

Business Plan Achievement Report

3rd Quarter 2020-2021

1 January to 31 March 2020

Eastern 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 Eastern 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 City Council of Whyalla and District Councils of Kimba, Franklin Harbour and Cleve areas, further details of our work and programs can be found on the [Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board website](#) or by contacting **Tim Breuer** (*Team Leader, Landscape Operations - Eastern District*) on 0488 000 481.

Note: For updates about delivery, in the Eastern 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	
Delivering the National Landcare Program (NLP) Smart Farm Mallee Seeps Project	

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](#).

District level sustainable agriculture activities

Program highlights this period

- Landscape officers attended the Harvest Update meeting in Cowell.
- Monitoring of soil cover levels continued across the district. In general, reasonable cover has been maintained, although some sandy rises and paddocks remain bare as cover has struggled to become established through the ongoing dry times.

Local government engagement for this period

- Nothing to report.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Nothing to report.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Social media post will be made regarding the importance of establishing good cover over the growing season to protect paddocks throughout drier periods.

Delivering the NLP Smart Farm Mallee Seeps Project

The Australian Government, through the National Landcare Program, have funded the [Overcoming the Rising Degradation of Mallee Seeps on Eastern Eyre Peninsula \(EP\)](#) project. Land managers are increasingly identifying Mallee seeps as a growing land degradation issue on the EP. Mallee seeps severely change pH and the chemical composition of soil, forcing areas of paddocks out of production. This project aims to increase farmers' awareness about Mallee seeps, and build capacity to detect and manage Mallee seep formation in their paddocks before land degradation occurs. The project will connect landholders to relevant scientific data and identify known management options that are best suited for the EP. Local trials and demonstrations will determine suitable practical treatments that can be applied by land managers in line with best practice sustainable agriculture to reduce the effects of saline seeps on the EP.

Program highlights this period

- During March, site visits were undertaken with Dr Chris McDonough (consulting specialist) to the four Mallee seeps project trial sites. During these site visits final remediation strategies for each site were agreed on, and are now ready for implementation over the upcoming growing season. Remediation works include planting lucerne and *Puccinellia* grasses, deep ripping and at one site a sump has been installed to assess whether water in the perched water table can be pumped out of the seep site and possibly used for spraying, watering stock and potentially for irrigation. The aim for each site is to return the land to productive uses and in some cases to be able to crop the affected land again. Monitoring for water table depth and salinity at each site is underway with data being collected periodically.



Photo 1: Scientist Chris McDonough explains how a Mallee seep on a property near Kimba can be remediated.



Photo 2:
Scientist Chris McDonough collecting water and soil samples from Mallee seep trial sites in the Kimba district.

- Landholder agreements were finalised for small grants to be paid to landholders participating in the trials. These small grants are used to offset some of the costs associated with trials.
- Dr Chris McDonough gave short presentations at the harvest update meetings held across EP in March. During this presentations he shared information about what a Mallee seep is, how they are formed and most importantly how they can be detected early and remediated. An overview of the trials on EP was given and Chris's experience in this field on EP and in the Murray Mallee areas was shared with those in attendance.

Local government engagement for this period

- Nothing to report.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- An article about the project was written for inclusion in PIRSA's annual 2021 Eyre Peninsula Farming Systems summary report.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Interim project report will be developed.
- A "How to" guide for identifying Mallee seeps will be developed.

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 Eastern 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.*

Program highlights this period

- Water quality testing was conducted, including testing done for SA Power Networks.

Local government engagement for this period

- Nothing to report.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Nothing to report.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- 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 Eastern 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

- **Fountain Grass**

In response to a Fountain Grass infestation at their concrete plant in Whyalla's industrial estate, Holcim Quarry have voluntarily developed a weed control plan in consultation with landscape officers. Controlling declared weeds in industrial settings is a high priority because of the risk of weed seeds spreading to other areas on machinery and quarried products.

- **Roadside weed survey and control work**

- Works were completed by a contractor on Lincoln Highway between Pt Augusta tanks and Wharminda Boundary Road. Weeds surveyed and controlled include summer grasses, **Buffel Grass**, **African Lovegrass**, **Fountain Grass**, ***Paspalum dilatatum*** (commonly called paspalum grass), and ***Ehrharta calycina*** (commonly called perennial veldt grass), as well as **Silverleaf Nightshade** (this control work is not shown in Figure 1, but will be shown next quarter).
- Works were completed by EP landscape officers along Eyre Highway between the Lake Gilles Conservation Park turnoff and Stringers Road. Weeds surveyed and controlled include summer grasses - **Buffel Grass**, **African Lovegrass**, **Fountain Grass** and **Silverleaf Nightshade**.

- **African Lovegrass** was detected at Cows Head Corner Road near Kimba, treated and resurveyed. Follow up treatment will be required next summer.

- A grass sample was collected in the Waddikee area for herbarium identification (pending).

- EP landscape officers are trialling a new tool for control of woody weeds in native vegetation and riparian environments. The Di-Bak injector is a tool which is able to deliver a capsule containing herbicide into the trunks of woody weeds and seals the herbicide in the actively growing, shallow tissues of the stem. It is hoped that this trial will provide information as to the best situations, weeds species and herbicides to use with this device.



Photo 3: Fountain Grass infestation at a concrete plant in Whyalla's industrial estate is being controlled by the land manager.

- A meeting between Landscapes SA, Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DTI) was attended by an Eyre Peninsula landscape officer. This meeting was held to determine regional priorities for weed control and to focus on coordinating and improving pest control along road and rail corridors. This meeting has resulted in improved communications between organisations and has identified **Buffel Grass** and other summer grasses as highest priority for EP.

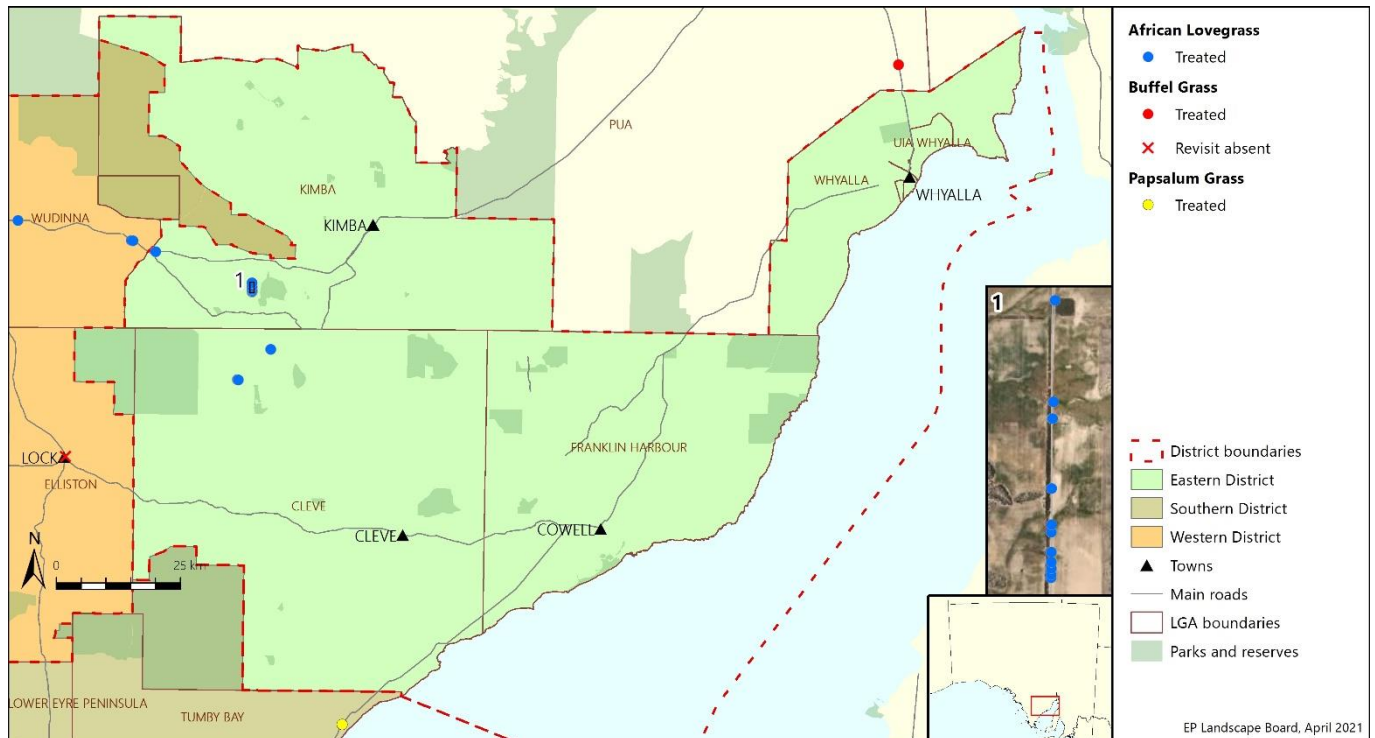


Figure 1: Priority pest plant control for the period 1 January to 31 March 2021

Pest animals

• Foxes

- Over two weeks in February, **fox bait distribution days** were held at ten locations in the district, including Waddikee, Kelly, Coolanie/Glynn, Darke Peak, Tuckey/Rudall, Mangalo, Elbow Hill, Wharminda, Arno Bay, and Buckleboo. Over 5,000 baits were distributed free of charge to assist landholder coordinated baiting programs, primarily to control fox numbers in the lead up to lambing.
- Fox baits are available free of charge for landholders at the Cleve and Whyalla offices by appointment.

• Rabbits

- Landholders have reported a rise in rabbit numbers on Eastern Eyre Peninsula. Baiting rabbits using 1080 poison oats (available for purchase from landscape officers) is recommended as an interim control measure until spring when the K5 rabbit virus can be released and is spread more efficiently between rabbit populations by fly vectors.
- 1080 poison oats are available to landholders for purchase from the Cleve and Whyalla Offices by appointment.



Photo 4: Landscape officer distributing fox baits to landholders.



Photo 5:

Baiting rabbits using 1080 poison oats (available for purchase from landscape officers), is recommended as an interim control measure until spring when the K5 virus can be released and spreads most effectively by flies.

• Deer

- Landscape officers are compiling data from landholder reports and have set motion cameras at deer hot spots around Buckleboo to estimate deer population numbers and assist in the development of a deer control strategy for the region.
- Eyre Reptile and Fauna Park are working with landscape officers to make deer fencing at the park compliant with Landscape South Australia Act 2019 regulations.



Photo 6: Deer tracks show deer have moved between scrub and crossed over a boundary fence on a property at Buckleboo near Kimba.

Photo 7:
Setting a motion camera on a dam to monitor deer activity at Buckleboo near Kimba.

Local government engagement for this period

- Nothing to report.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- [Media release](#) and social media around fox bait distribution days.
- [Deer media release](#) and liaison with landholders around feral deer control.
- Social media about rabbits on Facebook and Twitter.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Working with landholders to control feral deer populations around Buckleboo.
- African Boxthorn control on the Lincoln Highway from Whyalla to Cowell.
- Working with Local Government, landholders and Ag Bureau's to control African Boxthorn while it is active.
- Completion of district pest plant and animal action plans, which will outline priority pest plant and animal control activities in the district for the next year.

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 Eastern District, refer to the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Regional Projects**.

Program highlights this period

- Support was provided by landscape officers for the EP Summer Snorkelling program hosted by Experiencing Marine Sanctuaries and National Parks and Wildlife Services SA. The Flat Rock snorkel near Cowell was well attended and a snorkelling location in Whyalla has been scoped out for the 2022 summer snorkelling itinerary.
- Landscape officers from SA Arid Lands Landscape Board visited the saltmarshes near Whyalla to learn more about saltmarsh ecology and the saltmarsh programs which local EP landscape officers have been involved with since 2017.
- Ongoing liaison and support was provided to researchers working on the University of South Australia's Bushfoods Research Project.

Local government engagement for this period

- **Whyalla Council**
Landscape officers attended the Northern Coastline Working Group meetings. Whyalla Council have received substantial funding to upgrade facilities on the Northern Coastline and improve visitor infrastructure and experiences.

- Landscape officers worked with local government on the planning of the Cuttlefest which will take place next quarter.
- **Eyes on Eyre**
To provide advice for the Whyalla [Eyes on Eyre](#) program, landscape officers toured exemplar campsites at Yangie Bay and September Beach near Pt Lincoln, where advice was provided by the works supervisor of these sites. Photographs and information from the visit were collated and provided to local government to assist them with planning proposed campsites at Fitzgerald Bay on Whyalla's Northern Coastline.

Communications and community engagement for this period

- Landscape staff coordinated BirdLife Australia volunteers to undertake the Whyalla Saltpans *Summer Shorebird Count*, which is part of BirdLife Australia's *National Shorebird Monitoring Program*. More information about the survey is included in section 4 (pg.12) of the **Business Plan Achievement Report: Regional Projects, 3rd Quarter 2020-2021**.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Landscape officers will work with Whyalla Council to provide advice around a new project, being developed under the Northern Coastline Working Group.
- Landscape staff will provide support for the annual Cuttlefest event.



Photo 8: Experiencing Marine Sanctuaries summer snorkeling was well attended at Flat Rock near Cowell.

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 Eastern 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

Northern Coastline Track Closure Project

- Landscape officers met with Council to prioritise track closures at Douglas Point South Hill, and the Fitzgerald Bay (Windy Loo) campgrounds.
- Track closure works are underway, being implemented by a contractor.
- A variation to the scope of the original grant proposal will include revegetation works, with the planting of 360 native seedlings. The seedlings, including *Melaleuca lanceolata* (dry-land tea tree), *Eucalyptus gracilis* (yorrell), *Acacia papyrocarpa* (western myall), and *Senna artemisioides* (Senna), grown by local Trees for Life volunteer for the Eyre Peninsula Landscape Board, are to be planted by volunteers at Windy Loo and Point Lowly Campgrounds. Native tree seedlings will also be made available free to shack-owners to encourage planting these drought tolerant native species for shade around shacks in place of introduced species which can become pests.

Local government engagement for this period

Northern Coastline Track Closure and Revegetation Project

- Ongoing liaison.

Communications and community engagement for this period

Northern Coastline Track Closure and Revegetation Project

- Volunteer tree planting day is being organised for planting at Windy Loo and Point Lowly Campgrounds.
- Liaison with shack owners for give-away of native tree seedlings.

2021-22 Grassroots Grants

- Hincks Avenue Primary School – Gabmididi Manoo - meeting, site visit and project scoping for funding 2021-22 application.

Upcoming priorities for the next period

- Completion of 2020-21 Grassroots Grants program including site visits and assessments.
- Promote and provide assistance for Local Government, community groups etc. looking to apply for the new round of Grassroots Grants in 2021-22.

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