

Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board

Performance Report Highlights

Quarter 1 | July - September 2025

Outcomes aligned with the 2025-26 annual business plan investment and priorities



From the General Manager

I am proud to present this report, which summarises the landscape board's activities and performance over the past 3 months and tracks our progress towards delivering the 5-year Regional Landscape Plan and the Annual Business Plan.

The report provides the regular review of programs, services and projects, and highlights achievements, key partnerships and other related matters that have occurred during the period.

This report is one of the organisation's primary reporting tools used to deliver performance related information to landscape board members, the organisation and the wider community.

I hope that you will find its content valuable and informative.

Bryan McDonald
General Manager

Acknowledgement of Country

The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board acknowledges Aboriginal people as the First Peoples and Nations of the lands and water that we live and work upon, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge and respect the deep spiritual connection and the relationship that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

QUARTER AT A GLANCE

Working in partnership with regional communities to deliver a healthy and resilient landscape



289,790 ha benefitted from **pest animal control**



12 on-ground trial sites have been established or maintained



2,171 ha benefitted from **pest weed control**



237 communication materials published



13,000 ha of wetlands and surrounding floodplains managed



5,761 followers on social media



Area surveyed

16,870 ha for land management

5,451 ha for threatened species recovery



9 Radio, TV and newspaper **interviews** conducted



Engaging with **1,672 people** at **111 events**



112 schools supported and **43 schools** actively involved in the education program



584 interactions with **landholders and community** members to provide support and technical advice



36 referrals responded to by landscape board staff



6 compliance issues investigated

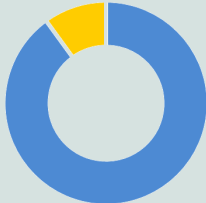
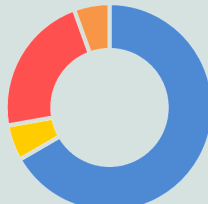
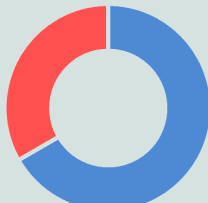
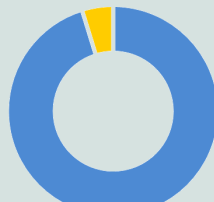
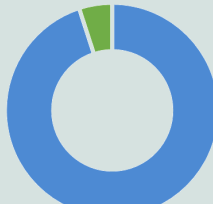
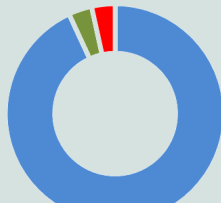


7 WAA permits received and processed

QUARTER AT A GLANCE



In quarter 1 of 2025-26, the following progress was made, and program delivery is predominantly **on track** for the financial year.

Strategic Priority	Annual Business Plan Programs	Program Strategies
Sustainable agricultural and pastoral landscapes	Sustainable agriculture Carbon farming outreach program Pest plant and animal management	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On track (9) Not started (1)
Sustainable water use	Sustainable irrigation Water planning and management Water allocation planning Pest plant and animal management	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On track (12) Not started (1) Behind schedule (4) Postponed (1)
Healthy rivers, lakes and wetlands	Wetlands and floodplain restoration Pest plant and animal management	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On track (6) Behind schedule (3)
Healthy natural landscapes	Landscape scale restoration Mallee birds TEC Restoring iron grass grasslands Pest plant and animal management	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On track (20) Not started (1)
People at the heart of landscape management	Grassroots grants Education program First Nations partnership program Community partnerships and engagement Citizen science	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On track (19) Completed (1)
Foundational programs	Board leadership and governance Planning and evaluation Customer and business services Communications Council levy collection fees	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On track (27) Completed (1) Behind schedule (1)

QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



Sustainable agricultural and pastoral landscapes



- New demonstration sites have been established through the Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) project to support landholders to develop their on-farm adaptive capacity to respond to climate extremes. Vapour Pressure Deficit (VPD) probes and CO₂ monitors have been installed in a netted avocado orchard. These tools optimise the operation of the orchard cooling system to manage the impacts of future heatwaves.
- The South Australian Landscape Boards in partnership with Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), will deliver the National Soil Monitoring Program through regional NRM organisations. On-ground soil sampling will begin in quarter 3, to improve knowledge about soil health and sustainable land management across the state.
- Workshops to support the delivery of the Carbon Farming Outreach Program (CFOP) were delivered with the grains and grazing sectors at Murray Bridge and Mannum in collaboration with Elders and Greening Australia.



Sustainable water use

- Staff attended the One Basin Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) annual event held in Goondiwindi. This was a great opportunity to visit the Northern Murray-Darling Basin and learn directly from the community about specific land and water management challenges in the area. Over 150 delegates heard about research work being undertaken across the One Basin CRC.
- The Marne Saunders catchment report card remains on track for releasing in March 2026. Layout and design are currently in progress incorporating expanded community and First Nations input, a three-year indicator snapshot to suggest trends, and economic indicators for the first time.
- Productive on-country visits with Peramangk Aboriginal Corporation (PAC) and the Mid Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation (MMAC) generated discussions about establishing First Nations representative bodies to work with the landscape board on water planning, and to implement on-country water planning activities such as Aboriginal waterways assessments and ranger groups.

QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



Healthy rivers, lakes and wetlands

- Tolderol water-delivery infrastructure works are now complete, enabling flexible, targeted watering across the extended managed inundation area. Commissioning tests are underway to ensure infrastructure is operating properly, with 60% of basins having received initial fills. A diverse mix of waterbirds has already returned, including the first annual influx of northern-hemisphere migratory waders.



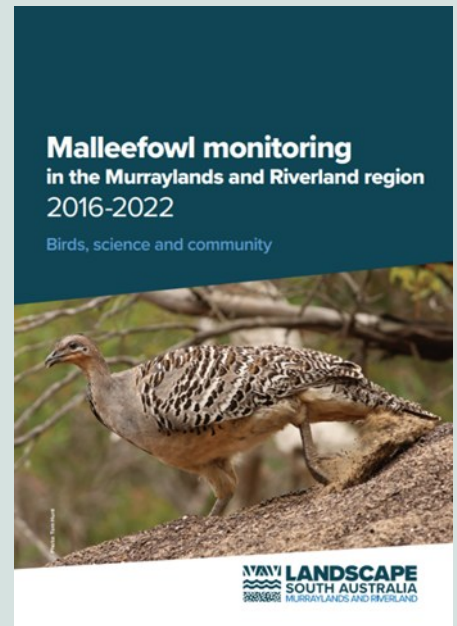
Healthy natural landscapes

- The threatened flora ecologists joined with experts from the Native Orchid Society of SA (NOSSA) to re-visit coloured spider-orchid (*Caladenia colorata*) sites which were first recorded in 2006. This survey work is important for prioritising threatened flora management, with very few confirmed coloured spider-orchids now remaining in the region.
- A Nature Festival event was held to launch the new children's book "Darling Murray Darling - An Australian Carpet Python Story" by author Heather Freeman from Little Australian Stories and supported by Auntie Sheryl Giles from RMMAC. The event was held at the Overland Corner Hotel and attracted around 200 attendees including over 50 children.



QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS

- A [report](#) summarising regional malleefowl monitoring outcomes was prepared by the senior ecologist for the Australian Government, with its findings were translated into [blog posts](#) to coincide with a media release promoting the upcoming monitoring season.
- Two working bees were held in July and August at Mowantjie Willauwar Conservation Park, bringing together the Threatened Plant Action Group, Second Nature Conservancy, National Parks rangers and the threatened flora ecologist. As part of a broader threat abatement program, these efforts focused on restoring habitat for the endangered sandhill greenhood orchid and improving overall habitat quality.



People at the heart of landscape management

- River Murray Youth Council (RMYC) members proudly represented our region's youth at this year's River Reflections Conference in Murray Bridge. In their presentation "A Youth Perspective: Views from Tomorrow's Leaders", they spoke passionately about what they value most in our landscapes, including their love for the River Murray and the importance of biodiversity, native species protection, and sustainable land use.



QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS

- RMYC members and mentors spent 2 incredible days at Yookamurra Wildlife Sanctuary for their spring camp. Students learned how to collect and analyse real wildlife data by participating in mallee ecology walks, a Yookamurra quiz, plus hands-on activities like “what scat is that?”, and camera trapping.
- The First Nations Partnerships team keep working with several Aboriginal Corporations to support their Junior Ranger programs. These programs engage young people in a range of activities aimed at getting them out on Country, learning from their community and other partners, and getting a taste for careers in environmental and cultural management.



- Some great National Science Week events were held in Murray Bridge, Renmark and Berri, hosted by the local councils in great community friendly locations in family friendly timeslots. Displays were interactive, and talks and book readings kept all ages entertained. Citizen science awards and volunteer recognition awards were also presented across the week.



QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



Foundational programs

- Five consultation sessions were held with key stakeholders (Murraylands RMYC, Riverland RMYC, Water Advisory Committee, River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation (RMMAC) and Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation (NAC) as part of the Regional Landscape Plan review. The sessions were well attended and generated strong engagement and positive feedback.
- A youth photo competition was launched as part of the Regional Landscape Plan engagement process, inviting young people to capture photos of the landscapes that matter most to them across the region. The winning photos may be featured in the final plan and other landscape board materials.
- The first woody meadow trial in South Australia has been successfully implemented in Murray Bridge. The project is the result of a partnership between the University of Melbourne, the Rural City of Murray Bridge, and Treenet.
- The landscape board participated in the Climate Adaptation Conference held in Perth, where the development of the landscape board's climate change strategy and how it will be integrated across our programs was showcased.



Pest plant and animal control

- Eight First Nation community members were engaged through NAC to undertake malleefowl surveys across 8 properties in the Murraylands where landholders will also be participating in coordinated fox baiting as part of the malleefowl protection program. The surveys identified approximately 15 nest locations, including 3 or 4 active nests. A field camera has been set up on one nest to gain more information about malleefowl activity in the area.



QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



- Eight new landholders joined the Loxton North deer project, bringing total participation to 53. Staff attended the Trans-Tasman Deer Conference to improve their knowledge of deer ecology and control.
- African boxthorn mapping and control across the region occurred. Letters were sent to landholders advising that the landscape board would be controlling boxthorns on roadsides, and offering support to landholders with ID and best practise control options.

- District staff made the most of the Riverland Field Days, engaging with the community and providing practical advice on pest animal control and Opuntia biocontrol. The display featured pest-control tools and an interactive grass-identification game, attracting marquee visitors and generating approximately 10 follow-up leads from people previously unaware of the landscape board and its services.
- White weeping broom infestations were sprayed along Stott Highway in the Sedan Hills near Keyneton, as well as a large roadside infestation near Millendella. White weeping broom is notoriously difficult to control, with few effective chemicals registered for use, so the event involved trialling herbicides to monitor their impact on the weed. Early inspections are showing positive results.
- Working with landholders, district staff removed 65 pigs at strategic locations across the region (following on from the removal of 100 feral pigs over the previous 12 months to July 2025). These results moves the project closer to the nationally recommended 70% population reduction target for effective impact reduction.



FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The following summary of financial performance includes total expenditure by priorities and funding source, in addition to expenditure through the disbursement of grant funds. More detail regarding revenue and planned expenditure is available in the [2025-26 Annual Business Plan](#).

Table 1. Quarter 1 expenditure by priority by funding source.

Funding source	Annual revenue	Expenditure by priority						Total expenditure YTD
		Sustainable agricultural and pastoral landscapes	Sustainable water Use	Healthy rivers, lakes and wetlands	Healthy natural landscapes	People at the heart of landscape management	Foundational programs	
Levy	13,852,488	395,495	1,056,225	293,977	215,388	698,406	562,030	3,221,521
Commonwealth	2,474,941	113,774	217,288	74,387	54,656	368,023	30,333	858,461
Other SA Govt Agencies	1,084,714	35,876	42,181	71,713	25,656	144,293	21,090	340,809
Other**	618,750	17,658	9,806	3,024	2,047	5,719	9,893	48,148
Total	18,030,893	562,802	1,325,500	443,101	297,748	1,216,441	623,347	4,468,939

* The budget and annual revenue in this table may differ to the Business Plan due to additional income being received or carry-over funds.

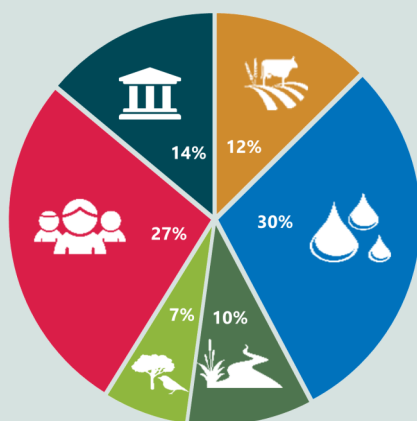


Figure 1. Percentage of expenditure for the quarter across priorities and foundational support.

The landscape board provides multiple opportunities for landholders and groups to apply for grants to undertake works that to contribute to the implementation of the Regional Landscape Plan. Table 2 and Figure 2 below provide information about the distribution of grant funds into our community.

Table 2. Grants disbursed by recipient category.

Category	Grants disbursed
Landholders	193,475
Volunteer Groups and NGOs	200,892
First Nations	310,932
Local government	8,744
State Government	18,750
Schools	24,014
Other	213,009

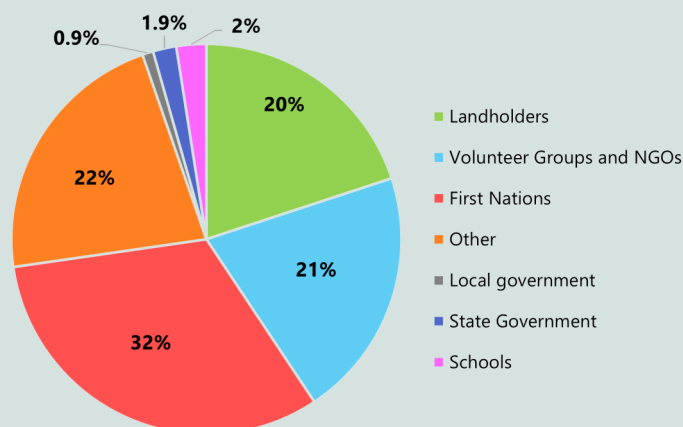


Figure 2. Percentage of grants disbursed by recipient category.

[View the full report here](#)

More information

landscape.sa.gov.au/mr

Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board Offices

Berri

28 Vaughan Terrace

Berri SA 5343

Phone: 08 8580 1800

Murray Bridge

Unit 5-6, Level 1 Sturt Centre

2 Sturt Reserve Road

Murray Bridge SA 5253

Phone: 08 8532 9100



Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 Licence.
© Crown in right of the State of South Australia,
Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board.



Government of South Australia

Murraylands and Riverland
Landscape Board