

Business Plan Achievement Report

4th Quarter 2020-2021

1 April to 30 June 2021

Southern District






About

The Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board's [Business Plan for 2020-21](#) sets out the programs, and component sub-programs or work activities, which are funded and delivered by the Board to achieve the goals and vision of the [Regional Landscape Plan](#).

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 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 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 [Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board 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 [Regenerative Agriculture Project \(RAP\)](#) and the [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#) refer to the *Business Plan Achievement Report: Regional Projects*.

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Sustainable agriculture

Sub-program	Status
District level sustainable agriculture activities	

For updates on our [Regenerative Agriculture Project \(RAP\)](#) and Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator (RALF) services, please refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Regional Projects**.

More information about our sustainable agriculture program, as well as useful information and resources for land managers can be found [here](#).

Program highlights this period

- Landscape officers have been liaising with a landholder regarding a soil management issue caused by wind erosion. Staff will continue to monitor the progress of management of this issue throughout the upcoming season.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- There will be ongoing monitoring of erosion issues throughout the district.
- Landscape officers will continue to attend the AIR EP Medium Rainfall Research, Development and Extension Committee meetings, where key agricultural issues facing the medium rainfall areas of lower Eyre Peninsula are discussed.

Water resources management

Sub-program	Status
District level rivers and creek restoration activities, water quality testing etc.	

For updates about water resources management activities implemented in the Southern District as part of the [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#) and the [Regenerative Agriculture Project \(RAP\)](#) refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Regional Projects**. Updates on work related to Water Affecting Activities and the Water Allocation Plan can be found in the same report.

Nothing to report.

Pest plant and animal control

Sub-program	Status
Monitor and facilitate management of priority pest plants and animals	

For updates about pest plant and animal control activities implemented in the Southern District as part of the [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#) refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Regional Projects**. Updates on development of our regional pest management plans can be found in the same report.

Program highlights this period

Pest plants

• Di-Bak Injecta trials

- Landscape officers completed a trial using BioHerbicides Australia's (BHA) Di-Bak Injecta for the control of targeted woody weeds. Declared pest plant species included in the trial were **Aleppo Pine, Olive, and White Weeping Broom**. Although not declared pest plant species, **Century Plant** and **Pepper Tree** were also included in the trials to test the efficacy of the Di-Bak Injecta technology.
- During the trials plants multiple of the same species were injected with different doses of Di-Bak AM (Aminopyralid/Metsulfuron Methyl) capsules. This was done so that we could determine not only how effective the Di-Bak Injecta is for the control of these species, but also how different herbicide dosages impact the same species, and what the time frames are before results are visible.
- Two months after the initial treatment, all plants treated in the trials looked unhealthy, and in some cases the plants were already dead.
- These early results indicate the Di-Bak Injecta will be a very useful tool in the fight against woody weeds going forward.
- A comprehensive report about the results of the trials is being developed for BioHerbicides Australia Pty Ltd on behalf of the Eyre Peninsula (EP) Landscape Board.



Photo 1: Landscape officer using the Di-Bak Injecta on Aleppo Pine. The left photo shows initial treatment being undertaken. The right photo shows the treated plants two months later, where visible die back of leaves can be seen.



*Photo 2:
Spraying Fountain Grass
along Lincoln Highway
between Port Lincoln and
Tumby Bay*

- Landscape officers have continued to provide best practice control advice to landholders for pest plants. There has been a noticeable interest in granular control for plants such as African Boxthorn and various invasive grasses.
- **Gorse**
 - Annual roadside **Gorse** surveys and control were completed by landscape officers. The survey shows roadside Gorse is currently well controlled, with only one small Gorse plant found and treated.
 - Eighteen compliance letters were sent out to landholders at Koppio, Whites Flat and Greenpatch requesting voluntary compliance with respect to Gorse control on their properties. Follow up contact was made and site visits undertaken. Four Action Orders have been issued as a result of non-compliance.
- **Woody weeds**
 - A survey of woody weeds was undertaken on the north shore of Port Lincoln, starting at Boston House and heading north for approximately 1 km. **Aleppo Pine, African Boxthorn, Rhamnus** and **Olives** were surveyed.
 - Funded by the Department for Infrastructure and Transport, a contractor will be employed in the next quarter to undertake works to control these woody weeds.
- **Grasses**
 - **Fountain Grass, Buffel Grass** and **African Lovegrass** were surveyed and treated along the Lincoln Highway between Port Lincoln and Tumby Bay.
 - Over 420 **Fountain Grass** plants were treated in Tumby Bay, Lipson and Ungarra surrounds, including sites along Bratten Road, along the Lipson-Ungarra Road and along East Dog Fence Road.

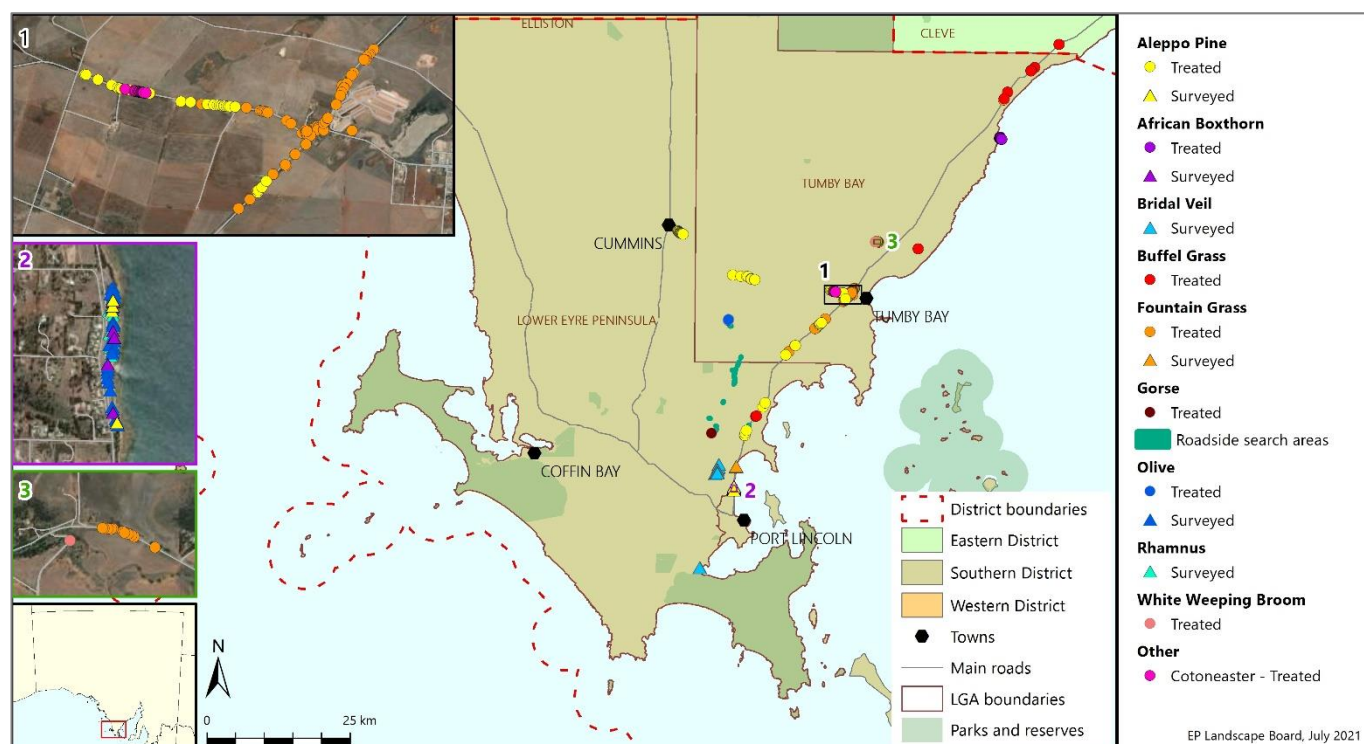


Figure 1: Priority pest plant control for the period 1 April to 30 June 2021

Pest animals

• Feral deer

EP Landscape Board issued the state's first Action Order in relation to an ongoing deer fence non-compliance issue. The Action Order is a new tool that has been implemented as part of the Landscape SA reform process as a way to simplify the pathway for enforcing compliance. The use of the Action Order was effective, providing the landholder with clear guidance as to what was required for the deer fence to be compliant. The landholder was able to quickly meet the requirements of the Action Order and we had the desired outcomes in a matter of five days.

• Rabbits

- The EP Landscape Board has been working closely with the Point Boston Community Corporation to reduce rabbit numbers in the Point Boston area for a number of years. As part of this ongoing work, EP Landscape Board worked collaboratively with the Department for Environment and Water's (DEW) Fire Management branch to implement a prescribed burn in a 2 ha stretch of coastal dune in the Point Boston area. The aim of the burn was to facilitate the implementation of rabbit control measures and reduce rabbit numbers. As a result of the burn, rabbit warrens that were protected by thick sedge vegetation and were previously inaccessible, can now be reached. Follow-up control measures, including fumigation and warren destruction, can now be undertaken, and EP Landscape Board will assist with these works in the coming weeks.
- Rabbit baiting – As part of the Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery (STAR) project, through baiting with poisoned oats, rabbit control was implemented at two localities, across an area of 264 ha. Control has been implemented to reduce grazing and disturbance pressure caused by rabbits on the native vegetation buffering and supporting the coastal saltmarsh ecosystem.



Photo 3: EP Landscape Board and DEW fire fighters working collaboratively implementing a prescribed burn in the Point Boston coastal dunes

• **Foxes**

- Landscape officers produced 3,500 fox baits during a fox bait production day. These 1080 baits are provided free of charge to landholders across the Lower EP in an effort to control fox numbers.
- We have continued to provide fox baits to landholders free of charge with an aim to reduce the number of foxes across the region. Foxes continue to be an ongoing problem in the region and are a high priority for control especially for stock focused farmers.
- Various fox control works have been implemented as part of the STAR project. These included a coordinated fox baiting program on private property adjacent to more than 15 km of coastline south of Tumby Bay; fox bating and trapping near Port Neill; fox den destruction from Cape Euler to Redcliffs, south of Tumby Bay; and cage trapping near Bolingbroke. For more information on this work see the *Business Plan Achievement Report: Regional Projects. 4th Quarter 2020-2021*.



Photo 4: 1080 fox baits in drying racks

Impact causing native species

- Advice was provided to a landholder with high raven numbers impacting on lambing survival.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Another 1080 meat bait production day has been scheduled to keep up with the ongoing demand from landholders.
- Bridal veil surveying, roadside control and compliance.
- Boneseed surveying, roadside control and compliance.

Other stewardship

Sub-program	Status
District level landscape management activities (coastal management, restoration, conservation, threatened species and ecological communities, citizen science etc.)	

For updates about delivery of the [Saltmarsh Threat Abatement and Recovery \(STAR\) Project](#) across the region, including the Southern District, refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Regional Projects**.

Program highlights this period

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 Protect the Hooded Plover 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.

- Volunteers have been supported to enter monitoring data for eight priority Hooded Plover nesting territories in the southern district monitored for the Protect the Hooded Plover project.
- Two priority nesting territories in the vicinity of Port Neill are monitored by volunteers (supported by landscape officers) for the *Protect the Hooded Plover* project. At these territories evidence of foxes was recorded regularly during the breeding season, and was likely the cause of repeated nest failures and chick mortality. Fox control measures were therefore implemented as an intervention measure to help protect these nesting territories from fox predation. Landscape officers worked with two landholders whose properties are adjacent to the more than 5 km of coastline north and south of Port Neill where the nesting territories are located, to implement a coordinated fox control program. 1080 fox baits were laid on these private properties at 10 locations, and baits were taken from eight of these. At some baiting locations, baits were taken more than once, giving an indication of the high number of foxes in the area.



Photo 5:
Fox tracks recorded during
territory monitoring south of Port
Neill

Acacia whibleyana

- Landscape officers are continuing to provide monitoring and watering support to Adelaide University with their soil disturbance trial at the Salt Lake *Acacia whibleyana* site. The trial is being implemented to determine whether soil disturbance will increase seed germination and seedling establishment of the endangered *Acacia whibleyana*.
- Clonal propagation of *Acacia whibleyana* undertaken by the Waite Arboretum was unsuccessful. While this was not unexpected, the trial was still considered useful with lessons learnt and it is still believed that it will be possible to achieve clonal propagation.

- The Whibley Wattles feature in Nature Play SA's newly released book titled *Where Birds Sing and Wildflowers Dance*. The book is a narrative of connecting to nature and ourselves, drawing upon art and science to showcase South Australia's wildlife, plants and animals.

Local government engagement for this period

- EP Landscape Board staff gave presentations about our work to the District Council of Tumby Bay staff and elected members at the June EP Landscape Board's Board meeting held in Tumby Bay.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- **National Landcare Program (NLP) project**
Protect the Hooded Plover
 - An article was produced for BirdLife Australia's [*Word about the Hood, Edition 25*](#) promoting the monitoring and intervention work on the Eyre Peninsula completed through this project, as well as through the STAR Project.
 - An *End of Season debrief* for Hooded Plover volunteers was held at our Port Lincoln office, coordinated by BirdLife Australia staff and supported by a landscape officer.
- **Greenly Day**
A landscape officer supported the *Lower Eyre Coastcare Group* to run **Greenly Day**. Greenly Day, now in its fifth year is a community revegetation day held at Greenly Beach. Native plant tubestock are propagated by the Lake Wangary Primary School ready for planting each year. A fantastic 1,000 tube stock were planted by approximately 100 volunteers who attended on the day.
- A presentation was given to Navigator College as part of their Year 5 Expo, outlining the role the EP Landscape Board plays in managing our region's landscapes.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- **National Landcare Program (NLP) project**
Protect the Hooded Plover
Support volunteers to commence 2021-2022 breeding season monitoring of eight priority Hooded Plover nesting territories in the Southern District.



Photo 6: Hooded Plover End of Season debrief meeting held with volunteers on Eyre Peninsula and run by BirdLife Australia's Renee Mead



Photo 7: Native coastal plants on site ready for planting at Greenly Day community event



Photo 8: (L-R) Laila, Jade and Grady attended Greenly Day and planted more than 80 local native tube stock with their families

- Finalise a Hooded Plover breeding season management plan with the District Council of Tumby Bay, for nesting territories in the Council area.
- Support the Lower Eyre Coastcare Group with a propagation day to be held with the Lake Wangary Primary School.
- Bushland condition monitoring will be implemented in early spring. Seven sites will be monitored in the Southern District to support the regional Biodiversity Monitoring Program.

Grassroots Grants program

Sub-program	Status
Support to grant applicants, monitoring of grants awarded and acquitted	

*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 [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: Regional Projects**.*

Program highlights this period

From Little Things Big Things Grow – St Josephs School

- The project was successfully completed, and included native seed collection excursions, seedling propagation and planting on a private property by St Joseph's Year 9 Students (54 kids and six staff). At the planting day, supported by a landscape officer, just over 300 native plants were planted and guarded on private property west of North Shields.



Photo 9: Landscape officer with St Joseph's Year 9 students planting seedlings

Photo 10:
St Joseph's School students caring for seedlings propagated from seed collected on private property for their 'From Little Things Big Things Grow' Grassroots Grant project

Coastal Management at Moonlight Bay – Eastern Lower Eyre Peninsula Landcare Group

- Landscape officers supported 54 primary school students and teachers from Tumby Bay Area School with a planting day at Moonlight Bay's sand-dune erosion area. Three hundred coastal native plant tubestock were planted and guarded. The plantings complemented the erosion control works recently completed. The plantings worked showed students how each erosion area is different and requires different management techniques. Students also collected marine debris as they walked to the planting site and a large poly bag was filled to the top (approx. 30 kgs). A simple exercise showing the impact of marine debris on our beaches and wildlife was also part of the excursion.



Photo 11: 'Coastal Management at Moonlight Bay' contractors rehabilitating a blowout area using a combination of hay bales, jute matting and erosion control fencing

Port Neill Coastal Works – Port Neill Progress Association

- Eighteen school and community members were engaged on a coastal walk and talk about the importance of the coastal environment and ways to help look after it. Ten cubic metres of weedy succulents were pulled during the workshop session.



Photo 12: Landholder D LeBrun with Tumby Bay Area School students on planting day at Moonlight Bay for the 'Coastal Management at Moonlight Bay' Grassroots Grant project

Local government engagement for this period

Port Neill Coastal Works – Port Neill Progress Association

- The Port Neill Progress Association were supported to seek approvals to undertake sand-dune rehabilitation, weed control and revegetation works on Council's coastal reserve.

Iconic Birds and Wildlife Information Sign at Lipson Cove –Lower Eyre Coastcare Group

- Community were supported to seek Council approval for draft signage, as well as for obtaining works approval to install signage on Council managed land.



Photo 13: School and community members pulling out weedy Pig's Ear for the Port Neill Coastal Works Grassroots Grant project

ICONIC SPECIES OF Lipson Cove

Lipson Cove is a habitat for diverse native species. In particular, Lipson Island Conservation Park is a rookery for roosting sea birds, including colonies of black-faced cormorants and crested terns and shorebirds such as the sooty oystercatcher.

Species of conservation importance known to inhabit or visit the area include Australian sea lions, hooded plovers and southern right whales. However, the white-bellied sea-eagle, little penguin and bottlenose dolphin are considered significantly iconic to Lipson Cove.

LITTLE PENGUIN

Lipson Island Conservation Park is a bird rookery and habitat for a small colony of little penguins (Eudyptes minor), also known as a fairy penguin or little blue penguin. They are the smallest of all penguin species. They are found along the southern coastline of Australia and New Zealand and are the only penguin species to breed in Australia.

While not a threatened species, the little penguin has been selected as part of the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board's iconic species project. Their population numbers are in decline.

Little penguins feed on small fishes, including Australian anchovies, crustaceans and squid. They dive to average depths of 10-20m for an average of 24 seconds, although they dive as deep as 60m.

- They tend to remain within 25 km of the island when foraging during the day, returning to the colony at night.
- Penguins move with speed in the water, with their flippers providing the power they need while swimming with their feet.
- They are particularly sensitive to disturbance including human interaction, introduced predators, domestic dogs and recreational injury.

Typically two eggs are laid in burrows and incubated for about 36 days by both parents. Once hatched, parents alternate guarding and feeding the chicks.

*These coveys for research purposes only under an ethics and research permit. Please do not attempt to capture.

Photographs taken by Steve Berggren, Lipson Island Conservation Park

PLEASE RESPECT THEIR HOME

Little penguins are very sensitive to human disturbance and interference.

- Please do not approach within 20m.
- Lipson Island Conservation Park is a protected area.
- Do not touch penguins, chicks, eggs or burrows as human contact can result in penguins abandoning their breeding activities.
- Because of the strong tidal movement, it is dangerous to wade or swim close to Lipson Island Conservation Park.

If you have any concerns about the penguins, please contact the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board's Wildlife Service office on (08) 8668 121.

Photograph taken by Steve Berggren, Lipson Island Conservation Park

BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN

The bottlenose dolphin (Tursiops sp.) is the most well-known of the Delphinidae family and often resides in shallow coastal waters.

Lipson Cove is a unique coastal home and sanctuary to a pod of approximately 20 individual bottlenose dolphins.

Bottlenose dolphins are very intelligent, curious, friendly and charismatic. They are also very social and communicate with each other through many different squeaks & whistles. They track their prey through echolocation, making up to 1000 clicking sounds per minute, and these sounds then travel underwater as their second type of sight to see what's around them. They eat multiple species of fish and cephalopods such as squid as well as crustaceans.

Every dolphin has unique natural markings on their dorsal fin which allow them to be individually identified.

- Lifespan: 40-50 years of age.
- Adult size: 2.3m in length.
- Weight: up to 320kg.
- Young calves are born tail first and can swim from the moment they are born. They are dependent on their nursing mother's milk and their protection for the first two years.

Photographs taken by Steve Berggren, Lipson Cove

PROTECTING OUR WILDLIFE

Dolphins are frequently seen and are a protected species under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 South Australia.

- Jet skis and drones must not get closer than 300m to a dolphin.
- Other vessels or persons must not move closer than 50m to a dolphin or sail and 100m for a whale.
- Or closer than 150m to a cove or pup and 300m for a whale with calf.

Coves can be spotted among the local pod of dolphins year round.

Photograph taken by Steve Berggren, Lipson Cove

WHITE-BELLIED SEA-EAGLE

The white-bellied sea eagle (Haliaeetus leucogaster) is a threatened species in South Australia, with a declining population of just 70-80 pairs. They are Australia's second largest eagle, weighing up to 4.2kg.

Sea eagles are skilled hunters that feed mainly of aquatic animals, such as fish, but they also eat birds and mammals like kangaroos. They also feed on carrion such as dead sheep and fish along the coast.

White-bellied sea eagles hunt their prey from a perch on Lipson Island Conservation Park or the nearby shore. They can also track their target while in flight, circling or sailing 10-20m above the coast.

- White-bellied sea eagles have declined in South Australia due to loss of habitat and nest site disturbance.
- They are very shy and sensitive to any disturbance, especially during their breeding season (May to January) and can abandon breeding completely if disturbed.
- Listed as Endangered in SA (National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972).

White adult birds are unmistakably striking black and white on the underside, they are gray on the back and upper wing.

Juveniles are often seen at Lipson Cove and are mottled brown.

Photographs taken by Steve Berggren, Lipson Cove

REPORT SIGHTINGS

Lipson Island Conservation Park and the Lipson Cove coastal area are essential for the threatened white-bellied sea eagle.

- They roost along the coast and feed in nearby waters.
- They are often seen hunting around Lipson Island Conservation Park.

The community is encouraged to contribute to the conservation of white-bellied sea eagles by reporting sightings to the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board's Iconic Birds Project.

www.epiconicbirds.com.au

Photograph taken by Steve Berggren, Lipson Cove

This project is supported by the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board's Grassroots Grants program, made possible by the regional landscape levy

Photo 14: Sign developed for 'Iconic Birds and Wildlife at Lipson Cove' Grassroots Grant project

Communications and community engagement for this period

- The final site visit was undertaken with the Big Swamp Committee for their Grassroots Grant project.
- **From Little Things Big Things Grow**
A landscape officer provided technical planning and on-ground support during the planting day for this project. ABC produced [a video of the project work](#), and St Joseph's School promoted their project work via Instagram and Facebook.
- **Coastal Management at Moonlight Bay**
Landscape officers provided technical planning and support to contractors completing erosion control works so as to comply with the Coastal Dune Rehabilitation Plan.
- **Port Neill Coastal Works**
Landscape Officers provided technical support for sand-dune erosion control and rehabilitation works.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- The 2021-22 Grassroots Grants will be awarded and support provided to successful applicants for the initiation of projects.

Photo 15: Jute matting and brush use in the rehabilitation works at Port Neill



Published by the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board.
13 August 2021

T: +61 (8) 8688 3200
E: EPLBAdmin@sa.gov.au

Report prepared by:
Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board

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



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