

# MURRAYLANDS AND RIVERLAND LANDSCAPE BOARD

## Minutes

### Acknowledgement of Country

The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board acknowledges the First Peoples of the lands and waters we live and work upon. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge and respect their deep spiritual and cultural connection to Country.

Meeting Title: Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board Meeting 11-25	
18 December 2025	
<b>Start Time:</b>	9:30am
<b>Location:</b>	Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board, Berri Office 28 Vaughan Terrace, Berri SA 5343 DEW Berri Conference Room and DEW Berri Meeting Room
<b>Present:</b>	<u>Board:</u> Frances Simes (Chair) Greg Cock, Tammy O'Malley, Andrew Biele (Teams), Jason Size, Brian Lund, Samantha Blight, Karen Eckermann (Teams), Kylie Moritz <u>Staff:</u> Bryan McDonald (General Manager), Amy Lee (Manager Strategy and Engagement), Renata Rix (Manager, Sustainable Landscapes), Michelle Finch (Manager Corporate Services), Tamika Parker (Business Support Coordinator, Murraylands), Arkellah Irving (Rural Resilience Coordinator, Item 9 - Teams) <u>Visitors:</u> Barb Cowey (Principal Regional Advisor, PIRSA, Item 5 - Teams)
<b>Apologies</b>	

Item	Item Title
1.	<b>Welcome, Apologies and Agenda check.</b> Frances Simes, declared the meeting open at 9:30am and welcomed all present, acknowledging the Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and water on which we meet.
2.	<b>Conflict of Interest</b> NIL
3.	<b>Board Calendar</b> The Annual Calendar of board meeting items was provided to the board.
4.	Adoption of <b><u>Minutes from the previous meeting (10-25)</u></b> held 27 November 2025 <b><i>Decision: The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board approved the Minutes of Meeting 10-25 held 27 November 2025</i></b>

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5.	<p><b>PIRSA Update:</b> Barb Cowey provided a verbal update:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CEO Karoonda East Murray District Council, Scott Reardon, sent Drone Footage of a sand drift on Kunlara Road, there is concern that the road will have to be closed due to this issue. This will cause significant detours for residents.</li> <li>• The board discussed with Barb that regarding sand drifting issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There are potentially 4 councils in the Murraylands and Riverland Region that are affected by sand drifting issues.</li> <li>○ Clay spreading may help mitigate the issue.</li> <li>○ Council is being impacted by the cost of moving the sand off the roads.</li> <li>○ The compliance process will need to be undertaken when dealing with the effected landholders, this includes speaking to the landholder, offering support, raising awareness and explaining obligations.</li> <li>○ The issue has been raised at the Drought Taskforce level.</li> <li>○ District Staff are reporting the issue as they come across it.</li> <li>○ Look at bringing councils together to have a joint approach.</li> <li>○ The discussion acknowledged not only the value of roadside vegetation as a biodiversity reservoirs but also as barriers to localised drift over roads.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• There has been an internal PIRSA meeting for anyone working in the Riverland and Northern Mallee Regions, this is so the situational context of the region isn't lost.</li> <li>• Varroa Mite Field Officers are happy to speak to any farmers not just beekeepers.</li> <li>• CCW has a great turnout for the Agave Workshop with 50 attending. The workshop explained the process of transitioning out of wine grapes</li> <li>• There may be more hay drops in the near future within the region.</li> </ul>
<b>ITEMS FOR DECISION</b>	
6.	<p>Board Workplan The MR Landscape Board discussed the Board Workplan, key points of this discussion were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Board members agreed with the proposal.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision: The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board</b></p> <p><b>a. Approves</b></p> <p><b>i. the proposed meeting schedule of six ordinary meetings per calendar year, held every second month from February (i.e.</b></p>

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	<p><i>February, April, June, August, October, December), as outlined in section 5 and attachment 1; and</i></p> <p><i>ii. Approves the use of “off months” (non-meeting months) for targeted strategic workshops, servicing of advisory committees and working groups as needed, and Board field trips where appropriate</i></p> <p><i>b. Endorses a revised of standard format for Board meeting days comprising:</i></p> <p><i>i. A pre-meeting strategic workshop with invited Partners/stakeholders (one hour) followed by a shared morning tea.</i></p> <p><i>ii. A Preliminary closed session for formal Board business followed by an open agenda session for non-confidential business.</i></p> <p><i>c. Notes that the revised schedule continues to meet statutory and governance obligations and is consistent with practice across other SA Landscape Boards.</i></p>
7.	<p><b>Draft Regional Landscape Plan 2026-2031</b></p> <p>The MR Landscape Board discussed the draft regional plan 2026-2031, key points of this discussion were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are several minor amendments to be made before it goes out to consultation.</li> <li>• The document goes out for public consultation on 12 January 2026.</li> <li>• Discussion re some minor tidy-up of the draft prior to consultation re wording, spelling &amp; photo titles</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Amy Lee to send out list of who we are targeting for consultation.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> <i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board approves the draft 2026-2031 Regional Landscape Plan for public consultation.</i></p>
<b>COMMITTEES</b>	
8.	<p><b>Water Advisory Committee</b></p> <p>The MR Landscape Board reviewed the minutes of the Water Advisory Committee, the Mallee Peake Roby Sherlock Community Reference Group and the Marne Saunders Community Reference Group.</p> <p><b>Decision:</b> <i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board</i></p> <p><i>a. Notes the minutes of meeting 30 for the Water Advisory Committee; and</i></p>

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	<p><b><i>b. Endorsed the recommendations of the Water Advisory Committee including:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><i>i. The Minutes from previous meeting 29 held on 14 August have been adopted as circulated; and</i></b></li> <li><b><i>ii. The WAC would like to see a consistent and coordinated message delivered from South Australia in its submissions for the Basin Plan review; and</i></b></li> <li><b><i>iii. The WAC is in support of holding a joint meeting with the Board in February, coinciding with the commencement of the public consultation phase of the Basin Plan Review to hear a presentation from the MDBA; and</i></b></li> <li><b><i>iv. It is recommended that the Board formally acknowledge and extend its appreciation to Susan Close for her dedication and significant contributions during her tenure as Minister for Climate, Environment and Water; and</i></b></li> <li><b><i>v. The Board support the separation of the Peake Roby Sherlock and Mallee Community Reference Groups, with individual groups to be established for each WAP.</i></b></li> </ul> <p><b><i>c. Notes the Minutes of meeting 6 of the Mallee, Peake Roby Sherlock Community Reference Group; and</i></b></p> <p><b><i>d. Notes the Minutes of meeting 6 of the Marne Saunders Community Reference Group.</i></b></p>
<b>ITEMS FOR NOTING</b>	
9.	<p><b>Future Drought Fund – Turning Plans to Impact</b></p> <p>The MR Landscape Board received a presentation from Arkellah Irving, Rural Resilience Coordinator on the Future Drought Fund and the MR Plan. Key points of this presentation were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arkellah introduced herself</li> <li>• She then explained her role and who is involved, the MRLB, LGA and RDA</li> <li>• Explained the obstacles and hurdles in place regarding the MR Plan</li> <li>• Spoke about the opportunities within the role and what outcomes could be achieved</li> <li>• Spoke about the 3 projects the MRLB put up for short term funding under the FDF process</li> <li>• Explained the next steps.</li> </ul>
10.	<p><b>Chairs Report</b></p> <p>The Chair provided a written report to the board members. In addition to this written report the following was noted:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Caught up with Kelly-Anne Saffon the Cross Border Commissioner. She is interested in catching up with General Manager Bryan McDonald.</li> </ul> <p><b>Decision: The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board noted the Chairs Reports.</b></p>
11.	<p><b>Board Member's Report</b></p> <p>A record of activities undertaken by individual board members was presented to the board. In addition to the written reports the following was noted:</p> <p><b>Andrew Biele:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Winds have been playing havoc; it has forced some to stop harvest as the winds has been so strong yields have been blown out the header.</li> <li>Yields are considerably down; some farmers have finished early some will still be going into the new year.</li> <li>Gazanias are becoming a real problem <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renata and Hannah presented to the Loxton Waikerie District Council, the next steps include getting an APVMA approved control method, that can support landholders across different land uses, this will then assist with the review of the weed declarations.</li> <li>PIRSA are starting the review of the declared weed policy soon, a Landscape SA Representative has been selected from Hills and Fleurieu to represent all the Boards.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Karen Eckermann:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attended Tony Pasin's forum 'The Reality of Net Zero' with Mat Canavan as the primary speaker. It was amusing but well attended. I heard some alarming things, but the Landscapes boards were mentioned in regards particularly to Scope 2 Emissions and farmers being compelled to oblige and calculate. I did not quite understand and would love some info on this? What our officers ask? At the forum also lots of anti-climate talk of course and negativity around SA's renewables push etc. Very much demonised the SA Govt so was a bit sad. Overall, it was interesting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Greg Cock:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In addition to the report tabled interest was noted in the concern for wild dog numbers in Ngarkat resulting from the changed Victorian policy, as described in PIRSA's report to Parliament. An ensuing discussion highlighted the Board's need to monitor this through our member on the Box Flat Committee.</li> </ul> <p><b>Jason Size:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>caught up with Barb Cowey to speak about regional issues.</li> </ul>

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	<p><b><i>Decision: The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board noted the Board Members' Reports.</i></b></p>
12.	<p><b>General Manager's &amp; ELT Report</b></p> <p>The General Manager and ELT provided their report, outlining the key focus areas over the last month. In addition to the report supplied:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing to work with the shared WHS resource</li> <li>• Over the next 60 days the team will be focusing on the organisation's strategic focus. An update will be brought back to the board</li> <li>• Most recent GM's meeting had a focus around the Landscape Priority Fund.</li> <li>• Work on the Risk Management Framework is under way, focusing on the risk register.</li> <li>• Work Health Safety policies and statements are out for staff consultation currently.</li> <li>• There have been several vehicle incidents recently, staff have been reminded to be vigilant when driving</li> <li>• Conversations have been held with leadership around finding savings, and these will be factored into the planning for the next financial year.</li> <li>• A review will be undertaken for the spend that has happened in the first half of this financial year.</li> <li>• Timelines around the River Murray Water Allocation Plan review were explained and unless a major change is required as part of the Basin Plan review, the official date for this review is 2033.</li> <li>• The State Landscape Strategy is still ongoing, UPRS is supporting the development of the content.</li> <li>• There is a discussion around Goat management in the Range Lands and the policy around it.</li> <li>• There is a state working group that has coordinated a goat project with the South Australian Arid Lands Landscape Board as lead, focusing on how to reduce the number of goats.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Decision: The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board noted the General Manager's Report and attachments.</i></b></p>
13.	<p><b>Finance Summary Reports</b></p> <p>The MR Landscape Board review the Finance Summary Reports</p> <p><b><i>Decision: The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board note the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Statement of Financial Position as at 30 November 2025</i></b></p>
14.	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>The Correspondence list for September was presented to the Board.</p>

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	<i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board noted the correspondence.</i>
15.	<b>Action List</b> The action list was reviewed by the board.
16.	<b>Other Business</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grassroots Grants - The GRG workshop meeting has been included into the workplan and is scheduled to be undertaken on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May in Murray Bridge, the invite will be extended once the board membership is decided.</li> </ul>
	<b>Next meeting details</b> – 26 February 2026 – Murray Bridge Water Advisory Committee – 26 February 2026 – Murray Bridge Box Flat Wild Dog Coordinating Committee – 16 March 2026 Finance Risk and Audit Committee – 17 March 2026 – Teams
	<b>Meeting closed at 12:36pm</b>

<b>ENDORSED</b>   <a href="#">Frances Simes (Feb 27, 2026 11:58:16 GMT+10.5)</a>	Frances Simes <b>Presiding Member</b> <b>Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board</b> Date: 26/02/2026
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