

Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board

Performance Report Highlights

Quarter 4 | April - June 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



381,994 ha benefitted from **pest animal control**



6 on-ground trial sites have been established or maintained



5,932 ha benefitted from **pest weed control**



347 communication materials published



13,000 ha of wetlands and surrounding floodplains managed



6,281 followers on social media



Area surveyed

20,537 ha for land management

22,683 ha for threatened species recovery



78 Property visits conducted for on-site monitoring



Engaged with **2,678 people** at **108 events**



117 schools supported and **38 schools** actively involved in the education program



312 interactions with landholders and community members to provide support and technical advice



42 referrals responded to by landscape board staff



4 compliance issues investigated

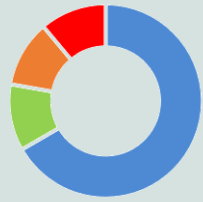
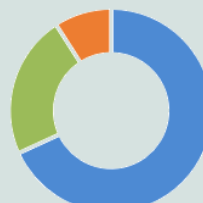
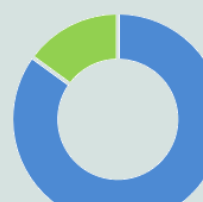
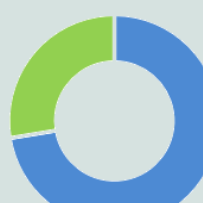


12 WAA permits received and processed

QUARTER AT A GLANCE



In quarter 4 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	 - On track (8) - Completed (2)
Sustainable water use	Sustainable irrigation Water planning and management Water allocation planning Pest plant and animal management	 - On track (12) - Complete (2) - Postponed (2) - Behind Schedule (2)
Healthy rivers, lakes and wetlands	Wetlands and floodplain restoration Pest plant and animal management	 On track (9)
Healthy natural landscapes	Landscape scale restoration Mallee birds TEC Restoring iron grass grasslands Pest plant and animal management	 - On track (15) - Completed (5) - Postponed (2)
People at the heart of landscape management	Grassroots grants Education program First Nations partnership program Community partnerships and engagement Citizen science	 - On track (17) - Completed (3)
Foundational programs	Board leadership and governance Planning and evaluation Customer and business services Communications Council levy collection fees	 - On track (21) - Completed (8)

QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



Sustainable agricultural and pastoral landscapes

- The National Soil Monitoring program was completed, with 60 sites sampled across the region. The program involved significant engagement with landholders and provides valuable information to support the understanding and monitoring of soil health.



Photo 1. Soil cores collected through the National Soil Monitoring Program

- Five new demonstration sites were established in partnership with Mallee Sustainable Farming, trialling innovative ways to manage soil stabilisation challenges during dry conditions.

Photo 2. Good rainfall has helped facilitate the re-establishment of cover on problematic soil drift sites in the Mallee.



- A practical demonstration of biochar production was held at Swan Reach using a new trailer-mounted pyrolysis unit. Almond hulls and shells from a local processing facility were used to produce biochar, demonstrating a potential pathway for turning agricultural waste into a useful resource. The biochar unit was funded through the landscape board's Grassroots Grant program.

QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



Sustainable water use

- New Regional Drought Resilience Planning funding has enabled 2 new projects with irrigation industry partners. The projects are exploring water market signals and supporting the adoption of sustainable soil practices in viticulture.

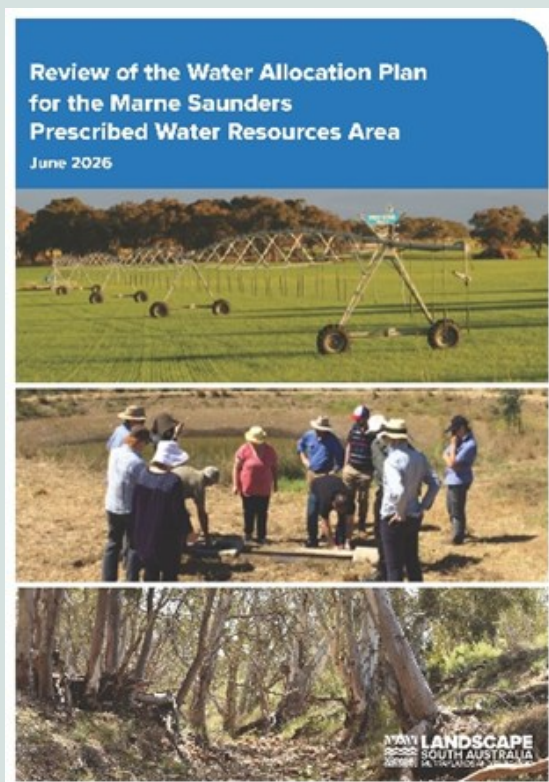


Photo 3. Review of the Water Allocation Plan for the Marne Saunders Prescribed Water Resources Area.

- The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board approved the Marne Saunders Water Allocation Plan Review in June 2026, following 4 years of technical investigations and extensive engagement with community and First Nations groups. The review provides a strong evidence base to guide future updates to the plan and support sustainable water management across the region.
- More than 230 groundwater salinity samples were received from the Peake, Roby and Sherlock Prescribed Wells Area (PWA), Mallee PWA and Marne Saunders Prescribed Water Resources Area. This information enables individual licensees to track salinity levels and contributes to monitoring regional groundwater salinity trends.

QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



Healthy rivers, lakes and wetlands

- River Murray wetlands continue to benefit from environmental watering, improving habitat for native plants and animals. A renewed partnership with the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder has secured ongoing environmental water delivery to wetlands through to 2029-30.



Photo 4. a & b. Building on last year's delivery of the largest-ever CEWH watering schedule by the landscape board, the 2025-26 program has advanced key ecological outcomes.

- The Wetlands and Floodplains team has successfully implemented a full hydrological (wetting and drying) cycle at key pool-connected wetlands across the Riverland and Murraylands. Refilling wetlands through infrastructure fitted with carp exclusion screens has resulted in improved water quality and vegetation, attracting native species and waterbirds.



Photo 5. Black Swan and cygnets at Beldora Spectacle Lakes wetland complex.

- Following the reintroduction of Murray hardyhead into Lyrup Lagoon in February, a follow-up survey in April did not detect any individuals, however stakeholders remain optimistic about finding Murray hardyhead in spring. If the species is still absent, another translocation is planned for late spring or summer in collaboration with River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation.

QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



Healthy natural landscapes

- An ecological burn at Calperum Station is helping restore degraded land to healthy mallee woodland by reducing native woody weeds. Delivered in partnership with the Australian Landscape Trust and National Parks and Wildlife Service, the project also demonstrated a cost-effective approach through coordinated fire management activities.

Photo 6. An ecological burn of woody weed shrubland in 80 x 80 Paddock at Calperum Station. (Photo: Jared Pippas)

- Helicopter with aerial ignitions deploying ignition lines.
- Multiple ignitions made by personnel on the ground with hand ignitions.



View of the site from the south-east corner at the start of works



Post seeding photo from the north-west of the site

Photo 7. a & b. Direct seeding to reinstate habitat for regent parrots.

- More than 20 hectares of habitat was restored near Pooginook Conservation Park through a partnership with Trees For Life and Nature Foundation. The revegetation will strengthen habitat connections for the nationally threatened regent parrot while providing food, shelter and movement corridors for a wide range of native wildlife.

- Native grassland restoration at Poonthie Ruwe Conservation Park was supported through a partnership with Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation and Mid Murray Landcare volunteers. Locally collected seed was used to improve plant diversity, supporting the long-term health and resilience of this important grassland ecosystem.

QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



People at the heart of landscape management

- World Turtle Day brought together enthusiastic junior naturalists at the Murray Bridge library to learn more about turtles, including a reading of the new picture book – The mystery of the missing turtles, by co-author Professor Ricky Spencer.



Photo 8. World Turtle Day at the Murray Bridge Library in May.



Photo 9. Attendees chatting to landscape board staff member, Sylvia Clarke at the Murray Bridge volunteer thank you event.

- Three volunteer thank you events were held, providing opportunities for volunteers to connect with each other, hear from experts and learn about future volunteering opportunities. Events were well attended and positively received, with volunteers valuing the opportunity to share experiences and learn more about malleefowl, frogs and fungi. Volunteer contributions were also formally recognised by board members and celebrated through social media during National Volunteer Week.

- More than 1,000 students were engaged and more than 1,000 local native plants were distributed across the region through the 2026 Precious Plants Program.



Photo 10. Berri Primary School YEL student passing on knowledge and skills reading pollinator stories to younger students as part of their precious plants sessions at school.

QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



People at the heart of landscape management

- One hundred students from 16 schools across the region participated in term two Young Environmental Leaders forums, with Murraylands students exploring fungi and Riverland students planting 1,400 trees to support regent parrots.

*Photo 11.
Riverland YEL
students
planting 1,400
regent parrot
food plants on
the National
Trust Reserve
at Overland
Corner.*



*Photo 12.
Riverland YEL
student
showing a
regent parrot
themed
collaborative
artwork which
will be
displayed at the
Overland Corner
Hotel.*



- A total of 36 grassroots grant projects were fully or partially funded, totalling \$401,481. An additional \$31,951.50 was contributed through project budgets, bringing the total investment in community-led projects to \$433,432.50.
- Cultural Flows planning has begun with the River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation and Peramangk Aboriginal Corporation, supporting First Nations participation in water planning and management by building understanding of cultural water interests.
- The Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation completed its final year of its *Building resilience of Ngarrindjeri Yarluwar-Ruwe* project, providing opportunities for community members to participate in yarning circles, Yarluwar-Ruwe assessments, monitoring programs for threatened and culturally significant species and priority on-ground works. A short film showcasing the outcomes of the project can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-3NCh2K8Vkm>

QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



Foundational programs

- A native plant giveaway at Brinkley, delivered in partnership with the Rural City of Murray Bridge, engaged more than 450 community members on the woody meadow trial and distributed 250 native plants.



Photo 13. a & b, Landscape board staff at the Rural City of Murray Bridge native plant giveaway in Brinkley.

- A suite of fact sheets was developed to support Minister Bourke MLC's recent regional visit, showcasing regional priorities, key projects and the work and achievements of the landscape board.
- Landscape boards came together at the Adelaide Careers Expo to promote career opportunities across the sector and raise awareness of employment opportunities with the landscape boards.



Photo 14. Murraylands and Riverlands, Northern and Yorke and Limestone Coast Landscape Board staff at the Adelaide Careers Expo.

QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



Pest plant and animal control

- Twenty-one landholders attended an Opuntia field day at Punyelroo, receiving practical advice on wheel cactus control, including biocontrol control options. The event also included demonstrations of stem injection techniques and available equipment.



Photo 15. a & b. Landscape board staff and landholders at the Opuntia field day at Punyelroo in April. 2026.

- Targeted pest plant and animal control works were completed along roadsides and rail corridors to help prevent the spread of pest species along key invasion pathways.
- AI-supported trail camera monitoring in the deer project area captured the first and only sighting of a sambar deer in an orange orchard. Sharing the image generated significant local interest and was picked up by news and media platforms across the country, raising awareness of the project and providing opportunities to engage with local landholders.



Photo 16. Landscape board staff undertaking pest plant and animal control works along rail corridors.

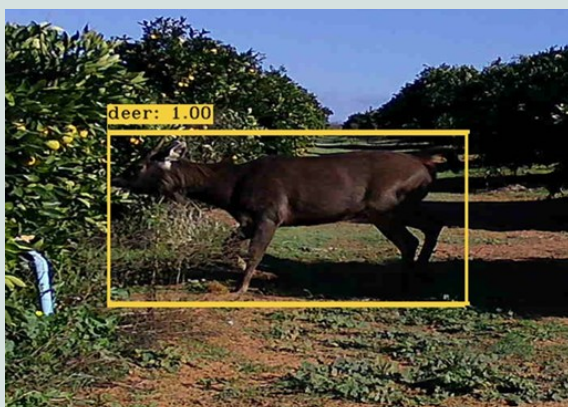


Photo 17. Remote monitoring with AI-enabled cameras happened to capture this image of a lone sambar deer wandering through an orange orchard.

QUARTER HIGHLIGHTS



Pest plant and animal control

- The fountain grass swap program continued to engage the community in managing an emerging priority species, with 132 plants swapped for a native species, and a number of schools involved in the project.



Photo 18. Some of the exceptionally large fountain grass plants collected through the swap program have required district staff to make multiple trips to a single property to ensure they are disposed of safely without risk of spreading seed.

- Riverland District staff used an extended control window and Rivers to Recovery funding to target priority infestations of noogoora burr, golden dodder and spiny rush. In partnership with Berri Barmera Council and River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation rangers, staff treated dense spiny rush infestations around the lake at Barmera.



Photo 19. a, b & c. Some of the Rivers to Recovery priority weeds present a two-for-one management opportunity. Noogoora burr often serves as a host for golden dodder, meaning that controlling noogoora burr can also help prevent golden dodder from establishing and surviving.

- a. Before control.*
- b. Control progress.*
- c. After control.*

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 4 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	13,859,815	1,884,695	4,172,710	1,551,853	1,123,157	2,319,719	2,552,580	13,604,714
Commonwealth	4,039,841	641,321	180,060	1,826,057	280,797	752,236	11,315	3,691,786
Other SA Govt Agencies	1,467,523	257,695	67,806	755,108	108,097	449,001	33,903	1,671,609
Other**	769,101	342,748	575,826	131,579	120,227	259,223	307,791	1,737,395
Total	20,136,279	3,126,459	4,996,402	4,264,598	1,632,279	3,780,180	2,905,588	20,705,505

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

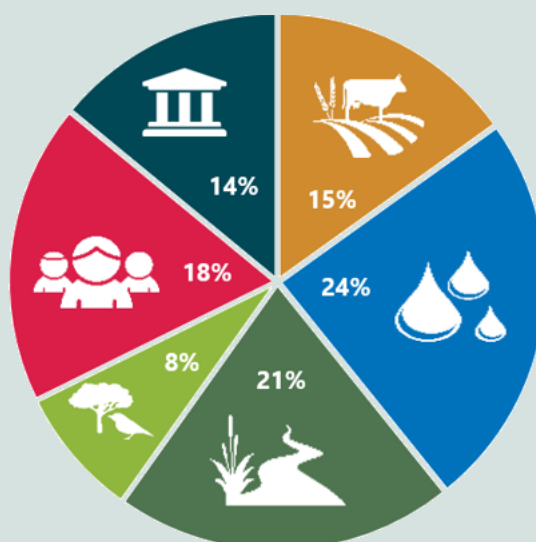


Figure 1. Percentage of expenditure for the quarter across priorities and foundational support.

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	554,812
Volunteer Groups and NGOs	857,307
First Nations	730,314
Local government	231,779
State Government	141,295
Schools	18,750
Other	27,537

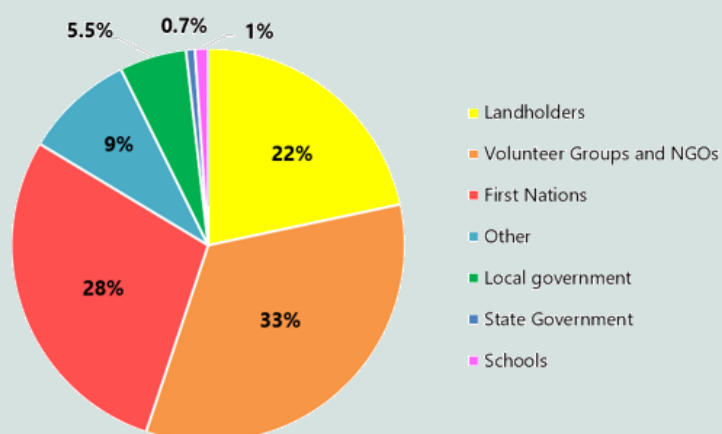


Figure 2. Percentage of grants disbursed by recipient category.

[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