

Northern and Yorke Landscape Board - Minutes

Meeting #50			
Date:	19 th August 2026		
Start time:	10:02am	Finish time:	2:19pm
Location:	Northern and Yorke Landscape Office, Gawler	Room:	River Room
Present:			
Board members:	Geoff White (Chair), Peter Angus, Sue Scarman, Holly Cowan, Erika Lawley and Leo Redden		
Staff:	Tony Fox (<i>General Manager</i>), Rebecca Howard (<i>Manager, Business and Planning</i>), Libby Duncan (<i>Projects Planning and Reporting Manager</i>), Phoebe Helbig (<i>Executive Assistant/Officer; minute taker</i>), Elly Pratt (<i>Resilient Ecosystems Ecologist</i>) and Emily Kakoschke (<i>Acting; Mid North Team Leader</i>)		
Guests:	Grant Pelton (DEW)		
Public Gallery			
Apologies	Nicki Robins		
Item	1 Meeting Standing Items		
1.1	Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country and apologies The Chair opened the Northern and Yorke Landscape Board (NYLB) meeting at 10:02am, welcoming members, NYLB staff and noted apologies. The chair acknowledged the traditional owners of the land. Noted the recent signing of the statement of commitment at the Chairs and General Managers Forum.		
1.2	Additional agenda items Nil		
1.3	Conflict of interest disclosures No new disclosures		
1.4	Acceptance of minutes from the previous meeting The minutes from meeting number 49 held on <i>24 June 2026</i> were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting. S Scarman / P Angus: CARRIED / AIF		
1.5	Confirmation of actions The Action Register was reviewed and updated.		
2 Deputations and Presentations			
2.2	Emily Kakoschke , Acting Team Leader of the Mid North District provided the board with an update from the district . Key points from the presentation included: - Provided an overview of the district, which covers 6.5 council areas and includes around 75% of the region’s population and levy base. Biodiversity: Progress was reported on catchment regeneration projects, including 4.6 km of roadside woody weed control undertaken to protect high value native vegetation. Community Engagement: The district continues to support strong community involvement, with 30 community groups and three Natural Resources Committees (NRCs) engaged, and 19 receiving community grants. Key drivers for property visits remain weeds, biodiversity and rabbit management. Discussion highlighted rabbit population trends and the ongoing release of the RHDV1 K5 virus in peri-urban areas. Pest Plants and Animals: Key activities include the development and implementation of council roadside management plans, delivery of district priority projects, biocontrol releases,		

	nursery establishment, roadside marker programs, and pest monitoring. Ongoing fox and rabbit control programs were also highlighted. • Sustainable Agriculture: The team continues to provide property management advice, workshops and knowledge-sharing opportunities to support resilient and sustainable farming practices. • Water and Coast: Work is progressing on the Gawler River Restoration Guide in partnership with Green Adelaide. Upcoming workshops will help landholders apply the guide, while Water Affecting Activity (WAA) compliance activities and cochineal releases continue across river systems. • Compliance: Compliance activities are being undertaken collaboratively across programs to support the protection and management of natural resources. Action: Mid North District presentation to be circulated to members. <i>H Cowan joined at 10:30am</i>
2.3	Elly Pratt presented on the emissions reduction project and NYLB response to bird flu. The presentation is summarised below: • Provided an overview of South Australia's emissions reduction context. South Australia has reduced greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 55% since 2005, with the largest reductions occurring in the energy and land use sectors. The State Government has set a target of a 60% reduction from 2005 levels by 2030 and is increasing its focus on emissions reduction and climate risk management. The Climate Ready Government policy was outlined as a legally binding framework requiring public sector agencies to actively manage climate-related risks and reduce emissions to support the transition to net zero. • The Board's current emissions reduction activities were highlighted, including the ACE Farmers Adapting to Climate and Emissions project, the Property-level Natural Capital Accounting Project, the Carbon Farming Outreach Program, revegetation and habitat restoration initiatives, community grants, electric vehicle adoption, and waste reduction programs. The Carbon Farming Outreach Program was noted as highly successful and is continuing through the ACE Farmers project. • An update was provided on Climate Ready Government preparedness activities, including participation in the Landscape Boards Climate Ready Government Working Group, establishment of an internal working group, emissions audits, and an emissions reduction workshop. The Board's emissions profile was compared with other Landscape Boards. Total emissions for 2023-24 were reported at approximately 302 tCO₂-e, with fleet fuel accounting for around 130 tCO₂-e (42% of total emissions). Opportunities and limitations for reducing fleet emissions were discussed. Procurement activities were identified as contributing approximately 124 tCO₂-e (40% of emissions), although figures are based on expenditure data and do not account for recycling or lifecycle impacts of ICT equipment. • Next steps include working with dSquared to develop an Emissions Reduction Plan, implementing identified actions, continuing annual emissions reporting, and progressing emissions reduction initiatives across the organisation. NYLB Bird Flu Response Update • An update was provided on the Board's response to avian influenza, including weekly inspections of key beaches across the region. Staff involvement to date includes eight staff undertaking inspections, completion of online biosecurity training, establishment of biosecurity kits, contributions to response planning, participation in daily briefings, and fortnightly operational plan updates. • Discussion included the potential role of volunteers and funding arrangements for the bird flu response. It was noted that the initial focus was on understanding the extent of any outbreak should avian influenza enter South Australia, with monitoring undertaken in

	partnership with DEW. Members discussed whether ongoing beach inspections remain the most effective approach and if resources may eventually be better directed towards responding to impacts rather than identifying cases. It was explained that the current focus is on surveillance, reporting, and raising awareness while the virus situation continues to evolve. National Parks and Wildlife Service staff are monitoring offshore islands and rookeries through aerial surveillance. The key message remains that the arrival of avian influenza in South Australia is considered likely, with preparedness and early detection continuing to be important priorities.
2.1	Grant Pelton from the Department of Environment and Water provided an update on the current situation of Bird Flu in South Australia. The key points are noted below. - Avian influenza (bird flu) has been circulating globally since 2020, with Australia largely protected due to its geography. Current evidence suggests the disease may have entered via migratory seabirds from sub-Antarctic regions, with changing ocean currents and temperatures influencing migration patterns. South Australia is currently the epicentre of the outbreak, with six endemic bird species affected. - The disease is now established in South Australia and can cause rapid mortality in wildlife, with affected animals often dying within 24 to 48 hours. To date, there have been no detections in mammals or the poultry industry in SA, although some strains are known to affect marine mammals and livestock overseas. - Significant planning and preparedness work has been undertaken over the past 2 to 3 years. DEW, PIRSA and Landscape Boards are working together on surveillance, monitoring, response planning and public communications. Additional operational resources have been engaged to support response activities over the next 12 months. - Public advice is shifting from reporting every dead bird to safe disposal practices, including double-bagging deceased birds and disposing of them in general waste where appropriate. Further guidance on managing mass mortality events and carcass disposal is being developed in consultation with the EPA. - While activity remains relatively low on Yorke Peninsula compared with Kangaroo Island and the South East, surveillance and staff training are continuing. Monitoring is focused on high-risk locations and species, including seabird colonies, inland waterbird populations, and migratory bird habitats. - Current surveillance has not detected the virus in feral bird species; however, species such as ibis, silver gulls and feral pigeons are considered higher-risk vectors due to their movement patterns and congregation in large numbers. - Ongoing beach surveillance will be reduced as the disease is now established, with future monitoring becoming more targeted and risk-based. - Boards and communities were thanked for their support and engagement, with members encouraged to promote official bird flu information resources and continue providing community feedback to inform response efforts.
3. Items for Decision	
3.1	Water Affecting Activity BPOP Members were advised of a new statewide SA Water Best Practice Operating Procedure aimed at streamlining approval processes for routine Water Affecting Activity (WAA) works. Under the new arrangements, SA Water can self-assess and approve lower-risk activities that meet agreed criteria, while only higher-risk proposals will require referral to the Landscape Board. The change is expected to deliver significant efficiency gains by reducing the need for routine applications to be assessed individually. Discussion also explored opportunities for increased engagement with SA Water regarding environmental water releases and broader water management activities. It was noted that separate

	SA Water environmental agreement programs operate in the Baroota and Beetaloo areas, providing potential opportunities for further collaboration and coordinated environmental outcomes. Motion The Northern and Yorke Landscape Board: - Note the content of this briefing and attachments; - Approve the commencement of a Water Affecting Activities Best Practice Operating Procedures agreement as detailed in this briefing. E Lawley / L Redden: CARRIED / AIF
3.2	Wild Dog Trapper Program Members were provided with a report from the 2024-25 SA Wild Dog Trapper program from PIRSA and an funding request to continue the program for 2026-27. The SA Wild Dog Trapper program proves to be a necessary and successful tool for wild dog control in the SAAL region and continues to prevent wild dog movement towards the NY region. Motion: The Northern and Yorke Landscape Board: - Note the report from PIRSA on the 2025-26 SA Wild Dog Trapper Program - Approve a financial contribution of \$18,750 to the 2026-27 SA Wild Dog Trapper Program Action: Arrange confirmation letter and financial contribution to PIRSA for Wild Dog Trapper Program P Angus / E Lawley: CARRIED / AIF
4 For Noting (carried as one motion)	
4.1	Bite Sized Grants An overview was provided of the bite sized grant programs delivered during 2024-25 and 2025-26. The programs aim to encourage community participation, support local initiatives, and strengthen community involvement in natural resource management. Members discussed potential improvements to the program for the current financial year, including opportunities to increase participation from a broader range of community groups and attract new applicants. The importance of actively promoting grant opportunities and engaging directly with communities to raise awareness was highlighted. It was also noted that demand for grant funding should continue to be monitored, with consideration to be given to enhancing the program in the future should community interest and demand increase.
4.2	Property level natural capital accounting project The project aims to improve drought resilience in the Wakefield River catchment through natural capital accounting and revegetation. Discussion focused on promoting native vegetation and biodiversity outcomes within agricultural businesses, including opportunities to add value through biodiversity planning and environmental credentials. Members also discussed learning from Kangaroo Island property management approaches and applying relevant practices locally. Emphasis was placed on providing practical information to farmers through local, one-on-one engagement rather than large events, with further discussion on how to increase participation from a broader range of landholders.
4.3	Grazing Management Grants An update was provided on the Grazing Management Grants program, which assists primary producers to undertake fencing and water infrastructure projects that support improved grazing management practices. Eligibility requirements and the types of activities that can be funded were discussed. Members agreed there is value in reviewing the program to explore alternative funding

	approaches and assess interest in a broader range of project types. Discussion highlighted the importance of identifying gaps where farmers may require additional support, while balancing environmental priorities and sustainable agriculture outcomes. Lessons from the current grant round will be used to help guide future program delivery and clarify priorities and desired outcomes. Action: Review and workshop potential improvements to the Grazing Management Grants program, including alternative funding models and opportunities to better support producer and environmental outcomes. The Board also acknowledged Molly O'Dea for her recent award and industry recognition.
4.4	National Tree Day Events Report provided summarised the national tree day events held by the community engagement officer with involvement from numerous schools across the region. Noted the importance of improving the interest from schools in Rangelands district, yet more recently these schools have had involvement from other board priorities such as sustainable agriculture
4.5	Independent community insurance The Independent community groups that have been provided with insurance coverage while undertaking board related activities for the 2026-27 financial year were reported to the board.
4.6	Draft financial statements 2025-26 The draft financial statements were presented to the board for the year ended 30 June 2026 as prepared by Shared Services South Australia and lodged with the Auditor-General's office. Final document to be approved once audited for inclusion in the annual report. Significant features to note include the deficit of \$144,000 which is attributed to carryover expenditure and the strong equity position.
4.7	Committee recommendations The recommendations from the Governance and Finance committee and Five Nations Landscape committee were noted. P Angus noted key points from the Governance and Finance meeting held on the 15th July 2026 were discussions of artificial intelligence to refine processes and create efficiencies and the new financial replacement program progress. E Lawley summarised the Five Nations Landscape committee held on country on the 12-13th August 2026 and noted the approval of the first nations artwork project. Recommendations from the Governance and Finance Committee • Receive and endorse the YTD June 2026 Financial • Note the policy review undertaken and approve the suggested changes made to the Artificial Intelligence Responsible Use Policy • Note the effectiveness of the policy will be reviewed annually or when required to meet the ongoing needs of the Board • Endorse the review of the Northern and Yorke Landscape Board Financial Management Compliance Program for 2026-2027 and work plan • Note the public complaints for the January to June 2026 period • Note and review the contracted obligations of the board • Note summary details of all committed contracts and grants for the fourth quarter of the 2025-26 financial year reporting period, in accordance with delegated authority • Note the Freedom of Information Annual Report 2025-26 submitted to State Records Recommendations from the Governance and Finance Committee • Note the endorsement of the First Nations Artwork Project.
4.8	NYLB Referrals Noted report summarising the last quarter of referrals received for the board's comment.

4.9	RLT priorities report Noted report summarising the regional leadership teams priorities following the previous quarter
	Motion: The Northern and Yorke Landscape Board: Note the reports provided from Items 4.1-4.9 S Scarman / E Lawley: CARRIED / AIF
5 Standing Reports (for noting)	
5.1	Presiding Member Tabled
5.2	Board Members: Noted report from E Lawley involving the Hart Field Site Winter Walk.
5.3	Communications and Engagement Noted
5.4	Correspondence Tabled
5.5	Board Forward Planner Reviewed
5.6	Board Calendar of Events Reviewed Noted Inaugural Russell Johnstone Award is open for nominations.
6 In Camera Session	
6.1	At 2:05pm the meeting was moved to 'In-Camera' due to the information the disclosure (J) of which: (i) would divulge information provided on a confidential basis by or to a Minister of the Crown, or another public authority or official; (ii) would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest; (Ref: Section 23 (5) LSA Act.) P Angus / E Lawley: CARRIED It was noted staff: Anthony Fox, Libby Duncan, Phoebe Helbig and Rebecca Howard remained in the room. Motion At 2:09pm the meeting moved out of 'In-Camera' and back to the main meeting where members of the public may be present H Cowan / L Redden: CARRIED
7 Other Items	
	- Members contributed in discussions of the levy collection - Northern and Yorke Landscape Board Meeting dates and locations for 2027 requirements were discussed.
8 Meeting Closure	
8.1	Next meeting: 23 September 2026 Clare
8.2	Meeting closed at 2:19pm

Confirmed on 23 September 2026, as a true and correct record

Geoff White

Geoff White (Sep 28, 2026 11:32:22 GMT+9.5)

Geoffrey White

Presiding Member