed management capacity of the project. Mapping the current extent of the Storm Petrel colony will also occur as part of this project to map future changes in its distribution and to ensure that risks across the entire colony footprint are managed.

### Vegetation protection and rehabilitation, Greenly Beach

Lower Eyre Coastcare

The objective of this project is the rationalisation of vehicle tracks through the coastal environment at Greenly Beach, thereby allowing for native vegetation regeneration and active revegetation. This will be

achieved through large rock placement to contain and manage vehicle access and rationalise tracks. There will also be revegetation works undertaken, with the participation of Lake Wangary School.

# Weed control and vegetation protection and rehabilitation, Coffin Bay Foreshore

Lower Eyre Coastcare

This project is for the control of woody weeds and revegetation in the remnant native vegetation buffer along the Coffin Bay foreshore. This will enable protection of existing vegetation and allow for some natural regeneration alongside active revegetation efforts by the Lower Eyre Coastcare group. Lake Wangary School will be involved with plant propagation and revegetation activities. There will also be communication activities to raise awareness of the impact of inappropriate access and the importance of maintaining coastal vegetation around the Bay, the impact of weedy garden plants that escape into the coastal environment, and the impact of stormwater on water quality into the Bay.

## **Protecting Our Soils Through Improved Grazing Management – Part 2**

Women Together Learning (WoTL Ltd)

This project will deliver two workshops (Cummins and Minnipa) on sheep management and feeding systems. The workshops will provide an opportunity for women to connect, whilst building capacity and understanding of regional livestock issues, particularly lamb finishing systems, feeding options, management of native pastures and the importance of landscape management especially soils in grazing systems. The day will cover grazing and livestock management tools to maintain soil cover and reduce erosion risk, especially during times of extremely dry seasonal conditions.

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