

# Business Plan Achievement Report

**3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2021-2022**

1 January to 31 March 2022

## Western District






## About

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

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

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

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

	On track to deliver key programs.		On track to deliver most programs. May be some delays.		Unlikely to deliver some program elements
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For projects in the District Councils of Ceduna, Elliston, Streaky Bay, Wudinna and Far West Coast areas, further details of our work and programs can be found on the [Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board website](#) or by contacting **Libby Hunt** (*Acting Team Leader, Landscape Operations - Western District*) on 08 8626 1108.

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

## Contents

<b>Pest plants and animals, and impact-causing native species .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Biodiversity .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Maintain and enhance biodiversity in prioritised ecosystems.....	7
<b>Community .....</b>	<b>8</b>
2021-2022 Grassroots Grants.....	8
Other Community work.....	10

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

Focus areas and priority programs	Status
<i>Supporting landowners to control prioritised <b>pest plants and animals</b></i>	
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	
<i>Collaborating to reduce threats from <b>impact-causing native species</b></i>	
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 Western District as part of the [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#) refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Whole of Region**. Updates on development of our regional pest and impact-causing natives management plans can be found in the same report.

## Program highlights this period

### Pest plants

#### Summer Grasses (Buffel Grass, Fountain Grass, Feather Top Grass)

- [Buffel Grass](#) was detected and controlled across all known sites in the Western District. Infestation sites treated include Flinders Highway 7 km northwest of Smoky Bay, Thevenard township, one site at Lock, and various sites on Eyre Highway including sites 8 km east of Ceduna, west of Ceduna, east of Wudinna, and several spots between Kyancutta and Kimba.
- [Fountain Grass](#) was also detected and controlled across the Western District. Infestation sites treated include sites in the Ceduna township, in Thevenard township, on the outskirts of Minnipa, Elliston, and Port Kenny. Some sites were surveyed and will be treated at a later date.

#### African Boxthorn

- [African Boxthorn](#) control was undertaken on back roads south of Wudinna, in the Elliston and Lock districts.

#### Aleppo Pine

- Over 300 [Aleppo Pine](#) seedlings were removed as part of an ongoing follow up program in the Elliston and Lock districts.

#### Bridal Creeper

- Following summer rains, a large [Bridal Creeper](#) (*Asparagus asparagoides*) infestation was detected in Colley, north-east of Port Kenny. The infestation has been surveyed, and it is planned to release a biocontrol agent, [Bridal Creeper rust fungus \(\*Puccinia myrsiphylli\*\)](#), in the spring to control this infestation. Bridal Creeper rust fungus, first released in Australia in 2000, infects the leaves and stems of Bridal Creeper, absorbing nutrients from the plant, slowing plant development and reproduction

and reducing the production of stems, fruit, rhizomes and tubers. Severely diseased plants shed infected leaves prematurely and ultimately die. The fungus is a highly effective biocontrol agent as it can produce many generations in a year, resulting in large amounts of wind dispersed spores which infect and kill large Bridal Creeper infestations.

### **Caltrop**

- Twenty-four [Caltrop](#) plants were found and controlled in one spot on the Elliston Golf Course after recent summer rains. It is important to control Caltrop as it is toxic to livestock, and with its spiny burrs, seeds are easily spread.

### **Innocent Weed**

- [Innocent Weed](#) was detected and treated on the Eyre Highway within Kyancutta. Landowners are required to take reasonable steps to control Innocent Weed on their properties.

### **Pest animals**

#### **Foxes**

- In February and March fox baiting groups were held at 26 locations across the western EP, ranging from Koongawa to Penong, to Lock and Elliston. At these groups local landscape officers enjoyed the chance to catch up with landholders and discuss current pest issues, including wild dogs, goats and overabundant native species. Over 10,000 baits were distributed to landholders across the Western District.

*Photo 1  
Part of Bridal Creeper infestation  
after summer rains*



*Photo 2:  
Caltrop  
burrs*



*Photo 3:  
Innocent  
Weed burrs*







Figure 1: Priority pest plant control for the period 1 January to 31 March 2022

### Rabbits

- Landscape officers provided assistance with a rabbit control program at the Elliston Golf Course, to reduce damage to the fairways caused by rabbit diggings.

### Wild Dogs

- Planning for a wild dog aerial baiting program in the Far West is under way. EP Landscape Board is working with Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA) and Department for Environment and Water (DEW) National Parks and Wildlife Services SA (NPWSSA) to deliver the baiting program, which is planned for late autumn. Aerial baiting will be complemented with coordinated on-ground baiting. The baiting program will cover the Far West area of the EP Landscape Board Region inside the dog fence, from Yalata in the west, through Bookabie, to Penong in the east, and up into the Alinytjara Wilurara Landscape Board region to the dog fence in the north.

### Feral Cats

- Ongoing remote sensing camera monitoring of feral predators continues at Venus Bay Conservation Park. This is being undertaken for threatened species protection and targeted feral cat control. Working with the NPWSSA, control works have been undertaken targeting cat 'hot spot' areas identified from camera data. Control measures implemented included 1080 poison baiting and a targeted shooting program over a ten day period.



Photo 4: Feral cat monitoring at Venus Bay for threatened species protection - feral cat tracks



### **Feral Deer (Chadinga Deer Eradication Project)**

The Chadinga Deer Eradication Project aims to eradicate a feral deer satellite population from a 2,700 ha area in and around the Chadinga Conservation Park. The project commenced in late 2021 and will run through to 2023. The project is part of a multi-agency program with funding from the Limestone Coast Landscape Board through their SA Government Landscape Priority Fund project "[Stopping the Spread of Feral Deer](#)", and from the EP Landscape Board, the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions (CISS) Deer Control National Program fund, Primary Industries and Regions South Australia (PIRSA), and in-kind contributions from National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) and SA Arid Lands Landscape Board.

- Red Deer (*Cervus elaphus*) monitoring is being undertaken in a 2,700 ha area in and around Chadinga Conservation Park. Deer tracks have been found in several locations, and two watering points (one sheep water trough and one waterhole) that are visited by deer have been identified.
- Eleven remote sensing (motion detection) cameras have been deployed in the area. Nine of these have been set up near tracks where deer have previously been sighted, and one each to monitor the water trough and waterhole which deer are known to visit. Over 45 images of deer have been captured to date, with as many as five deer, including stags, does and fawns, captured in a single image.
- Ongoing monitoring will be carried out at the eleven camera sites, with fortnightly camera checks. Camera data will inform an aerial deer shooting operation with Helifarm contractors in late May or June. Camera monitoring and fortnightly camera checks will continue after the aerial shoot.
- We strongly encourage anyone to report sightings of deer to any of our offices, and/or on [DeerScan](#). This is especially important if you are seeing deer moving into areas where you don't usually see them.



Photo 5: Feral cat monitoring at Venus Bay for threatened species protection - checking remote sensing cameras



Photo 6:  
Two Red Deer does near the  
Chadinga Conservation  
Park boundary



Photo 7:  
Red Deer and fox drinking  
from farmer's water trough  
near Chadinga  
Conservation Park

### Impact-causing native species

- We had engagement with a landholder regarding the management of wombat numbers in cropping areas. Advice was provided around [destruction permits](#) and control.

### Local government engagement for this period

- Discussions were held with Council employees and Councillors in relation to wild dog workshops and ongoing issues around sheep attacks in the vicinity of the Koonibba community.
- A local government representative attended the Wild Dog Trapper Training Workshop (see below for more information) that was held at Charra Hall.

### Communications and community engagement for this period

#### Fountain Grass

- Far West Coast Aboriginal Rangers detected multiple infestation sites of Fountain Grass within the Ceduna township and passed on location data to Ceduna-based landscape officers. Landscape officers will use this data to implement a control program.

#### Foxes

- Various media was published about the fox bait distribution days, including [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) posts, a [media release](#), an article in [Stock Journal](#), and interview on 5cc radio and with EP Advocate.

#### Wild Dogs

##### **Wild Dog Trapper Training Workshops**

- Two *Wild Dog Trapper Training Workshops* were held, one at Coorabie Farm, and one at Charra Hall. The workshops were organised by EP Landscape Board in conjunction with PIRSA, and were promoted on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).
- The workshops were run by three trainers; two PIRSA dog trappers and a wild dog expert from Queensland. In addition to the trainers and workshop organisers, the Charra workshop was



attended by two veterinarians from Animal Management In Rural and Remote Indigenous Communities (AMRRIC), eight landholders and a council representative. The Coorabie workshop was attended by eleven landholders.

- Workshop content included discussion of the new wild dog legislation and the differences in legislation between various regions. There were lessons on planning and control for properties, setting of traps and how to do so without leaving any scent, where to set traps and lure techniques.
  - Trapping is time-consuming and labour intensive, and to achieve humane and successful trapping expertise and experience is required. Wild dogs are clever and learn to avoid traps. There are anecdotal reports of dogs learning to identify traps and teaching other dogs to avoid them, even going as far as being able to dig up traps without triggering them to show their pups.
  - During the workshops the use of the [WildDogScan](#) app for reporting wild dog sightings, was demonstrated and several new landholders joined local groups on the App.
- **Wild Dog aerial baiting planning workshops**
    - To facilitate planning of the autumn aerial baiting program in the Far West, we also held mapping workshops with landholders from the area to be baited. During these workshops we worked with landholders to identify areas to be baited and areas to be excluded from the aerial baiting program.



Photo 8: Setting wild dog traps at Wild Dog Trapper Training Workshop at Coorabie Farm



Photo 9:  
Inspecting different types of wild dog traps at Wild Dog Trapper Training Workshop at Coorabie Farm



## Upcoming priorities for the next period

- There will be follow-up surveillance and treatment of summer grasses, including Buffel Grass, African Lovegrass, *Eragrostis trichophora* and Fountain Grass.
- Gazania control will be implemented in targeted locations across the Western District
- Prickly Pear sites will be treated using a biocontrol method, cochineal scale beetles.
- Wild dog aerial baiting will be undertaken in the Far West.
- There will be bait production for use by landholders for on ground wild dog baiting.
- As part of the Chadinga Deer Eradication Project, aerial culling of deer will be undertaken.

## Biodiversity

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

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

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

## Maintain and enhance biodiversity in prioritised ecosystems

### Program highlights this period

#### Enhancing Remnant Vegetation (ERV) Pilot

- Staff in the western region have been assisting landholders with the development of proposed management plans under the next stage of the Enhancing Remnant Vegetation Pilot. Planning requirements have included pest animal and plant control, fencing and revegetation.

# Community

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

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

## 2021-2022 Grassroots Grants

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

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

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

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

### **Re-invigorating the Minnipa Women's Pioneer Park with waterwise native plants**

*The Minnipa Progress Association will be using this grant to renew the garden area of the Minnipa Women's Pioneer Park. The garden will be replanted with sustainable waterwise native plants which will have lower water requirements and lower maintenance than the exotic flowering plants currently in the garden. A watering system is also planned. Native plants will provide ecosystem support for native fauna and insects. Renewing this garden area will also increase the visual appeal of the town for locals and tourists.*

### **Program highlights this period**

- The Minnipa Progress Association has been busy finalising the garden design for their project with Waterwise Nursery and Garden Design.

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

- A planting event is planned for the next quarter.

### **Coast Access and Revegetation of Venus Bay Foreshore**

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

### **Program highlights this period**

- The Kenny Venus Progress Association has undertaken track rationalisation works at the Venus Bay foreshore to create a formalised drive through area. This is a major improvement to the heavily utilised coastal site. Visitors to the area towing caravans and trailers are already making use of the area leading to less congestion along the foreshore area.





*Photo 10  
Coast Access and  
Revegetation of Venus Bay  
Foreshore Project –  
Foreshore condition at  
Venus Bay before  
commencement of works*



*Photo 11:  
New formalised vehicle  
track on the Venus Bay  
foreshore constructed under  
the Kenny Venus Progress  
Association's project. As can  
be seen, the area is already  
well used by vehicles  
towing caravans.*

### Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Creation of new garden beds and planting of local native coastal species is planned by the Kenny Venus Progress Association to complete works at the Venus Bay project site.

### **Revegetation of Fowlers Bay sand dunes**

*Under this project the Fowlers Bay Progress Association is undertaking extensive planting of native sand dune species on the dunes which are moving ever closer to the township and are threatening to cut off one of the major access roads (Coorabie Road) to the town. It is hoped this work will slow the dune movement as well as improve the biodiversity of the area.*

### Program highlights this period

- The Fowlers Bay Progress Association hosted a school excursion in late November with the Penong Primary School children who assisted with propagating native *Myoporum sp.* seeds. Up to 20 seedlings have now been planted with another 250 to be planted in the coming months.

### Upcoming priorities for the next period

- A second planting event is planned in May/June for the Fowlers Bay Progress Association project.

*Photo 12:  
Discussing revegetation / rock protection  
buffer area with Wudinna District Council  
at Pildappa Rock*



## **Other Community work**

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

- Wudinna District Council have successfully secured funding to undertake an extensive refurbishment at the Pildappa Rock tourist destination. Landscape officers therefore met with Council officials at Pildappa Rock to discuss the development of a weed management and revegetation plan that is to be incorporated into the upgrade work, which is due to commence within the 2022-23 financial year.

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

- Officers attended local sessional SARDI meetings.



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