

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 2-25	
27 March 2025	
Start Time:	9.30am
Location:	Berri Landscapes Office
Present:	<p><u>Board:</u> Frances Simes (Chair), Andrew Biele, Samantha Blight, Brian Lund, Tammy O'Malley,</p> <p><u>Staff:</u> Andrew Meddle (General Manager), Renata Rix (Manager, Sustainable Landscapes), Amy Lee (Manager, Strategy and Engagement), Michelle Finch (Manager, Business Services), Helane Norman (Executive Officer),</p> <p>Items 5: Darren Willis (Team leader, Wetlands and Floodplains), Sandy Gunter (Team leader, Communications and Engagement)</p> <p><u>Guests:</u> Dara Frankel (PIRSA),</p>
Apologies:	Greg Cock, Jason Size

Item	Item Title
1.	<p>Welcome, Apologies and Agenda check.</p> <p>Frances Simes, Chair, declared the meeting open at 8.45am and welcomed all present, acknowledging the Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and water on which we meet.</p>
2.	<p>Conflict of Interest – No new disclosures</p>
3.	<p>Board Calendar</p> <p>The Annual Calendar of board meeting items was provided to the board.</p>
4.	<p>Adoption of Minutes from the previous meeting (1-25) held 27 February 2025</p> <p>Decision: The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board approved the Minutes of Meeting 1-25 held 27 February 2025.</p>
5.	<p>Team Presentations</p> <p>Wetlands and Floodplains - Darren Willis</p> <p>The Team Leader, Wetlands and Floodplains presented a summary of the wetlands teams and their work.</p> <p>Communications and Engagement – Sandy Gunter</p> <p>The Team Leader, Communications and Engagement provided an overview of the work of the expanded team, which now includes the Citizen Science program.</p>

Item	Item Title
	<p>The board appreciated the work of the Comms and Engagement team and the use of modern technologies. Concern was raised that the traditional media especially newspapers, are not being utilised to the full extent. Board members can provide contacts of local newsletters to the comms team, where media can be lifted from job adverts, media releases, MRL News, etc and sent to them. Sandy would appreciate the opportunity to meet with editors of newsletters.</p> <p>Other suggestions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower staff to spread the word. • Take opportunity to promote the business as a whole while doing radio interviews • AI can help with team capacity • Breaking down the 'community' into smaller groups to understand and target precisely. <p>The board thanked both presenters.</p> <p>ACTION: Provide Sandy Gunter/Helane with names and contact details of local newsletters and editors so Sandy can make contact.</p>
6.	<p>PIRSA update</p> <p>Dara Frankel presented a report on happenings in the Murraylands and Riverland region within PIRSA highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIRSA Connecting Communities Events grants has been extended to the end of June unless expended beforehand • Annette Scanlon to run workshops on pest birds (pigeons and corellas) with LG and horticultural growers in the Riverland during April. • MR Plan - PIRSA has implementation funding to address actions in the plan • PIRSA promoting agritourism, SATC promotion as well, for farmers to start tourism opportunities • Sustainable Communities program is a \$20m to mitigate the impact of water recovery in the community • Alex Cannon-Leyson has been appointed General Manager of Riverland Wine • If you have any information of what is happening regarding current drought, please let Dara know.
7.	<p>Chairs Report</p> <p>The Chair provided a written report, elaborating on the Chairs Forum held on 19th March:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion on the Act review, Dan Jordan and Graeme Green discussed easy wins on the act review, in relation to the drought. • Water issues: Farm dams – user benefits vs environment benefits, WAP's and alternative water sources, Mywater failure to deliver, Water for Good and National water agreements • Boards need to look at their needs as distinct from DEW's • Executive Officer Kate Forrest has been appointed • Andrew provided a presentation on our Regional Plan review process • Next Chairs forum is the 12 June.

Item	Item Title
	<p>Possibility that the Carp Frenzy (website) could be used to promote stories where carp has been removed in wetlands, however message would have to be managed.</p> <p><i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board noted the Chair's Report.</i></p>
8.	<p>Board Member's Report</p> <p>A record of activities undertaken by individual board members was presented to the board. Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Andrew Biele reported the fire danger season has been extended to 30 April. Andrew also reported that he will be attending a MMCCC Murray Zircon Community Day on 11 April. Tammy O'Malley participated in the TRAIL Emerging Leadership Program which was a challenging 5-day camping experience, and great learning opportunity Farm Forestry Landcare Field day speaker Greg Butler spoke on biochar. Government is now providing carbon credits for woody weeds which have been used to produce biochar, with carbon credits available to use. <p><i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board noted the Board Members' Reports.</i></p>
9.	<p>General Manager's Report</p> <p>The General Manager provided his report, outlining the activities undertaken by the General Manager over the last two months along with the Communications activity and the referrals the board has been looking at.</p> <p>Highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MR Plan – unsure of funding for the implementation Sustainable Communities program - \$20m over 4 years, and until it is clear where the water will be lost out of the region and the impact this will have, uncertainty will continue to occur in this space. Berri Depot – current likelihood that we will remain on the current site, with conversations occurring to better utilise the space, but alternative premises offer a great opportunity to rationalise our current three sites. Karoonda – District staff will continue to have a presence at Karoonda, but unsure of the space that is required, however depot access will remain as is. <p><i>That the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board noted the General Manager's Report and attachments.</i></p>
ITEMS FOR DECISION	
10.	<p>Future Board Members, WAC Chair and Board Representation on Committees</p> <p>The General Manager provided to the board background on board member representation on committees and the need for a new Water Advisory Committee chair, due to recent changes with board membership.</p> <p>Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board decided at its previous meeting that they would like board membership increased to 9, and discussion followed with regard to people who might be interested in standing on the board.

Item	Item Title
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frances Simes will chair the April WAC meeting and invite Penny Smith to attend the meeting with the view of possibly taking on the role. • Inclusion of the Murray Zircon MMCCC committee on list of committees. • Board representation on CLLMM Research Centre discussed and Sam Blight will undertake this position as she is already attending these meetings. <p>ACTION: Board members to provide possible candidates for consideration as board members to the Chair or General Manager</p> <p><i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board approved:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>That Jim Godden continues as Chair of the FINANCE, RISK AND AUDIT COMMITTEE until 30 June 2027;</i> <i>That the FINANCE, RISK AND AUDIT COMMITTEE continue as is until 30 April 2025;</i> <i>That Frances Simes continues to Chair the Water Advisory Committee until a suitable chair is found;</i> <i>That Jason Size and Frances Simes be appointed to the WATER PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE until 30 June 2027;</i> <i>That Tammy O'Malley be appointed as the board representative, and Andrew Biele be appointed as the proxy for the BOX FLAT WILD DOG COORDINATING COMMITTEE to serve until 30 June 2027;</i> <i>That the Grassroots Grants Assessment Panel for 2025 be Jason Size, Andrew Biele and Sam Blight, with Tammy O'Malley able to assist if required;</i> <i>That Andrew Biele be the board representative on the Murray Mallee Community Consultative Committee until 30 June 2027</i> <i>That Sam Blight be the board representative on the CLLMM Research Centre; and</i> <i>That possible candidates for consideration as board members be provided to the Chair or General Manager.</i>
11.	<p>Board business planning</p> <p>The Manager Corporate Services provided a presentation on the proposed business planning process for 2025-26 along with a high-level operating budget. The process, including the information exchange will be reviewed after the plan is adopted, and other options may be considered if it is felt there is a more appropriate way.</p>
12.	<p>Reductions in Water Levy</p> <p>The Manager Strategy and Engagement provided insight into the issues the board are facing and their likely impact regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the difficulties collecting the minimum fee from water licences with zero allocation, and the impact of this on our budget, • the likelihood of a proportion of the River Murray water levy transferring to the Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board and • the large component of work delivered by the MR Wetland's team in the Hills and Fleurieu area.

Item	Item Title
	<p>The board is disappointed about its lack of prior knowledge of the zero allocation issues, and concerned about the impact of sharing the River Murray levy allocation will have on the board's budget, with further discussions to occur.</p> <p><i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. noted the reasons for licences with zero allocations to be no longer charged the minimum fee and approve for these licensees to be notified of this change;</i> <i>b. noted that further discussions will be had with DEW Water Licensing around the loss of revenue to the MR Landscape Board due to the changed administration arrangements;</i> <i>c. approved in principle the redistribution of the category two River Murray water levy to ensure Hills and Fleurieu Landscape Board receives their proportion of water levy income consistent with the principles used for other shared prescribed water resource areas, pending final calculations and that discussions will continue regarding category 1; and</i> <i>d. noted that further discussions will be had with HF Landscape Board about the Wetland Team services that are currently delivered in their region.</i>
13.	<p>State Election Commitments</p> <p>The General Manager provided a verbal report on what the landscape board would like to portray to the state government prior to the election next year. Issues around Water Reform and Adequacy and Equity of regional vs urban levies will be made to State Government.</p> <p><i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board endorsed the comments to be made to State Government.</i></p>
14.	<p>Firearms Policy</p> <p>The Manager Sustainable Landscapes is proposing the reintroduction of the use of Firearms by certain staff within the Sustainable Landscapes Team to humanely destroy pest animals in a responsible and timely manner. This has previously been outsourced and in order for this task to be undertaken by staff, a Firearms Policy has been drafted for consideration by the board, noting that other operational documents will need to be developed and approvals sought.</p> <p><i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>a. Approved the Firearms Policy (Attachment 1); and</i> <i>b. Noted that operational requirements to implement the Firearms Policy is subject to further ELT approval.</i>
COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS	
15.	<p>Finance Risk and Audit Report</p> <p>The Manager Corporate Services presented the Finance Reports to the end of February to the board.</p>

Item	Item Title
	<i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board noted the attached Statement of Comprehensive Income and Statement of Financial Position as at 28 February 2025.</i>
16.	<p>Box Flat Wild Dog Coordinating Committee</p> <p>The draft minutes of the recent Box Flat Wild Dog coordinating committee were shared with the board with Tammy O'Malley and staff providing additional information.</p> <p>PIRSA's Annette Scanlon is proposing a collaborative approach to deliver aerial baiting to control wild dogs in Ngarkat, which is a contentious program, but needing support from Landscape Boards and NPWS.</p> <p>The board's approach has softened, in light of genetic advice and science, and there have been low numbers of dog attacks in South Australia.</p> <p>Landscape staff will need to look closely at the reported data, and get more detailed information on each sighting, and also look at the future of the committee.</p> <p><i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board noted the draft minutes of the Box Flat Wild Dog Coordinating Committee meeting held on 17 March.</i></p>
ITEMS FOR NOTING	
17.	<p>NRM Regions Australia Strategic Plan</p> <p>The General Manager shared the NRM Regions Australia Strategic Plan with the board.</p> <p><i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board noted the NRM Regions Australia Strategic Plan 2025–2030.</i></p>
18.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>The Correspondence list for March was presented to the board.</p> <p><i>The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board noted the correspondence.</i></p>
19.	<p>Action List</p> <p>The Action list was reviewed by the board.</p>
	<p>Next meeting details – 1 May at Karoonda</p> <p>Water Advisory Committee – 10 April at Murray Bridge</p> <p>Finance Risk and Audit Committee – 15 April</p> <p>Box Flat Wild Dog Coordinating Committee – 17 March at Lameroo</p>
	The meeting closed at 3.10pm.

<p>ENDORSED</p> <p><i>frances simes</i></p> <p><small>frances simes (May 2, 2025 10:44 GMT+9.5)</small></p>	<p>Frances Simes</p> <p>Presiding Member</p> <p>Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board</p> <p>Date: May 2, 2025</p>
--	--