

Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board

MINUTES

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the lands of the Hills and Fleurieu region are the traditional lands for the Kurna, Peramangk and Ngarrindjeri Nations. We respect the Kurna, Peramangk and Ngarrindjeri people as the custodians of these lands, and that their cultural and heritage beliefs, and spiritual relationships with Country, are still important to their people today.

Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board Meeting #39

Date: 26/02/2025

Start Time: 9:30 am

Scheduled Finish Time: 1:00 pm (including lunch)

Location: Auchendarroch House - 17 Adelaide Road, Mount Barker SA 5251

Attendees: Board Members

David Greenhough (Chair), Chris West, Janet Klein Andy Lowe, Leanne Muffet, Amelia Graham, Sarah Day (online) and James Stacey.

Staff

Michael Garrod (General Manager), Ben Della Torre (Manager – Landscape Operations), Wendy Telfer (Manager – Planning, Engagement and Partnerships), Simon Jenkins (Team Leader – Business Services) Alison Skinner (Team Leader – Planning and MERI), and Emilee Vidau (Executive Officer).

Guests

Nick Whiterod and Jane French (from the Centre Manager for the Coorong Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth Research Centre)

Apologies:

Meeting Items

Preliminary and Procedural Matters

1.1 Welcome and apologies

The Chair acknowledged Country and welcomed members and guests to the meeting.

1.2 Conflict of Interest Disclosure (arising from agenda items)

J Stacey noted a potential conflict of interest relating to the in-camera item, M Garrod confirmed that whilst worth noting, it is not a conflict. No other conflicts of Interest disclosures arose from the agenda declared.

1.3 Consent Schedule

*The board **approved** and **agreed** the items on the Consent Schedule be adopted.*

Moved: L Muffet

Seconded: A Lowe

Carried

1.4 Any Other Business (to be covered in item 4)

4.1.1. Spring-fed dam issue

4.1.2. MyWater website

4.1.3. Mount Barker Wastewater

4.1.4. Landscape Board Forum

1.5 Minutes from the previous meeting

The board **confirmed** the minutes of meeting number 38, held on 11 December 2024 as a true and accurate record noting the following amendments:

- Under item 3.3 in relation to D Greenhough stepping down as Chair of Chairs within NRM Regions Australia:

Dot point read:

M Garrod advised the board that D Greenhough would be stepping out of the role as Chair of Chairs and position within NRM Australia. Limestone Coast Landscape Board Chair, P Schulze, will be transitioning into both roles.

Amended to:

M Garrod advised the board that D Greenhough would be stepping out of the role as Chair of Chairs and the Chairs' representative on NRM Regions Australia. The Limestone Coast Landscape Board Chair, P Schulz, will be transitioning into both roles.

Moved: L Muffet

Seconded: J Klein

Carried

1.6 Actions arising from previous meetings

The board **noted** the status of actions arising from the previous minutes.

Moved: A Lowe

Seconded: C West

Carried

1.7 Resolution Register

The board **noted** the Resolution Register.

Carried

Items (for noting or decision)

2.: **Presentation** – An update on the Coorong Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth Research Centre.

- N Whiterod and J French presented to the board, highlighting:
 - There are four governing bodies with DCCEEWW (the funding administrator).
 - originally there was four-years' funding and that has now been condensed to three.
 - Diverse and community driven projects being implemented by the research program.
 - There are four of the 25 current research projects in the Hills and Fleurieu region

Discussion followed:

- The Goyder steering and Goyder science committee were discussed, and it was noted that this has been functioning well.
- The board queried if there were any plans for continuation of the research center. J French confirmed a rebid has been put in for an additional 6 years, which, if successful would take the center to 2032.
- J Klein asked about the breadth of research being driven by community, and what gaps are present. N Whiterod noted that there are currently no gaps of note.
- S Day inquired about the potential for upstream engagement, acknowledging the impact of downstream factors. N Whiterod stated it is not currently on the table but is a continued discussion with the steering committee.

2.: ** J Harvey joined the meeting.

General Manager's Report

- M Garrod provided a summary of the report, highlighting:
 - The Deputy Premier has approved the \$4.4 million Dam Compliance project from the Landscape Priorities Fund, and the full compliance team is now actively engaged in its implementation.
 - The Deputy Premier further announced \$9.4 million has been made available in grants for landholders through Native Vegetation Council, with \$3.2 million available to the Hills and Fleurieu region.

- The ReBird the Ranges Action Plan launch event, held on 13 February was a success noting the efforts of W Telfer, D Pearce and the team.
- PIRSA has led a mid year budget bid to support the \$14 million, 10-year South Australian Feral Deer Eradication Program. As part of this process 6 Landscape regions have indicated a preparedness to seek access to retained earnings to support deer eradication efforts. Should this approach be endorsed by Treasury, a formal proposal will be brought to the board for consideration.
- The Landscape Board General Managers across the State have been discussing how to progress the Independent Review of the LSA Act recommendation by J Hill to resolve levy rate differences across South Australia, highlighting regional inequities and the various bases used to calculate these levies.
- The board discussed this levy issue, focusing on the following key points:
 - It was noted that if a consistent and equitable approach were adopted across all regions, there would be a significant increase in funding received.
 - The board discussed the need for a socio-economic assessment to be completed prior to any significant changes in rates being considered.
 - The Chairs Forum is currently undertaking the necessary background work to consider options and potentially propose a recommendation option or options after the state election in March 2026.
- Discussion followed:
 - The board queried whether staff are involved in promoting the funding by the Native Vegetation Council. It was confirmed that these grants are available to landholders, and Stewardship Officers are promoting the grants with landholders.
 - It was queried whether landholders could be encouraged to focus and scale up in specific areas of the region. Staff confirmed this, with W Telfer noting that for the ReBird the Ranges initiative, a large proportion of the grassy woodland needed is in the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape region and hopefully some landholders will take up this opportunity in that area too.

The board:

2.2.1 noted the General Manager's report.

Moved: J Harvey

Seconded: J Stacey

Carried

2. Quarterly Project Progress Report for Q2 2024-25

- The board took the paper as read and discussion followed:
 - A Skinner briefly noted it was a shorter format to remove any duplication with the General Managers report.
 - A Lowe emphasised the importance of the report, highlighting its clarity.

The board:

2.3.1 noted the quarterly report.

Moved: J Harvey

Seconded: C West

Carried

2. Biodiversity Bill for South Australia – Draft HFLB Submission

- A Skinner presented to the Board noting:
 - The significant effort put in by colleagues towards the joint Landscape Board response.

Discussion followed:

- L Muffet provided feedback to A Skinner prior to the meeting, which was taken as read.
- A brief discussion followed regarding the transparency and implementation of the Biodiversity Bill, and emphasising the importance of appropriate resourcing, oversight, and reporting to ensure its goals are achieved.
- It was noted by the board that some of the points about the importance of reporting are only referenced in the overarching letter and should be included in the detailed feedback as well. The board agreed that subject to staff taking on board feedback provided, the board is comfortable for staff to finalise and submit the response.

Action

- 1) Final submission to be circulated to board members post submission out of session.

Responsible Officer: W Telfer

The board:

2.4.1 considered the draft HFLB submission to SA Biodiversity Bill consultation, provided feedback, and **endorsed** a final submission be made by 27 February.

Moved: A Lowe

Seconded: J Klein

Carried

2.1 Board Committee Membership

- The Board Committee Membership paper was taken as read, and discussion followed:
 - J Harvey requested time commitments are added to each committee, aiding in board members understanding in volunteering for committees.
 - The board queried where the Water Allocation Advisory Committee Terms of Reference (ToR) were, and it was agreed that they would be added to the board's web portal for reference.

Conversation followed in relation to membership of the Community Engagement Committee:

- The board agreed that the voice of a First Nations representative would be desirable but that it puts a single representative in a difficult position if they need to talk on behalf of three Nations.
- The board agreed that ideally a youth representative be included. A discussion followed regarding age restrictions. It was noted that specifying an age range may not be necessary, but the conversation was valuable.

S Day queried the boards position on whether a "voice for nature" should be included among committee members, D Greenhough responded that all representatives would play part of this role and it could be part of the selection criteria.

Action

- 2) Approved TOR for Water Allocation Advisory Committee to be added to the Board Portal.

Responsible Officer: E Vidau

Action

- 3) A schedule outlining committee membership and estimated time commitments be formulated and provided to board members out of session.

Responsible Officer: W Telfer

The board:

2.5.1 approved the establishment of a Community Engagement Committee and **approved** the Terms of Reference for the Committee

Moved: L Muffet

Seconded: C West

Carried

2.5.1 discussed and **endorsed** the appointment of board members and chairing arrangements for its committees as follows:

Committee	Board members	Chair	Member (proxy chair)
Risk & Performance Committee	D Greenhough S Day	D Greenhough	Andy Brown & Chris Young
Water Resources Committee	A Lowe J Stacey	A Lowe	J Stacey
Eastern MLR Water Advisory Committee	J Klein J Stacey	J Klein	J Stacey
Western MLR Water Advisory Committee	J Harvey C West	J Harvey	C West
Community Engagement	L Muffet A Graham C West	L Muffet	A Graham

Moved: J Klein

Seconded: L Muffet

Carried

2.1 Pest Control Fees and Charges Policy

- B Della Torre provided an overview, highlighting:
 - The policy was initially approved in 2023, and more recently the statewide Landscape Operations Managers updated the pricing schedule to ensure consistency across the state, which is now reflected in the updated policy.

Discussion followed:

- D Greenhough queried whether the program would result in any financial loss. B Della Torre confirmed that it is a cost recovery program, with land managers absorbing costs.
- There was further discussion regarding the management of Roadside pest weeds. The board raised the question of whether roadside weed management should be included in the response to the Biodiversity Bill. It was clarified that this issue is already addressed under the Landscape Act. M Garrod noted that this matter could be further explored during the government's review of the Landscape Act.

The board:

2.6.1 Endorsed the Pest Control Fees and Charges Policy

Moved: C West

Seconded: A Lowe

Carried

2. Requested Carry-over of Funds and Expenditure Authority

- S Jenkins spoke to the paper and the paper was taken as read by the board. Discussion followed:
 - The board noted previous carry-overs have not been approved for some boards, but M Garrod explained that with stronger 5-year forward planning HFLB has been more successful in having its requested carry-overs approved. A Graham queried how HFLB staff forecasted a shortfall in external income for 2028/29. S Jenkins confirmed the formula was based on the projects and services we want to be doing in this period whilst considering what external income we can expect in that period. W Telfer added that efforts to secure further external funding will continue. M Garrod confirming that the carry-over serves as risk mitigation.
 - A Lowe noted some useful information about how the board's finances work was covered in a presentation at the Board Induction Day. A soft copy of information provided by Mark Priadko at the induction would be helpful for board members to refer to.
 - The board inquired about the impact if the carry-over was rejected. M Garrod mentioned other risk mitigation strategies, while D Greenhough pointed out that although the term "shortfall" seems alarming, it is used as a protective strategy.

Action

- 4) Board members to receive a soft copy of the induction materials and presentation provided by Mark Priadko on Public Sector Finances.

Responsible Officer: M Garrod & E Vidau

The board:

2.7.1 endorsed the request to carry-over funds, and associated expenditure authority of \$848,000 from the 2024-25 financial year to future years.

Moved: J Klein

Seconded: J Harvey

Carried

2.1 Draft 2025/26 Business Plan Budget

- The paper taken as read by the board, discussion followed:
 - S Day enquired if the nature budget line should be included under each of the other priorities, given its integration within them. M Garrod clarified that each budget line represents one of the five priorities of the five-year plan.
 - M Garrod further noted that discussion regarding the next five-year plan will begin at the March board workshop.

The board:

2.8.1 noted and provided feedback on the draft budget for the 2025-26 Business Plan.

Moved: L Muffet

Seconded: A Lowe

Carried

2.9 Debt recovery and write-off, waiver policy and Procedure

- The board accepted the paper as read, and no further discussion ensued.

The board:

2.9.1 approved the Debt recovery, write off and waiver policy and procedure.

Moved: L Muffet Seconded: J Harvey

Carried

2.9.2 approved writing off \$5,895.55 of debts from 2018-19

Moved: J Harvey Seconded: A Lowe

Carried

2.10 Compliance Update

B Della Torre spoke to the paper, highlighting the following key points:

- As previously mentioned, the \$4.4 Million for the Dam compliance project has being secured, noting the attendance of B Macdonald, Senior Compliance Officer and B Ibbotson, Program Manager Dam education and compliance.
- The Program will include; compliance campaign, education and awareness raising and state wide change detection program.
- Compliance team is currently working through a triage process for approximately 450 new and 300 enlarged dams since 2019.
- 10 notices to rectify have been issued, noting 8 are complying with the conditions.
- A management agreement has been finalised in the ERD Court relating to the Hay Flat feral deer property between the landowner and the board
- Currently 26 active deer farms across the region. Although most are compliant, 2 land managers have had warrants issued and executed in early February, these landholders remain non-compliant.

Discussion followed:

- It was asked who had been responsible for surveillance and compliance since 2019. M Garrod confirmed that, while no agency was directly assigned responsibility, ownership lies with Local Government and the Landscape Boards.
- It was noted dam compliance is a statewide issue, and the lack of change detection technology had previously made monitoring difficult.
- The board queried whether additional funding would be allocated after the 3 years for surveillance. It was noted that although no extra funding will be provided, the adaption of the new software will monitor this on an ongoing basis.
- A Lowe noted heavy pushback was received from the Invasive Species Council regarding the ABC Program "Eat the Invaders". It was noted that the board would offer support should any further pushback be encountered regarding the deer eradication program.

The board:

2.10.1 noted the H&F compliance update.

Moved: C West Seconded: L Muffet

Carried

Standing Items

3.1 ** S Day left the meeting.

Finance Overview

- The Financial Overview for the year to date as of 31 January 2025 was taken as read. Brief discussion followed:
 - J Harvey queried what was considered a moveable vehicle. S Jenkins confirmed it referred to trailers and bait layers.

The board:

3.1.1 accepted the financial reports and statistics for the period ending 31 January 2025.

Moved: A Lowe Seconded: J Klein

Carried

3.2 Work Health and Safety Update

- S Jenkin provided the Work Health and Safety Update noting:
 - The update on the incident reported to the Board in December, confirming reinforcement of policies and procedures.

- A new incident that took place on 10 February, at a compliance inspection. The staff were spoken to in an unacceptable manner by the land manager. Staff followed a Compliance Plan as per policy and debriefed after the inspection.
- In response to the increase in compliance activity a review of office security has commenced and staff that have public interactions completed a 2-day 'Conflict Management' course the week of 17 February.

The board:

3.3.2 noted the Work Health and Safety update as at 21 February 2025.

Moved: L Muffet

Seconded: A Lowe

Carried

3.3 Board Member Activity Register

- D Greenhough noted his last day as Chair of Chairs is 28 February, reiterating that P Schulz has transitioned into this position. D Greenhough thanked M Garrod for his support and assistance during his tenure.

The board:

3.3.1 noted the current register of meetings and events attended by the Chair and board members in their capacity as representatives.

Moved: J Harvey

Seconded: A Lowe

Carried

3.4 Board Forward Agenda

- D Greenhough suggestion with the new structure of Peramangk, to explore the opportunity for them to attend a board meeting or the potential for a joint workshop. W Telfer noted we should look at this for Kurna and Ngarrindjeri nations also.
- A Lowe noted that due to personal reasons the next Water Resources Steering Committee would need to either be end of April or pushed to June. Further querying if the minutes from the February meeting had been completed. E Vidau confirmed the minutes are yet to be finalized.

Action

- 5) Investigate joint workshop or attendance at HFLB board meeting with Peramangk (and other First Nations).

Responsible Officer: M Garrod

The board:

3.5.1 Noted the Forward Agenda.

Carried

3.5 Register of Interests

The board **noted** the Register of Interests.

Carried

3.6 Correspondence

The board **noted** the correspondence record provided.

Carried

Other Business

- 4.1** 4.1.1 – J Stacey received feedback from residents in Wistow of a spring-fed dam on Crown land.

Action

- 6) J Stacey to provide further information to allow for the issue to be investigated

Responsible Officer: M Garrod and B Della Torre

- 4.1.2 – J Harvey raised on going issues with DEW MyWater, noting many irrigators did not receive their roll-over credits until January, confirming this is 3 months later than previous years. Both J Harvey and J Stacey emphasized the large, negative impact this has had on the community.

- 4.1.3 – J Harvey also informed the board that an MOU will be signed between McLaren Vale and Mt Barker Council for the transfer of Mt Barker's wastewater to McLaren Vale

- 4.1.4 – D Greenough highlighted the Landscape Forum coming up in May and facilitated by Green Adelaide. M Garrod spoke to a rough agenda for the 2-day forum and noted E Vidau had sent out an updated diary invite and email to ELT and board members, E Vidau will further be registering attendance and any requested accommodation on behalf of the board.


In Camera / Confidential Papers

In accordance with the Landscape SA Act 2019, section 23 (5) the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board orders the public be excluded to receive, discuss or consider any prescribed information or matter in confidence

5.1 Complaint relating to Compliance issue

Meeting Closure

- 6.1 **Next meeting:** Wednesday – 16 April 2025
Venue: Training Room - Mt Barker Community Centre - 3 Dumas St - Mt Barker
- 6.2 **Meeting close** – 1:31pm

Endorsed 	David Greenhough Presiding Member Hills Fleurieu Landscape Board 16 April 2025
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