

Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board

# Performance Report Highlights

Quarter 3 | January - March 2026

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*



**543,415 ha** benefitted from **pest animal control**



**7 on-ground trial sites** have been established or maintain



**7,256 ha** benefitted from **pest weed control**



**190 communication materials** published



**13,000 ha** of wetlands and surrounding floodplains managed



**6,020 followers** on social media



## **Area surveyed**

**29,330 ha** for land management

**6,117 ha** for threatened species recovery



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



Engaged with **1,479 people** at **122 events**



**117 schools** supported and **44 schools** actively involved in the education program



**1,066 interactions with landholders and community** members to provide support and technical advice



**28 referrals** responded to by landscape board staff



**7 compliance** issues investigated

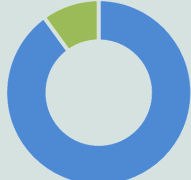
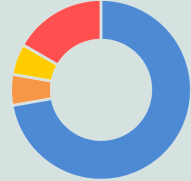
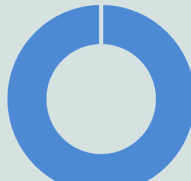
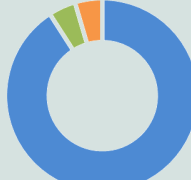

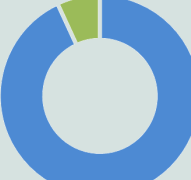


**3 WAA** permits received and processed

# QUARTER AT A GLANCE



In quarter 3 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
<b>Sustainable agricultural and pastoral landscapes</b>	Sustainable agriculture Carbon farming outreach program Pest plant and animal management	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ On track (9)</li> <li>■ Completed (1)</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainable water use</b>	Sustainable irrigation Water planning and management Water allocation planning Pest plant and animal management	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ On track (13)</li> <li>■ Postponed (1)</li> <li>■ Not Started (1)</li> <li>■ Behind Schedule (3)</li> </ul>
<b>Healthy rivers, lakes and wetlands</b>	Wetlands and floodplain restoration Pest plant and animal management	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ On track (9)</li> </ul>
<b>Healthy natural landscapes</b>	Landscape scale restoration Mallee birds TEC Restoring iron grass grasslands Pest plant and animal management	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ On track (20)</li> <li>■ Completed (1)</li> <li>■ Postponed (1)</li> </ul>
<b>People at the heart of landscape management</b>	Grassroots grants Education program First Nations partnership program Community partnerships and engagement Citizen science	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ On track (20)</li> </ul>
<b>Foundational programs</b>	Board leadership and governance Planning and evaluation Customer and business services Communications Council levy collection fees	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ On track (31)</li> <li>■ Completed (2)</li> </ul>

# QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



## Sustainable agricultural and pastoral landscapes

- The Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) project progressed this quarter, including ongoing CSA grant activities and a new soil-health demonstration site with Citrus SA.
- National Soil Monitoring Program sampling commenced with field sampling at 15 of 60 contracted sites completed.
- The Optimising Soil Health and Productivity project, funded by the Landscape Priorities Fund and SA Drought Hub, advanced this quarter. Mallee Sustainable Farming established four demonstration sites, consulted on the lentil production decision tree, and onboarded new growers to the AgriSolve platform.

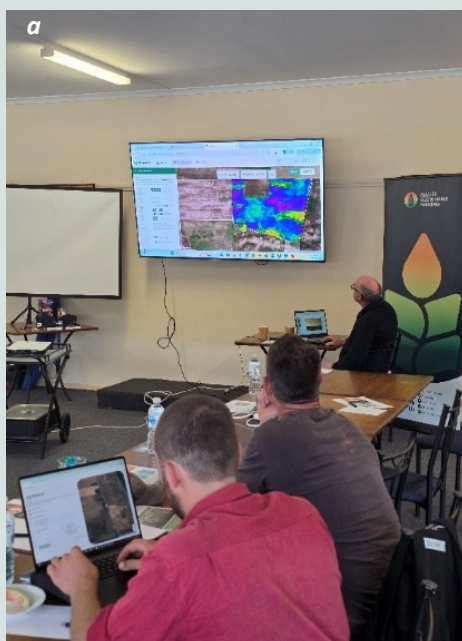


Photo 1, a & b. Chris McDonough presenting on the AgriSolve platform to growers and attendees at MSF pre-seeding workshops and event promotional materials.

- The landscape board supported the 2026 Barossa Improved Grazing Group (BiGG) annual conference - *Thrive Together: Pastures, Livestock and Farmers*.



Photo 2. Dr. Peter Hayman speaking at the 2026 Barossa Improved Grazing Group Annual Conference at Angaston.

# QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



## Sustainable water use

- The draft Marne Saunders WAP review was presented to the Water Advisory Committee (WAC), which provided provisional endorsement for it to proceed to the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board.
- The regional automatic weather station network website received a refresh, and the new site formally came online during February. The refresh allows for an improved user experience while also providing the ability to incorporate next generation weather stations into the display.
- Collaboration with the One Basin Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) continued this quarter. The landscape board hosted University of Melbourne researchers involved in the Decarbonising Basin Irrigation Regions project. The visited the Murtho Climate Smart Agriculture site examining cooling-irrigation optimisation for heat-wave mitigation and adaptation.



## Healthy rivers, lakes and wetlands

- The Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH) environmental watering schedule continued at pace and will run through to early June to complete.
- The Wetland and Floodplains team has been developing techniques for the wetland management of pull-connected sites over recent years, with drying/refilling and carp-exclusion regimes now delivering consistent improvements in water quality and aquatic habitat across multiple sites.
- The landscape board's large environmental watering program has resulted in an expanded and more continuous monitoring program rather than a seasonal approach this year. Despite the scale, the team has now completed most autumn field surveys, including extensive tree health monitoring. Strong ecological responses continue, including southern bell frog activity and increased waterbird diversity across managed sites, particularly around the Lower Lakes.



Photo 4. Broad and diverse bird responses to 2022-23 floods and sub-

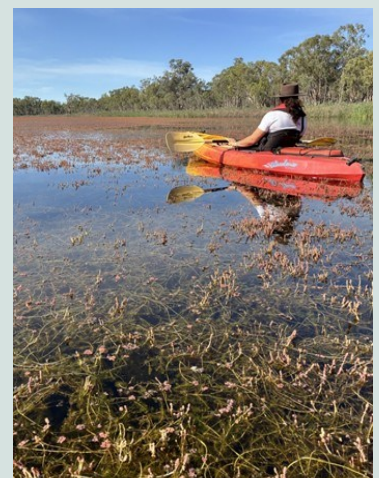


Photo 3. Drying and refilling operations at managed wetlands with

# QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



## Healthy natural landscapes

- Survey efforts for the Murray-Darling carpet python project resulted in 3 confirmed skins, a juvenile (too small for tracking) and several community-call out captures via iSPYthon. One adult male was fitted with a tracking device and has been monitored for 7 weeks, with early indications of a defined home range.



Photo 5. a, b & c. Telemetry tracking of pythons: Harrison Kent releasing a python, python insitu, Harrison Kent and Mel Burford out tracking.

- The landscape board partnered with the Murray Bridge library to deliver a community event highlighting the iSPYthon project. The library funded and hosted two children's book readings of both *Darling Murray Darling- An Australian carpet python story* and *Palpatata and Pangku – An Australian regent parrot story*. Animals Anonymous attended with native animals, including the Murray-Darling carpet python.



Photo 6. a & b. Display at event, and one of the two sessions on the day.

# QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



## Healthy natural landscapes

- The Kangaroo Partnership Project (KPP) continued to explore state-wide opportunities to assist in the management of overabundant kangaroos. Information resources for landholders are available on the Kangaroo Partnership Project website. A series of yarning circles to discuss kangaroos with First Nations communities have begun, with the first session attended by RMMAC representatives
- This quarter, landscape-wide rabbit impact rapid assessments were completed throughout the Living Landscape project area by River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation (RMMAC) Riverland Rangers, working with the Landscape Ecology team.



*Photo 7. River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation – Riverland Rangers undertaking*



## People at the heart of landscape management

- The Ngarrindjeri Lands and Progress Aboriginal Corporation Junior Rangers from Murray Bridge High School visited Monarto Safari Park, where they had the opportunity to learn about career opportunities in conservation and threatened species from the Aboriginal Learning on Country (ALoC) team.



*Photo 8. Ngarrindjeri community engage in pest management activities with District staff.*

# QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



## People at the heart of landscape management

- River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation community and Rangers participated in a workshop on rabbit management and the importance of planning pest management programs as part of the River to Recovery Project.
- The volunteer assisted malleefowl monitoring season was completed with a total of 35 volunteers involved across 20 field trips. In total 782 mounds were monitored, with 18 active mounds recorded.



Photo 9. RMMAC community and Rangers engage in River to Recovery Project.



Photo 10. Completion of malleefowl monitoring season.



Photo 11. Autumn Frog Census.

- The autumn frog census yielded interesting results due to higher participation than the same time last year and a wide range of frog species recorded.
- A new round of Grassroots Grants opened in February with 57 applications received. Grant assessments are now underway.

# QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



## People at the heart of landscape management

- A total of 94 students from 20 schools across the region attended "Precious Plants and Pollinators" Young Environmental Leaders forums. Students will use their knowledge and skills to deliver education sessions as part of the Precious Plants program in May.
- More than 50 teachers have been involved with a wide range of professional development aimed at providing varied opportunities for local educators .



*Photo 12. Education Officer Ilyth Burton ready to talk to students from Berri Primary School as part of "Habitats and Animal Adaptations" education sessions.*



*Photo 13. RMYC students and local educators attended bird monitoring with wetland team and Ramco-Hart wetland group at Hart Lagoon in Waikerie.*

# QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



## Foundational programs

- Local government practitioners visited the Woody Meadows trial site in Murray Bridge, gaining firsthand insight into climate-resilient planting. The visit shared practical learnings on native species selection, inorganic mulch and monitoring.



Photo 14 a & b. Woody Meadows local government practitioner event.

- The draft 2026-2031 Regional Landscape Plan opened for consultation on 12 January 2026 and closed on 15 March 2026, with 18 submissions received.
- Two new awareness posters were developed, featuring the regent parrot and the Murray-Darling carpet python. The posters have been designed to support community education and engagement.



Photo 15. Draft 2026-2031 Regional Landscape Plan



Photo 16. New awareness posters for Murray-Darling carpet python and Regent parrot

# QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



## Pest plant and animal control

- District staff coordinated and ran fox bait distribution month, providing landholders throughout the Murraylands with discounted fox baits to promote coordinated baiting at a landscape scale.
- District staff facilitated a best practice rabbit control workshop at Nildottie, resulting in a large uptake of interest and a number of landowners opting to carry out rabbit control programs on their properties.



Photo 17. Rabbit control workshop at Nildottie.

- *Lagocheirus funestus* beetles from Queensland were released at a biological control site at Blackhill. The site was ideal due to its high-density wheel cactus (*Opuntia robusta*). The trial will assess the beetle's host suitability and adaptability to the region's climate.



Photo 19. Biocontrol release of *Lagocheirus funestus* beetles at Blackhill.

### Coordinated fox baiting

THE Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board is supporting landholders across the Murraylands region through its annual coordinated fox baiting program, providing access to discounted baits to help manage pest numbers.

Foxes are a significant pest, with the potential to severely impact both agriculture and the environment through predation, damage to infrastructure, the spread of weed seeds and the transmission of some animal diseases.

Murraylands District team leader Casey Henderson said a coordinated approach to baiting was the most effective way to significantly reduce fox populations, with the annual program designed to support landholders to work together.

"Managing the impact of foxes on the local landscape is most successful when neighbouring properties work together to lay baits at the same time, thereby increasing the likelihood of a fox coming across a bait," Ms Henderson said.

"In the lead up to lambing, working together will help to minimise fox impacts on agricultural productivity and harm to the environment."

Landholders can order and arrange the collection of discounted baits by contacting their local district officer on 8532 9100.



The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board is supporting landholders across the Murraylands region through its annual coordinated fox baiting program, providing access to discounted baits. (Supplied)

MURRAYVALLEYSTANDARD.COM.AU

Photo 18. Promotion of fox bait distribution month.

# QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



## Pest plant and animal control

- Khaki weed continued to be a major focus for the quarter, with summer rains giving a burst of growth to the plant. Collaboration with the Renmark Paringa Council was prioritised and a coordinated control plan was created, with investment by the landscape board matched by the council.
- Landholders in the Riverland Feral Pig project area continue to become more self-sufficient in the overall control of pigs, and the effects this can have across the landscape. Monitoring with a connected camera network made it easy to track the movement of feral pigs between properties and landscapes.



*Photo 20. Another mob of pigs captured, following patient waiting.*

- The Fountain Grass Swap project was launched, with a number of enquiries from across the Riverland district. Promotional methods included posters, letter box drops and social media.

# 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 3 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	1,192,687	3,225,249	972,566	722,081	1,673,601	1,769,548	9,555,732
Commonwealth	4,522,101	450,296	217,686	1,300,282	190,875	722,250	30,532	2,911,920
Other SA Govt Agencies	1,188,219	125,116	40,794	468,146	57,228	256,283	20,397	967,963
Other**	835,118	203,570	211,612	56,468	44,183	97,128	122,191	732,152
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,397,926</b>	<b>1,971,669</b>	<b>3,695,341</b>	<b>2,797,461</b>	<b>1,014,366</b>	<b>2,749,262</b>	<b>1,942,667</b>	<b>14,170,767</b>

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

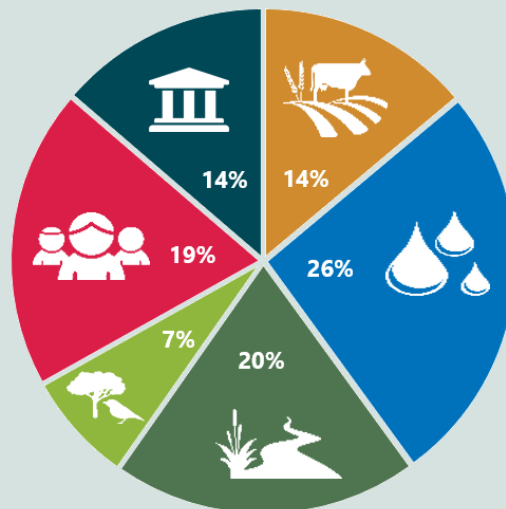


Figure 1. Percentage of expenditure for the quarter across priorities and foundational support.

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	251,243
Volunteer Groups and NGOs	402,468
First Nations	310,932
Local government	8,744
State Government	18,750
Schools	24,014
Other	213,009

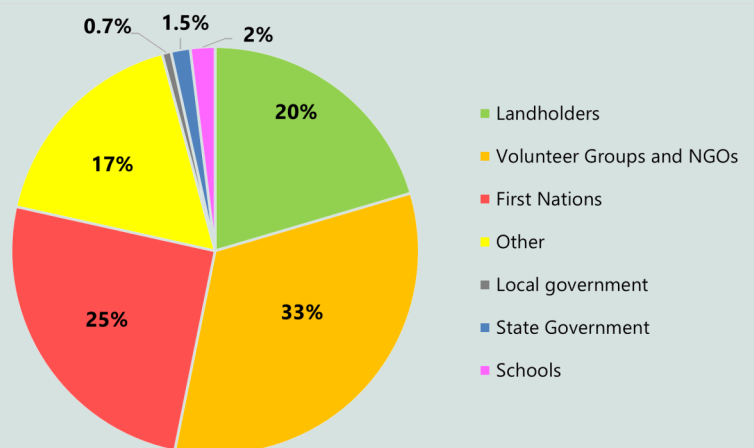


Figure 2. Percentage of grants disbursed by recipient category.

[View the full report here](#)

## More information

[landscape.sa.gov.au/mr](http://landscape.sa.gov.au/mr)

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Murraylands and Riverland  
Landscape Board