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Resilient communities in productive healthy landscapes

Mission
To be a customer-focused business that enables improved primary production and better management of natural resources

Goals
1: Resilient, self-reliant and prepared local communities.
2: Biosecure, profitable, productive and sustainable primary industries.
3: Healthy, diverse and connected natural environments.
4: Board members and staff who are collaborative, innovative and commercially-focused.

Values
- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Integrity
- Performance
- Service
- Trust
Foreword

It’s an exciting time in land management with new and innovative ideas being introduced every day to improve the way we enhance, protect and generate an income from our natural resources.

Three years after the formation of Local Land Services and we continue to strengthen our relationships with ratepayers, landholders and communities by delivering the services and projects that meet the diverse needs of our customers.

These activities are highlighted throughout this report, which details the work undertaken by the organisation in 2016.

Local Land Services helps people make better decisions about the land they manage.

Eleven local regions provide frontline services with each approaching local priorities in different ways.

This report showcases some of the outcomes we have achieved in partnership with the community and demonstrate the outputs delivered across the state.

Statewide achievements include:

• 6,420 property visits by vets and biosecurity officers
• 12,025 general consultations by vets and biosecurity officers
• 1,611 saleyard inspections
• 1,070 livestock export certificates issued
• 14,600 participants at training events
• 7,900 properties involved in wild dog baiting
• 34.5 million hectares managed for pest animal control.

While this is a great snapshot of the year, there have also been a number of regional highlights, including:

• Central Tablelands Local Land Services continued its collaboration with landholder groups on feral animal control, with a successful and innovative cat tracking project raising awareness of cats in the environment among the urban community in the Lithgow area.
• Wild dog baiting programs in the Western region resulted in 419,179 baits being delivered on 808 properties covering a total of 16,834,494 hectares.
• Greater Sydney Local Land Services secured one million dollars in funding for the National Vegetable Extension Network project with Horticulture Innovation Australia and $454,750 for the Next Generation Compost Trial in partnership with NSW Farmers, NSW Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and the University of Technology (UTS), Sydney.
• Hunter Local Land Services invested about $2.5 million in grants for 124 landholders, land managers and groups for projects to improve the sustainability and productivity of land management in the region.
• Murray Local Land Services worked with 20 community group partners, to provide information and advice to more than 2,900 customers at events such as field days, seminars and discussion groups resulting in the improvement of sustainable practices on more than 90,750 hectares in the region.
• North Coast Local Land Services managed more than 160 hectares of land holding Aboriginal cultural value and launched the North Coast Aboriginal Engagement Plan.
• North West Local Land Services increased the capacity of land managers to improve primary production and natural resource management and trained more than 450 customers at training events. More than 3,200 hectares of land was managed for sustainable grazing in the region.
• In the Northern Tablelands, more than 100,000 baits were dropped by helicopter and landholders laid 10,000 ground baits on 1,230,531 hectares of land as part of the 2016 annual wild dog aerial and ground baiting campaign across the Walcha, Armidale, Glen Innes and Tenterfield districts.
• South East Local Land Services negotiated 166 voluntary conservation agreements, protecting and conserving for biodiversity enhancement 5,889 hectares of land as well as 4,131 hectares received support for measures to better manage sustainable grazing.
• Riverina Local Land Services received more than 400 expressions of interest for their grants program and managed more than two million hectares for pest animal control.
• Central West Local Land Services has allocated more than 2.1 million dollars for the operation of local Landcare networks and the delivery of regional Landcare facilitator functions for the three-year period from 2015 to 2018 and entered into a Memorandum of Understanding between Landcare and Local Land Services in the Central West.

Many projects and programs would not be possible without the support of our funding partners — the National Landcare Programme via the Australian Government and the Catchment Action NSW program, supported by the NSW Government.

In 2017 we will continue to focus on tailoring our services to ensure they meet the needs of industry and primary producers across the state.

Richard Bull
Acting Chair - Local Land Services
We work with land managers and the community to improve primary production within healthy landscapes. We also help rural and regional communities to be profitable and sustainable into the future.

We connect people with groups, information, support and funding to improve agricultural productivity and better manage our natural resources.

Local Land Services is one statewide organisation offering integrated and independent services, delivered regionally and tailored for each community, industry and landscape.

Local Land Services is governed by a Board of Chairs, comprised of an independent chair and the chairs of the local boards.

The Board of Chairs reports directly to the Minister for Primary Industries and is responsible for oversight of Local Land Services’ strategy and governance. This includes ensuring Local Land Services is aligned with NSW Government priorities.

Local regions provide our front-line services. We are uniquely placed to provide on-ground and face-to-face assistance to land managers throughout the state to help protect their land, business and way of life.

Each region has a local board that is responsible for communications and engagement with local communities. These boards provide oversight of the following, in line with local and state priorities:

- corporate governance
- regionally-appropriate programs
- local strategic plans
- budgets.

Regions vary in geographic and organisational size and they approach local priorities in different ways, which is why it is so important to be locally focused.
Local Land Services and the organisation continues to strengthen relationships with ratepayers, landholders and communities by delivering the services and projects that meet the diverse needs of our customers. The figures below outline the achievements of Local Land Services in the past year and the broad range of services being offered to the state.
Our year in review

The operations of Local Land Services are aligned and integrated with our four statewide goals. The Local Land Services State Strategic Plan describes each area of operation and outlines key strategies and activities that will achieve each statewide goal. In 2016, the first full year of operation under the Local Land Services State Strategic Plan, Local Land Services implemented the following activities.

Resilient, self-reliant and prepared local communities

Local Land Services makes a significant contribution to the state in order to see it thrive. Resilience, self-reliance and preparedness are vital ingredients in a thriving community, ensuring it is better able to withstand shocks or disturbances to the landscape, production of food and fibre and the economy, and still maintain its functions and structures.

Emergency management and disaster relief

Emergency management is a shared responsibility that involves prevention and preparedness to minimise the impact of emergencies, responding to emergency events and conducting recovery operations to return communities, the environment and economy to business as usual.

In partnership with the NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI), we help manage livestock disease and emergencies such as drought, bushfires and floods and biosecurity events involving plants, animals and pest insects.

Nearly 70 per cent of Local Land Services staff have received base-level biosecurity and emergency response training while 35 per cent of staff have been trained beyond this level.

Trained staff have helped in almost 40 emergency responses across the state during the year.

Projects in the past year included response and recovery activities relating to storms and floods, delivery of flood recovery updates in partnership with various government and community group partnerships.

Aboriginal communities

We support Aboriginal people to care for Country, share traditional land management knowledge and help protect and strengthen Aboriginal cultural heritage.

We’re working to promote Aboriginal cultural awareness and enhance engagement throughout NSW. Our goal is to support Aboriginal communities in caring for Country, particularly through employment and training opportunities to build skills and capacity in land management.

More than 2,000 hectares of land with Aboriginal cultural value were managed along with 82 Aboriginal sites.
Sustainable agriculture
Local Land Services provides high quality advisory services to landholders in the region to improve the sustainability and resilience of the landscape, agricultural industries and communities.

Our teams provide credible, independent advice and extension services built on sound scientific knowledge and evidence based practices.

We have, directly and in partnership with land manager organisations, enhanced the capacity of land managers to improve primary production and natural resource management.

Together, with community group partners, Local Land Services has provided information and advice to more than 14,600 customers at events such as field days, seminars and discussion groups.

This has resulted in more than 311,000 hectares of land being managed for sustainable grazing throughout the state.

Biosecure, profitable, productive and sustainable primary industries
Effective biosecurity and animal welfare is insurance to maintain market access for livestock and crop producers, now and in the future. Our produce is free of many of the pests and diseases found in other parts of the world and that’s why Local Land Services works diligently with ratepayers to monitor herds, flocks, and crops across the region and shares up-to-date advice and information to boost productivity.

Animal biosecurity and welfare
Pest animals cause serious economic losses to agricultural production, pose a risk of exotic disease, threaten the survival of many native species and cause environmental degradation.

We work with landholders to minimise the impact of pests on agricultural production and the environment. In the past year district veterinarians and biosecurity officers attended more than 12,000 general consultations and conducted 2,600 disease investigations.

We have strengthened our National Livestock Identification System (NLIS) compliance auditing this year through Operation Mary, a joint Local Land Services/NSW DPI intensive sheep audit. It focused on untagged sheep and National Vendor Declarations of non-vendor bred sheep where the visual Property Identification Codes (PIC) were not recorded or pink tags were not used.

Sheepcatcher II was a nationwide exercise that sought to further test our mob-based system by proving NSW compliance with the tracing time frame set out for a mock disease outbreak situation.

Invasive species and plant biosecurity
Invasive pests can impact significantly on the productivity and profitability of agriculture. We work with landholders to minimise the impact of pests on agricultural production and the environment. We provided 320 education and training workshops to build the capacity of 7,360 land managers and support and help coordinate group control programs — bringing landholders together to control wild dogs, foxes, pigs, deer, plague locusts and other pests.

We worked with land managers to establish 50 wild dog management plans with 7,900 properties involved in 1080 dog baiting over an area of 21.6 million hectares across the state.

Another high priority is supporting land managers and producers to manage existing weeds such as pasture weeds and environmental woody weeds, and prevent the spread of new and emerging weeds which can impact negatively on agriculture.

We improve the coordination of weed management in the region, working with Regional Weeds Committees throughout the state to determine weeds priorities and develop strategic programs to control new and emerging weeds.

Protecting our agricultural industry
To support primary producers we encourage and promote sustainable agricultural practices and increase the productivity of primary production. Our biosecurity officers are also stock inspectors in NSW.

Good surveillance detects any problems early and ensures the quality and safety of NSW livestock and livestock products, and access to domestic and international markets. In the past year we undertook 1,985 investigations to exclude emergency animal diseases (EADs).

Projects in the past year included participation in the National Arbovirus Monitoring program to protect livestock from arbovirus and crops from heliocoverpa.
Travelling stock reserves and stock management

In the common interest of the whole community, Local Land Services manages travelling stock reserves for their many users.

We manage more than 500,000 hectares of travelling stock reserves and promote a balance of use for production, social, cultural and environmental outcomes and continuously work to maintain and improve the reserves.

Mobs of travelling stock are common throughout the state with 4,920 walking permits issued in 2016 for stock movements.

To control the movement of stock, Local Land Services audits and inspects saleyards to monitor NLIS compliance, with 1,600 inspections during the year.

Some 1,070 livestock export certificates were issued during 2016 ensuring our stock are free from livestock health and disease problems. To protect market access, Local Land Services manages Property Identification Codes (PICs), with 2,680 PICs issued during the year.

Healthy, diverse, connected natural environments

Local Land Services regions work hard to bring landholders and customers the best available research, knowledge and skills to help production be more profitable and to ensure that natural resources are available for future generations.

We support healthy environments and biodiverse ecosystems across the state by helping landholders and communities to improve the quality of their land, soil, vegetation and water through grants and funding for on-ground projects, partnerships and training.

Land management

Healthy ecosystems underpin successful, productive primary production and communities. Through investment from the NSW and Australian governments, we support a healthy ecosystem across the landscapes of NSW.

We’re focused on implementing landscape-scale approaches to address threats to the natural environment. In particular, we support land managers to rehabilitate degraded habitat, manage weeds and pests, and contribute to the recovery of threatened ecological communities.

In the past year 880 voluntary conservation agreements were negotiated, protecting and conserving for biodiversity enhancement 233,200 hectares of land, and 207,300 hectares received support for measures to better manage sustainable grazing.

In the past year we have managed and enhanced travelling stock reserves to provide biodiversity conservation benefits by using a mix of active management and on-ground rehabilitation activities.

We’ve established and enhanced corridors of vegetation across public and private land to improve landscape connectivity in over-cleared landscapes and have built knowledge and skills to support adaptive management of our landscapes and natural resources.

Biodiversity

Native vegetation benefits both on farm production and environmental health. Healthy native vegetation can increase land values and productivity while reducing operating costs.

We’re improving the condition of native vegetation and riparian areas, extend habitat for threatened flora and fauna, and enhance existing wetland vegetation extent and quality.

To achieve this, we have enhanced and rehabilitated 51,300 hectares of wetland and 460 hectares of coastal native vegetation.

Sound management of native vegetation to rehabilitate, enhance and protect remnants and to increase the area of native vegetation in the landscape is a key objective for land managers across the state. In the past year we have enhanced and rehabilitated 56,500 hectares of land and protected 181,450 hectares of vegetation through fencing.

With better knowledge and improved land management techniques, soil is protected by native vegetation to reduce its susceptibility to erosion. Native vegetation is also critical for maintaining and improving habitat for many threatened flora and fauna species and for sustaining the health and function of local ecosystems. We planted 119,540 hectares of native species to help with regeneration.
Investment and partnerships

Local Land Services supports and engages Landcare networks, producer groups and community and industry partners to undertake agricultural, natural resource management, biosecurity and capacity building activities. Working with Landcare NSW and the NSW Government, we improve land and water ecosystem management, soil health and native vegetation protection.

The NSW Government has provided $15 million over four years to renew the government-community relationship and unlock the full potential of the thousands of volunteers in the Landcare network.

In addition to community partners Local Land Services works collaboratively with national, state and local government investors and delivery and service agencies to improve the service we offer in the region.

We also partner with a range of research, educational and industry stakeholders to maximise opportunities for our customers.
Regional achievements
Central Tablelands Local Land Services

The Central Tablelands region covers an area of approximately 31,365 square kilometres. It includes the major towns of Bathurst, Blayney, Cowra, Lithgow, Molong, Mudgee, Oberon and Orange and falls predominantly within Wiradjuri Aboriginal Country.

The region is home to over 156,000 residents, including an Indigenous population of 7,012 (4.5 per cent of the population).

Agriculturally, the region is highly diverse. Winter rainfall supports productive cropping systems. The most significant land use is grazing, followed by the production of broadacre crops. The region has increasing areas of fruit and vegetable production and viticulture.

Livestock production is also significant in the region, with sheep and cattle taking up the major share.

There are a number of pest animal species across the region, including foxes, rabbits and locusts. Reducing the impact of these pests is a priority.

Our year in review

In the past year, Central Tablelands Local Land Services has helped producers raise productivity, improve natural resources, protect our agricultural industries from pests and diseases and respond with the community to regional and state wide emergencies.

This work has been supported by the delivery of projects funded by the NSW Government, ratepayer funds, Australian Government and non-government organisations.

The wide range of projects were highlighted at the Mudgee Small Farm Field Days with a launch of our incentives program and a broad range of information at the Australian National Field Days.

We continued our collaboration with landholder groups on feral animal control, with successful aerial and ground baiting of wild dogs on public and private land in the east of the region. Also, the cat tracking project has raised awareness of cats in the environment among the urban community in the Lithgow area. Across the region a total of 976,033 hectares of land has been managed for pest animal control.

Our staff continue to support and assist the coordination of the Landcare networks across the region. Watershed Landcare Group is to be congratulated for organising and delivering another fantastic ‘Green Day’, engaging schools from across the region.

The Agribusiness Today Forum in Blayney was supported by Central Tablelands Local Land Services and was attended by more than 200 people.

The year saw the regional weeds committee formed from a broad group of stakeholders, and we started work on the Central Tablelands Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan under the chairmanship of Sean Richardson from Mid-Western Regional Council.
Groundcover incentive project

The challenge
Maintaining adequate rates of groundcover through adverse weather/declining seasonal conditions has many benefits. These include:
- rapid recovery of the pasture base following a seasonal break
- minimising soil and nutrient loss from bare ground
- maintaining perennial pasture composition and density for extended periods of time.

Work undertaken
A package of financial incentives and training was offered to landholders throughout the Central Tablelands region to construct farm infrastructure (stock management areas). Incentives were offered to eligible landholders to construct stock management areas to improve grazing management and groundcover outcomes. Attendance at two training days (confined stock management and ‘Stockplan’) was a prerequisite for landholders receiving an incentive.

Benefits
- Landholders trained on the benefits of maintaining groundcover and logistics around setting up and commissioning stock management areas.
- Infrastructure constructed to allow landholders greater flexibility to de-stock grazing areas during various times of the year.
- Landholders were helped to prevent degradation of natural resources by ensuring adequate groundcover was maintained across their properties during drier seasonal conditions.
- According to ‘The Grove’ farm manager, Rob Atkinson, funding and training from Central Tablelands Local Land Services has improved livestock management flexibility, groundcover and pasture recovery on their mixed farming operation at Canowindra, NSW.

Key achievements
- 16 landholders involved
- more than 23,000 hectares of grazing land protected, ensuring groundcover is maintained at above 70 per cent
- 25 landholders trained in ‘Stockplan’
- 30 landholders trained in confined stock management.

In collaboration with
- 16 landholders
- This project was supported through funding from the Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme.

“It gives you another tool in a non-drought situation where you have better management of your land and better production which means more money in your pocket and helps everybody.”
- Canowindra landholder.
Creating superb homes for parrots

The challenge

The Superb parrot is a listed threatened species under both Australian and NSW legislation. In order to breed, these parrots require large hollows near healthy box-gum grassy woodland vegetation communities. Hollows are at a premium due to historic land clearing, removal for firewood, competition from feral birds and honey bees and clearing of woodland vegetation.

Work undertaken

An experienced arborist used the ‘hollow augmentation’ technique to cut hollows into standing trees using a chainsaw. This method was first demonstrated in our region at the Hollows for Habitat Forum hosted in April 2016. The hollows created by this method provide a much more natural and durable hollow than simply installing nest boxes which Superb parrots are reluctant to use. Revegetation works also occurred in partnership with an education campaign.

Benefits

- More than 200 hollows created across the region to provide nesting habitat for Superb parrots.
- More than 2,000 native plants known to be habitat species for the Superb parrot planted by volunteers including school groups.
- Partnership with five local government areas – Bathurst, Blayney, Cabonne, Cowra and Orange to implement the works.
- Five community planting days conducted to provide an opportunity for members of the public to assist in the conservation of this species.
- Posters, fact sheets, flyers and stickers were produced and distributed as part of the education campaign.
- A thesis study will be completed on this project by a student from the University of Wollongong to provide scientific backing of the use of the ‘hollow augmentation’ technique.

Key achievements

This landscape scale project has created Superb parrots nesting habitat that will last for more than 50 years, which will result in long term conservation outcomes for one of our highest profile threatened species.

In collaboration with

- Environment and Waterways Alliance
- Bathurst Regional Council
- Blayney Shire Council
- Cabonne Council
- Cowra Council
- Orange City Council
- Orange Field Naturalist and Conservation Society.

“There are five Councils that are part of this program. It shows innovation and collaboration; and it clearly shows that the environment extends beyond Council boundaries.”
- Hon. Paul Toole, Minister for Local Government
Central West Local Land Services

The Central West region is home to about 110,000 people and covers from Grenfell, Forbes and Wellington to the western plains of Nyngan and Coonamble. Our region is home to about 14,500 Indigenous people, the second highest Indigenous population of all Local Land Services regions.

The major Aboriginal nations that the central west region overlies are Wiradjuri, Kawambarai, Weilwan and Wongaibon.

Mixed farming production of cropping and livestock systems is dominant across the region. Wheat is the main cereal crop and canola the most significant non-cereal crop. Sheep and cattle are the dominant livestock enterprises.

The region produces a number of horticultural crops, including cherries and apples, and also supports a growing viticulture industry. It is also home to a number of natural assets, including the internationally recognised Macquarie Marshes.

Our year in review

For the Central West region 2016 has been a year of planning and of enabling and helping our landholders either directly or by working with one or more of our valued partners.

Along with, and in complement to, our cornerstone statutory undertakings, we have been involved in activities in line with the goals and strategies laid out in the local strategic plan.

Highlights from 2016 include:

- The ‘Pastures, Livestock, Innovation – future proofing your grazing business’ forum was held at Nyngan in February and attended by more than 100 landholders and community members.
- The appointment of seven new local Landcare coordinators in the central west thanks to the NSW Governments local Landcare coordinators initiative.
- A Partnership with NSW Rural Fire Services was formed to conduct a traditional mosaic ‘cool burn’ for cultural, environmental and hazard reduction purposes on Troy reserve near Dubbo.
- Acting under the agriculture and animal services functional area as support agency to NSW DPI, Central West Local Land Services staff were heavily involved in flood response and recovery activities over August and September. We carried out surveillance on more than four million hectares and more than 400 damage reports were received.
- A collaborative information workshop at Dubbo Regional Council in December targeted landholders with small holdings to provide advice on accountabilities and how to manage and make the most of their land. This day was so well received that plans have been put in place to hold an additional two days across the region. Partners contributing to make the day a success included Dubbo Regional Council, NSW Police, NSW Rural Fire Service and SafeWork NSW.

Without continued financial support from the NSW Government, ratepayer funds, the Australian Government and non-government organisations, Central West Local Land Services would not be able to carry out these activities.
Characterising the Aboriginal heritage/archaeological values of travelling stock reserves

The challenge

Ensuring that Central West Local Land Services understands the likelihood of Aboriginal heritage/archaeological values of Travelling Stock Reserves (TSRs) within the region.

Work undertaken

The Central West Local Land Services region includes over 105,000 hectares of TSRs. There was a need to collate potential Aboriginal cultural values over these sites with those known and listed on the NSW Aboriginal Heritage Information Management database. A methodology was established to calculate the likelihood of values on any specific TSR. This data was then ground truthed for accuracy.

Two teams comprising archaeologists and Central West Local Land Services Cultural Heritage Officer, Mike Nolan undertook site visits over nine days at the archaeological field assessment stage. During this time, two sites within each of nine polygons were surveyed as part of the process.

The information gathered was used to develop:
- updated GIS layers, using Aboriginal Heritage Information Systems (AHIMS) information and survey results, showing all Aboriginal heritage over TSRs.
- a report documenting the results of the field survey over the chosen TSRs
- AHIMS Site Cards for all sites. These will be lodged with the Office of Environment and Heritage.

Benefits

Staff involved in the project and in subsequent developing plans have an increased understanding and awareness of cultural values.

Key achievements

Central West Local Land Services now has a methodology which can be used to undertake further assessment of cultural values and a process to determine which polygons will be prioritised for future archaeological surveys.

Total investment

- $81,577

In collaboration with

- OzArk Environmental and Heritage Management Pty Ltd
- Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme
- Catchment Action NSW.

“This project has helped us better understand the cultural values that our TSRs hold.”
- Central West Local Land Services, Team Leader Collaboration, Shona Whitfield.
Creek line restoration Shalimar - working with the Beers

The challenge
To permanently prevent stock from grazing in Sandy Creek in order to protect the already fragile banks from further erosion and to increase the native vegetation on their highly cleared landscape.

Work undertaken
- Five kilometres of new stock proof fencing.
- Four sets of double gates installed at two locations to make it easier to move stock.
- 500 square metre area for revegetation.
- 200 seedlings planted for revegetation.
- In the early stages of the project, a cultural heritage walk and talk was conducted by Central West Local Land Services Cultural Heritage Officer, Mike Nolan. This revealed a number of artefacts which resulted in the planting of 200 seedlings for revegetation to increase diversity and further protect the culturally significant sites.

Benefits
- The 18.50 hectare project area is not only protected from stock, but also regularly monitored for plants and pest animal control.
- Information relating to stock health and feral animal control was provided which led to a site visit by a biosecurity officer to further discuss feral animal control.
- Once the revegetation is established, it is anticipated that the site will be an important corridor link to the Goonoo Forest to the east providing habitat for native birds and animals.

Key achievements
- The Beer family fenced the entire length of Sandy Creek on their property on both sides.
- Regular ongoing contact with the Beers has not only assisted in project delivery flexibility, but also provided an opportunity to expose the landholders to the full complement of services available to assist their production systems and natural resource management.

Total investment
- Australian Biodiversity Fund (Clean Energy Future Fund - $30,950, Central West Local Land Services - provision of technical and equipment support, Landholder - $15,000 cash and in-kind contribution.

In collaboration with
- Landholder
- Commonwealth Biodiversity Fund (Clean Energy Future Fund).

“We have learnt a lot about creek management, weed control, native pastures and have seen our country improving.”
- Landholders, Mathew and Natalie Beer.
Greater Sydney Local Land services

The Greater Sydney region extends from some of the most intensely urbanised localities in NSW, through to vast World Heritage protected wilderness areas, and expansive coastal waterways. The region is home to 4.6 million people, the largest urban population in Australia and an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of 54,747 or 32 per cent of the population in NSW.

The important natural resources of the region underpin significant economic activity. The Greater Sydney region covers just 1.5 per cent of the land area of NSW, yet it accounts for seven per cent of the state’s agricultural output.

A third of all vegetable farms in NSW are in the Greater Sydney region. The highest value agricultural sectors are poultry, vegetables, nurseries and turf. Preservation of high value precincts such as the Hawkesbury floodplain and the orchard areas on volcanic soil at Bilpin is important in ensuring food security for Sydney.

Greater Sydney Local Land Services has an important role in the post-border management of such threats and supports NSW DPI with management and response.

Our year in review

Greater Sydney Local Land Services work with land managers and the community to improve primary production within healthy landscapes. We help people make better decisions about the land they manage and help communities and agricultural industries to be profitable and sustainable into the future.

In the past year, we have delivered a variety of projects to improve the productivity and sustainability of our agricultural industry, reducing the impacts of pests and diseases, building our capabilities in emergency management and enhancing and protecting the many and varied natural environments within our region.

During 2016, we secured investment partnerships with both industry and government including our $1 million National Vegetable Extension Network project with Horticulture Innovation Australia and the $454,750 Next Generation Compost Trial in partnership with NSW Farmers, NSW EPA and the University of Technology, Sydney. These projects will support the enhancement and viability of our $1 billion horticulture industry with primary producers throughout our region.

In the past 12 months Greater Sydney Local Land Services has also delivered a variety of other projects that demonstrate the value of the integrated Local Land Services model. These include the Menangle Fox Control program, a collaborative and coordinated campaign launched in March this year in a bid to reduce the impact of foxes on livestock and the natural environment. We have had a great response from the community with more than 60 landholders engaged to date.

This year also saw our biosecurity presence increased thanks to a $1.13 million partnership with NSW DPI. Biosecurity protections are particularly important for landholders in the Greater Sydney region given our close proximity to major ports of entry, and the high density of domestic animals and plant nurseries where new pests and diseases can easily spread.
The Greater Sydney demonstration farm

The challenge
The total value of agricultural production in the Greater Sydney region is estimated at $749 million and includes one third of all vegetable farms in NSW. Intensive production industries on small lot holdings are favoured and this presents major challenges for meaningful communication and extension. Our goal has been to develop a practical facility for training, demonstration and extension to showcase all operational aspects of Local Land Services in a single location.

Work undertaken
We undertook extensive consultation with primary producers, industry and the small farms peri-urban community. This consultation uncovered a desire for an independent, interactive learning facility such as the Demonstration Farm. The 2.1 hectare site is located on the University of Western Sydney Campus at Richmond and includes a fully automated irrigated horticulture paddock, a large shed for workshops and training and an area set aside to demonstrate and promote best practice for smaller peri-urban landholders dealing with a range of common land management issues.

Benefits
- Use of the facility for training and events across all functional areas of Local Land Services including agricultural services, biosecurity and natural resource management.
- The site represents a ‘neutral ground’ bringing farmers together at an independent, non-commercial farm.
- Opportunity for producers to meet, talk, network and ask questions of Greater Sydney Local Land Services staff and industry experts.
- Effective sharing of information by bringing people together in a central location.
- Showcasing best practice pest animal control with on ground fox management practices in place.

Key achievements
- More than 350 growers, producers and land managers visited the farm to talk to our team and take part in a variety of events covering a range of topics including on farm biosecurity practices, sustainable pest management in vegetable crops and best practices in sustainable horticulture.
- Three NSW EPA compost trial crops being scientifically monitored.
- Key learning and delivery centre for our $1 million partnership with Horticulture Innovation Australia as part of the National Vegetable Extension Network project.
- Variety trials underway in partnership with industry as a drawcard for local growers.
- Development of a peri-urban showcase on part of the property to demonstrate best practice small farm techniques and tips.

“This farm is an integral space for growers, industry and government to come together on mutual ground to see results of various trials, hear tips and techniques and provide feedback on the future of our agricultural industry.”
- Pitt Town Bottoms Grower, Mario Muscat.

Pictured: Dr Jessica Lye of AUSVEG with Land Services Manager, Bill Dixon.
Menangle Fox control campaign ramps up

The challenge
The rise of fox numbers throughout South West Sydney is causing increasing problems for landholders and for the local environment. Greater Sydney Local Land Services joined forces with Barragal Landcare, NSW DPI and three local councils to form the Menangle Fox Control Group. The group aims to educate landholders, managers and local residents on the best ways to reduce rising fox numbers and their impact on livestock health, native vegetation and wildlife.

Work undertaken
• Key stakeholder group formed.
• Two public workshops held to gather community input and involvement.
• On-ground baiting and monitoring via motion detection cameras.
• Training for landholders and land managers on the use of best practice pest animal management.
• Scat collection and analysis.
• Ongoing consultation with community and education around disease risks and environmental impacts.

Benefits
The campaign is a long-term, coordinated approach driven by collaborating with the community, government and volunteer groups to raise awareness of the impacts of foxes and the best methods to reduce numbers.

Key achievements
• More than 40 landholders were engaged through public workshops.
• Cross collaboration with Greater Sydney Local Land Services biosecurity and natural resource management staff.
• Training of landholders in the use of cage traps.
• Collaboration between council education officers, local schools and Landcare volunteers.
• Increased uptake in use of the FeralScan app.
• Strong media interest and support of campaign.
• First stages of a two year project.

Total investment
More than $54,600 including approximately $35,000 via in-kind and staff resourcing and more than $19,600 funding via the Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme.

In collaboration with
• Barragal Landcare Group Inc
• NSW DPI
• Campbelltown, Camden and Wollondilly councils.

“In order to control foxes we need a whole of community approach which includes our farming neighbours and those in urban environments where we see up to 10 times the fox population. This is a fantastic initiative by Greater Sydney Local Land Services and one we are proud to be a part of.”
- Barragal Landcare Vice Chairman, Roger Giles.

Pictured: Senior Land Services Officer, Alison Towerton with Senior Biosecurity Officer, Lee Parker.
Hunter Local Land Services

The Hunter Local Land Services region covers an area of approximately 33,000 square kilometres. It takes in the local government areas of Greater Taree, Great Lakes, Gloucester, Port Stephens, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Cessnock, Dungog, Singleton, Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter. About 670,000 people live in the Hunter Local Land Services region.

The natural resources of the Hunter have enabled the development of a wide range of industries including tourism, agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries, coal mining, power generation, and recreation.

Grazing of beef cattle and sheep are major agricultural activities in the region, as are dairying, poultry production, dryland cropping, irrigated cropping, fodder production and turf production on alluvial soils.

The region is also renowned for its thoroughbred horse industry and vineyards. The estuaries and coastal waters support production of oysters, fish and crustaceans.

Our year in review

Hunter Local Land Services has continued to support producers and landholders by building capacity to control pest animals, improving agricultural productivity, and managing riparian lands and native vegetation.

We’ve been working with the community to better manage our water, land, soil, vegetation, biodiversity and cultural heritage, including managing Travelling Stock Reserves (TSRs) and enabling Aboriginal communities to work on Country.

In November we launched our much-anticipated Farm Flood Readiness Kit, developed in the wake of the April 2015 super storm, to help Hunter landholders in flood prone areas to prepare their properties for floods.

Throughout the year we invested about $2.5 million in grants for 124 landholders, land managers and groups across the Hunter for projects to improve the sustainability and productivity of land management in the region. Our investment attracted substantially greater cash and in-kind co-investment from landholders and land managers.

We have been supporting beef, dairy and poultry industries across the region with sustainable agriculture. In the Hunter, we contributed to 689 hectares of land being managed for sustainable grazing activities that improve groundcover, pasture persistence, water efficiency, nutrient retention, fencing and stock water supply infrastructure.

We’ve been working with landholders to protect and improve biodiversity habitat connectivity, quality and condition. In the past year 86 voluntary conservation agreements were negotiated on 4,941 hectares of land, with 3,358 hectares receiving support to better manage sustainable grazing. Landholder skills and capacity have been improved with over 1,300 landholders attending training events.

With the finalisation of the Hexham Swamp Rehabilitation Project, we reached a major milestone in the rehabilitation of the Hunter Estuary. In the past ten years this project has restored 443 hectares of estuarine habitat, contributing some $3.4 million per annum to the NSW economy through the establishment of new prawn nurseries.

In 2016, Local Land Services and Landcare NSW formed a community and government partnership to reinvigorate Landcare. In the Hunter this has resulted in the appointment of seven new Local Landcare Coordinators, hosted by Landcare networks and local government partners. The new coordinators are an important presence in local communities and support Landcare networks to identify and deliver their local priorities and activities.
Hunter landholders prepare for flooding

The challenge
Low-lying areas of Murray and Deb Schaefer’s 230 hectare property in Nelsons Plains, on the Hunter River floodplain, were inundated by heavy rains during the April 2015 storm. The beef farmers endured damage to fencing and pastures and were forced to sell 253 steers in the fortnight immediately after the floods, much earlier than they would have liked. The experience prompted the Schaefers to ensure they were prepared for the next flood event. Their main objective was to make sure they could quickly and easily evacuate their 450 steers in the event of future floods.

Work undertaken
Since the 2015 flood, the Schaefers have installed more than six kilometres of new fencing to create two laneways which cattle will use to safely evacuate the floodplain. Several paddocks feed into the laneway, which extends all the way to the Williams River, making it easy to round up stock. The roofing on their old hay sheds has been repaired so they can store feed during major rain events. The Schaefers have also fenced off a smaller ‘sacrifice paddock’ around the hay sheds on higher ground. In the event of a minor flood, the couple will bring the stock up to this paddock and hand feed them hay while the pastures on the lower ground dry out. The couple is also currently replacing existing plastic water troughs, which leak and shift during floods, with more durable concrete tanks.

Key achievements
The Schaefers now have a farm flood readiness plan, which they developed with assistance from Hunter Local Land Services. The plan outlines the actions that need to be taken when a flood is coming.

In collaboration with
• Hunter catchment contributions from the community of the Hunter.

Benefits
• The property is now better prepared for future flooding.
• The two bovine laneways to flood-free pastures will keep cattle high and dry next time a flood is on the horizon, preventing animal welfare issues.
• When it’s time to evacuate stock it will take an hour instead of half a day.
• One hundred tonnes of hay is stored away in dry hay sheds for flood events.
• The property will be more sustainable in the event of floods, with the higher ground ‘sacrifice paddock’ to be used by stock while the flooded pastures on lower ground dry out.

Total investment
• $30,000 Hunter Local Land Services flood recovery grant and considerable cash and in-kind contributions from the Schaefers.

“Developing our flood readiness plan allowed us to identify and address the risks and hazards on our property. We are now better prepared for inevitable future flood events and we know the actions we will take when a flood is coming.”
- Landholder, Murray Schaefer.
Grass farming in Rawdon Vale

The challenge
Cameron Laurie runs 1,300 head of beef cattle on his 1,838 hectare property at Rawdon Vale west of Gloucester. When he took over management of the farm, productivity was falling due to a proliferation of carpet grass, blady grass, setaria, rhodes and paspalum with some kikuyu patches. There were also a number of eroding gullies, and hills and ridges that were not getting enough water. Cameron was keen to improve the soils to create some resilience in the landscape. He met with Hunter Local Land Services staff at a farm planning workshop and started to discuss the establishment of a strategic grazing system.

Work undertaken
- Constructed 11.5 km of internal electric fencing to subdivide a 179 hectare paddock into 11 paddocks to rotationally graze stock consistent with a strategic grazing plan.
- Installed eight stock water troughs fed from a large dam supporting a reticulated off-stream water supply.
- Monitored grazing and soil health indicators in accordance with a strategic grazing plan.
- Monitored and recorded herbage mass, pasture density and stocking rates at each rotation.
- Initial and biannual assessment of groundcover and pasture composition and quality.

Benefits
Cameron has already seen some good increases in stocking capacity on the subdivided paddocks. The off stream water supply and stock exclusion from the eroded gully line has seen the regeneration of grasses and native vegetation which, apart from supporting the banks from further erosion, will increase biodiversity and reduce the loss of nutrients downstream.

Benefits
Although sample monitoring of pasture only commenced in winter 2016, and it is too soon to determine any significant differences in pasture, Cameron has seen a marked improvement in cattle condition and reduction of stress. He has also been able to get cattle to a good weight considerably earlier than he could previously.

Key achievements
With technical advice and funding from Hunter Local Land Services, Cameron has been able to implement an integrated system of rotational grazing, pasture management, off stream water supply for livestock, and improvement of riparian vegetation condition.

Adopting these new strategies has not only achieved better environmental outcomes, it’s also improving general farm management and creating the potential for increased profits.

Total investment
- $30,000 sustainable agriculture grant, with considerable cash and in-kind contributions from Cameron Laurie.

In collaboration with
- Australian Government, through its National Landcare Programme.

“Grazing management is exactly that, you’re actually managing your grass. You’re a grass farmer as opposed to a grazier. So you’re looking at things a little differently to how it’s been done in the past. It’s all about encouraging the species you want to proliferate.”

- Landholder, Cameron Laurie.
The Murray region spans more than 42,000 square kilometres across a range of environments, from the steep alpine slopes in the east to the vast native grasslands and riverine floodplains in the west. The region's population of about 107,000 people is concentrated along the Murray and Edward–Kolety river systems in towns such as Corowa, Moama, Deniliquin, Tocumwal, Holbrook and the city of Albury. Land and water resources within the Murray region support diverse agricultural enterprises including cropping, grazing of sheep and cattle, and horticultural production. The Murray region has always supported a large Aboriginal population and features many important cultural locations of state, national and international significance. Approximately one-third of residents are directly involved in agriculture, underscoring the importance Murray Local Land Services places on working with the local community on sustainable agricultural production and natural resource management.

Our year in review

Murray Local Land Services is focussed on delivering a high standard of service for the community and in the past year, has worked with individuals, groups and funding partners to increase the health and productivity of the region. The year brought its challenges and seasonal extremes, with wet conditions and water logging mid-year leading to floods followed by quite dry conditions by mid-November. We worked to provide ongoing service across all areas while responding to the specific demands of the seasonal conditions and the immediate nature of emergencies. The 2016 flood response included aerial surveillance for at-risk animals, liaising with affected landholders, aerial fodder drops to stranded stock and pre-emptive contact with potentially affected landholders to check on their preparations for the upcoming flood peak. A number of highlights from 2016 include:

- Ramsar and buffer zones project – the protection of natural assets of international significance, including threatened species such as turtles and bitterns, through partnerships with adjacent landholders, traditional owners and other government agencies.
- Our open-call Community Grants program, which, in 2016, enabled 21 community groups to deliver projects that addressed local priorities. The projects covered agricultural, environmental and community capacity initiatives across the region.
- Cooperative aerial baiting of wild dogs involving our wild dog groups, National Parks and Wildlife Service and Forestry Corporation NSW.
- Roll-out of a dollar-for-dollar wild dog exclusion fencing program funded from the Federal Government’s Drought Pest and Weed program, erecting 130 km of electric fencing across several wild dog-affected holdings.
- Declaration of two local areas, Doodle Comer and Mungabareena as Aboriginal places.
Big gains for little fish with habitat improvements

The challenge
Small-bodied native fish play an important role in aquatic ecosystems, providing a critical link in food webs between zooplankton and larger fish and birds. They don’t, however, receive the attention that larger fish species like the iconic Murray cod do. Many small-bodied native fish are under threat, and for some species their current distribution is significantly smaller than their potential range.

Historic practices, including allowing stock access to creeks, replacement of native vegetation with willows and flow regulation have substantially reduced the suitability of our creeks for small-bodied native fish. Of particular concern in the Murray region is the southern pygmy perch, which was once broadly distributed but is now restricted to two sites in the region.

Work undertaken
Murray Local Land Services is working with industry, landholders and the community to enhance key habitat areas for the southern pygmy perch at Holbrook and Coppabella. Landholders are fencing off sections of creek, planting native species and actively managing willows and blackberry on their properties.

Murray Local Land Services is also engaging with local schools to raise awareness about small-bodied fish. The schools have received an aquarium tank and captive-bred southern pygmy perch as part of a learning module delivered with Petarus Education Group.

Students have completed assignments about the species and have learnt how to care for the fish in their tanks. One group of students has done such a great job that their fish recently bred.

Benefits
- Improved community awareness about small-bodied native fish.
- Improved riparian and aquatic vegetation and reduced stream turbidity and nutrients.
- Reduced erosion of farmland near creeks.
- Flow-on benefits for other small-bodied native fish and frogs.

Key achievement
- Southern pygmy perch population at key sites have been maintained or are increasing.
- Building connections of local youth with their local landscapes and species.

In collaboration with
- Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme
- Catchment Action NSW
- NSW DPI - Fisheries
- Office of Environment and Heritage
- landholders
- Forestry Corporation NSW
- local community.

“Water plants are a critical habitat feature for Southern Pygmy Perch.”
- NSW DPI Fisheries, Fisheries Manager, Luke Pearce.
Testing emergency animal disease preparedness

The challenge
Murray Local Land Services’ animal biosecurity and welfare team saw the need to improve the capability and experience of staff to identify and respond to an EAD incursion. Murray Local Land Services had not yet developed an understanding of the contribution required of local support agencies to facilitate a systematic and efficient response.

Work undertaken
A one-day exercise, designed to enable staff to practise responding to an EAD incident, was organised. Titled Exercise Unicus, it centred on a suspected Hendra case in a single interstate horse at a large national horse event at the Albury Equestrian Centre. It brought together 30 participants from Murray Local Land Services and NSW DPI, along with private veterinarians, event organisers, equestrian centre management, NSW Police, NSW Health and local government.

Benefits
- Participants familiarised themselves with existing NSW DPI policies and procedures for the detection and response to Hendra.
- Increased knowledge of Hendra, including its history, epidemiology and risks to human and equine health.
- Improved awareness of the correct application of personal protective equipment, a critical risk control for the safety of all people in a suspected Hendra case.
- Increased staff understanding of their roles and responsibilities in an EAD scenario.
- Enhanced understanding among stakeholders and support agencies of NSW DPI and Murray Local Land Services’ role as lead response agencies for EAD response and EAD – Hendra.
- Improved familiarity of support agency roles in EAD response for effective and efficient management of EAD including EAD - Hendra.
- Enhanced relationships between Murray Local Land Services, NSW DPI, stakeholders and support agencies.

Key achievements
Bringing the relevant representatives together at the same time can be challenging and may be perceived as resource intensive. The animal biosecurity and welfare team was able to articulate the potential risks and impact to the equine industry and local community as well as the role stakeholders and support agencies would play in facilitating efficient and effective response to an EAD.

In collaboration with
- NSW DPI Emergency, Animal Disease Response preparedness program.
North Coast Local Land Services

The North Coast Local Land Services Region is located in north-eastern NSW, including Lord Howe Island, and covers an area of 32,050 square kilometres. The region includes 568 kilometres of coastline and extends three nautical miles out to sea.

Approximately 506,000 people, including about 21,000 Indigenous Australians live on the North Coast.

The major population centres are on the coast and are connected primarily by coastal transport routes. They include Tweed Heads, Lismore, Murwillumbah, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Nambucca Heads, Kempsey and Port Macquarie.

The North Coast region is the third most biodiverse region in Australia and also supports a diverse range of agricultural industries including beef, dairy, blueberry, macadamia, intensive horticulture, fishing and aquaculture.

Our year in review

North Coast Local Land Services has strengthened relationships with ratepayers, landholders and communities in the past year and continued to deliver services and projects that meet the diverse needs of the region.

North Coast Local Land Services projects and partnerships grow farm productivity and healthy environments but also play a vital role in helping to protect against pests, diseases and environmental threats. This work is supported by the NSW Government Catchment Action funding and the Australian Government funded National Landcare Programme.

Our response to meeting the region’s diverse needs has been to develop an integrated approach to service delivery. We partner with public and private organisations to achieve our goals and this collaborative approach best serves the needs of the region.

Some of our key achievements in 2016 include:

• Launched the North Coast Aboriginal Engagement Plan and a partnership with a number of Aboriginal organisations such as Booroongen Djugun College that deliver employment, training and education programs in environmental conservation and land management.

• Increased the capacity of land managers to improve primary production and natural resource management and trained more than 2,300 customers.

• District veterinarians and biosecurity officers attended 979 general consultations and conducted 63 investigations to exclude emergency animal disease.

• Provided education and training workshops to build the capacity of 600 land managers to support and help coordinate group control programs — bringing landholders together to control wild dogs, foxes, pigs and deer.

• More than 2,100 landholders were involved in baiting over an area of 797,215 hectares across the region.

• In the past year, we enhanced and rehabilitated 563 hectares of land and protected 152 hectares of vegetation through fencing.

• North Coast Local Land Services has allocated more than $0.91 million dollars for the operation of local Landcare networks and the delivery of regional Landcare facilitator functions for the three-year period from 2015 to 2018.
Building relationships in the North Coast

The challenge

Everyone has a role to play in growing and maintaining healthy environments and productive farms. North Coast Local Land Services is building formal relationships with environmental and agriculturally based organisations to maximise outcomes.

Work undertaken

In 2016 we continued to build on our strong partnership with North Coast Regional Landcare, undertaking a mid-agreement review. North Coast Local Land Services continually works to develop new and strengthen existing partnerships to support productive and sustainable agriculture.

In 2016 several partnerships were formalised with agricultural industry partners to support the productivity and sustainability of agriculture on the North Coast. Formal partnership arrangements were entered into with Subtropical Dairy and the Australian Macadamia Society and ongoing opportunities for collaboration were identified with Norco Rural and Dairy NSW.

North Coast Local Land Services also formalised the relationship with the Lord Howe Island Board to support the healthy natural resources and agricultural productivity of Lord Howe Island.

Benefits

- Building strong relationships that have real outcomes for the environment, the economy and our community.
- Facilitating information sharing.
- Enabling better informed decisions while balancing production, profit and sustainability
- Facilitating awareness in the community of the importance of biodiversity which leads to stewardship and protection of the environment.
- Bringing people together to achieve shared goals to protect our natural, living wealth – our biodiversity – for future generations.

Key achievements

The North Coast Regional Landcare partnership has facilitated additional funding and resources for the organisation and enabled programs in pest management and sustainable agriculture.

The Subtropical Dairy agreement has allowed for additional training for agricultural advisory staff in effluent management for North Coast dairy producers.

The Norco partnership has facilitated the participation of North Coast Local Land Services and Norco agricultural advisory staff in the ProGraze program.

The Australian Macadamia Society partnership has supported 16 macadamia farmers to implement best practice orchard management.

The Lord Howe Island Board partnership will help protect this world heritage listed natural treasure.

In collaboration with

- North Coast Regional Landcare
- Subtropical Dairy
- Dairy NSW and Norco
- Australian Macadamia Society
- The Lord Howe Island Board

Collaborative projects stretch across many areas, including sustainable grazing practices, enhancing vegetative corridors for biodiversity and assisting Indigenous communities.
Landholder involvement in wild dog groups

The challenge
Wild dogs are a serious pest in Australia. They attack livestock and native animals and potentially spread diseases and threatening human health, safety and wellbeing. North Coast Local Land Services supports landholder groups with control techniques including ground baiting, trapping and the use of technology, including monitoring with remote cameras. The biosecurity team have been working hard to encourage landholders to cooperate with their neighbours, rather than tackling their problem individually.

Work undertaken
- The most effective way to control wild dogs is to bring together all land managers in a coordinated approach. Wild dogs don’t respect human boundaries which is why it’s important for all land managers to work together. Effective wild dog management involves understanding how wild dogs function within a landscape and then using the appropriate control methods, such as baiting, trapping, canid pest ejectors, shooting or a combination of these methods.
- North Coast Local Land Services biosecurity officers have been working hard to encourage land managers to work together to increase participation in wild dog control programs across the region.
- In the past three years that effort is starting to translate into results with more land managers getting involved in group programs. More than 65 coordinated groups were involved in the autumn campaign covering nearly 420 properties and 265,000 hectares of land.

Benefits
- The number of groups involved in wild dog baiting programs increased from 94 to 198 in three years.
- The number of holdings participating in groups has increased from 407 to 1,014 and the total number of holdings participating has increased from 1,552 to 1919.
- The wider community benefit greatly from the efforts of those who are active and regularly participate in pest animal control.
- Increasing the number of landholders participating in groups enable more effective wild dog control.

Key achievements
The significant increase in the number of landholders participating in groups, rather than tackling the wild dog problem individually, has resulted in better control of wild dog populations.

In collaboration with
- private landholders
- public land managers
- North East Pest Animal Advisory Committee (NEPAAC).
North West Local Land Services

The North West region spans from Quirindi in the south and to the Queensland border in the north, Bendemeer in the east and Walgett in the west. The region has an area of approximately 82,000 square kilometres. It is home to about 113,000 people who live mainly along the rivers and their tributaries. The major regional centres are Moree, Narrabri, Gunnedah and Tamworth. The people of the Kamilaroi nation are the traditional custodians of the region. There are 14 local Aboriginal land councils representing some 13,000 people living in the area.

The North West region is a productive agricultural area with summer dominant rainfall and a climate allowing for crop and pasture growth across most of the year. There are significant groundwater resources, together with surface water allocations, which enables the irrigation industries to contribute approximately 48 per cent of the gross value of agricultural production to the region’s economy.

Our year in review

North West Local Land Services has built on a strong foundation of trust, experience and result driven action. The year has seen us deliver our programs more efficiently and drive programs which have better community and industry appeal.

In 2016, we continued to reach out to our local industries and communities to ensure we were meeting the needs of the north-west. This inclusive and collaborative approach ensures we can continue to build on our strong agricultural, environmental and cultural values.

Some highlights of the year include:

- The invasive species and plant health team had a major focus on landholder training and held vertebrate pesticide induction training days at 23 locations across the region.
- During the November/December floods our teams helped landholders with animal welfare issues, and with damage assessments for disaster declarations and participated in recovery planning.
- Three of our district veterinarians travelled to Nepal for intensive training in villages with active cases of foot and mouth disease. This practical training provided our region and the state with increased ability to protect our community and industries.
- A large-scale maintenance program on the TSR network. A priority for this program was to regain water security on TSRs by de-silting of earth dams and tanks.
- Increased allocation of weed spraying resources to reinforce the harrisia cactus containment line south of Boggabilla.
- Improved the condition of habitat for koalas at Croppa Creek and south of Gunnedah.
- Successfully completed the Caring for Our Country Regional Investment Program 2013-2018.

An additional highlight has been the support of the North West Community Advisory Group, which has provided advice to the local board to tailor services more effectively and have closer connections to industry and community.

Many of our projects and programs would not be possible without the support of our funding partners—the National Landcare Programme via the Australian Government and Catchment Action NSW, supported by the NSW Government.
Wild deer in the Liverpool Plains survey

The challenge
In early 2016, a Liverpool Plains Community Advisory Group representative raised concerns about the numbers of wild deer and their destructive impact within her area and the effect this was having on the customers of the region. Community advisory groups assist the local board in its decision making capability by bringing key issues to its attention.

Work undertaken
• Members of North West Local Land Services’ strategic land services team met with key parties in the Liverpool Plains to further investigate the wild deer situation.
• After the initial consultation, a course of action was agreed upon and a landholder survey was used to gauge local opinions about wild deer.
• To get a representative sample, the survey was conducted online and telephone.

Benefits
• The results of the survey showed clear customer concerns including the real damage and impact of wild deer on crops, biosecurity, stock carrying capacity and road safety.
• As a result, the survey partner, the University of New England, key staff from North West Local Land Services, the Natural Resource Commission, NSW DPI, ABC local radio staff and approximately 30 local landholders attended a survey feedback day at the Warrah Creek Hall.
• A detailed series of presentations was delivered with feedback received from our customers about the impact of wild deer in the area.

Key achievements
• The formation of a working group, driven by the community advisory group and key North West Local Land Services staff to investigate possible courses of action.
• This process demonstrated the capacity of the community advisory group model and the connectivity that it provides.
• The community advisory group model can be used to effect change and bring attention to major issues within a customer area.

Total investment
• $40,000.

“The community has pulled together to engage in this survey to demonstrate the importance of the deer issues in the area. It is good for the community to see Local Land Services listening and trying to drive the best services possible.”
- Liverpool Plains Community Advisory Group representative, Heather Ranclaud.
Aquatill farming training

The challenge
Zero-till farming has provided significant benefits to agriculture in the region, including higher yields, more moisture storage and better soil health. However, the increased surface residue can cause issues when planting the next crop as conventional machinery can struggle to accurately place seed into the seedbed.

Work undertaken
- North West Local Land Services, along with project partners, demonstrated how the adaptation of technology from the manufacturing industry could be used to improve planting opportunities in high residue situations.
- The Aquatill system uses ultra-high pressure (UHP) liquid to cut through residue in front of the planting units.
- This UHP liquid system is normally used for cutting steel and concrete.
- The system was mounted to a local grower’s planter and demonstrated to interested growers and advisers at a field day near Moree.

Key achievements
The agricultural sector was able to apply innovative thinking to solve a major issue through the use of technology from another industry.

Benefits
- Improved planting opportunities.
- Growers can maintain higher residue levels to improve groundcover.
- Ability to apply liquid fertilisers at planting time.

In collaboration with
- AMPS
- SA No-Till Farming Association
- Conservation Agriculture Australia
- Shape Technologies Group
- Conservation Agriculture and No-till Farming Association.

Total investment
- $16,000.

“We can see how the technology can be used to improve fertiliser application and cut through stubble to improve planting.”

– Moree grower.
Northern Tablelands Local Land Services

The Northern Tablelands region spans 45,000 square kilometres and is bounded by Tenterfield in the north and Walcha in the south. The region extends between Wairilda and Delungra in the west and reaches to the escarpment of the Great Dividing Range in the east.

The population of the Northern Tablelands region is 72,000 and is centred around the towns of Armidale, Glen Innes, Guyra, Inverell, Tenterfield, Uralla, Walcha and numerous small villages, all of which support productive rural communities predominantly producing beef, sheep and wool. Major industries and town viability are focused on agricultural production.

Eight Aboriginal nations - Ngarabal, Dainggatti, Anaiwan, Kamilaroi, Banbai, Gumbainggir, Bigambul and Nganyaywana - incorporating various language dialects, fall within the region.

The Northern Tablelands has the highest livestock carrying capacity of all Local Land Services regions and grazing is the major land use at 56 per cent. Significant smaller industries include forestry, apples, stone fruit, potatoes, glasshouse tomatoes, dairy farms, alpacas and cool climate wineries.

Our year in review

Northern Tablelands Local Land Services is here when it matters for agriculture, for the environment and, most importantly, for people in rural communities. We are here when it matters in times of natural disaster - drought, flood or bushfire - and are vigilant in protecting our livestock industries from pests and disease.

Northern Tablelands Local Land Services continues to deliver outstanding achievements that surpass results of the previous year. Some highlights in 2016 include:

• Pastures, mixed farming, soils, livestock and farm planning projects contributed to sustainable grazing management across almost 10,000 hectares of land.
• Some 210 applications were received from landholders to plant more trees on their farms. During the year more than 97,000 native, endemic seedlings were planted on farms throughout the region.
• Aboriginal cultural heritage is a priority for Northern Tablelands Local Land Services and this year, 588 hectares of land was managed for Aboriginal cultural value. This was achieved through farm planning to establish a beef production business at Jubullum near Tenterfield and introducing a traditional fire burn regime at the Aboriginal-owned property, “Wattleridge” near Guyra. We have also built a learning centre at Walcha to up-skill local Aboriginal people in natural resource management.
• We visited 350 properties to investigate potential threats from animal disease. This surveillance underpins disease certification and market access for Northern Tablelands livestock producers.
• Our district veterinarians and biosecurity officers surveyed 65 flocks to maintain our Footrot Protected Area status. The animal biosecurity team also conducted 180 saleyard inspections across the region to monitor NLIS compliance including ear tagging and National Vendor Declaration completion in sheep, cattle and goats.
• More than 100,000 baits were dropped by helicopter and landholders laid 10,000 ground baits on 1,230,531 hectares of land as part of the 2016 annual wild dog aerial and ground baiting campaign across the Walcha, Armidale, Glen Innes and Tenterfield districts.

944 PARTICIPANTS AT TRAINING EVENTS
11,929 HECTARES MANAGED FOR NATURAL RESOURCE OUTCOMES
350 PROPERTY VISITS BY VETS AND BIOSECURITY OFFICERS
530 GENERAL CONSULTATIONS BY VETS AND BIOSECURITY OFFICERS
180 SALEYARD INSPECTIONS
28 LIVESTOCK EXPORT CERTIFICATES ISSUED
$2.4 M INVESTED IN COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ON-FARM ACTIVITIES IN THE REGION
1,198 PROPERTIES INVOLVED IN WILD DOG BAITING
Ladies in Livestock

The challenge
To boost women’s participation in Northern Tablelands Local Land Services agriculture training and extension activities to represent the equal contribution women make to farming decisions. The program also aims to build women’s technical skills and confidence in the paddock. Women in the Ladies in Livestock program are already involved in farm management, but they may not have come from a farming background.

Work undertaken
- The inaugural ‘Ladies in Livestock’ group was formed in Guyra.
- The group meet monthly to undertake on-farm training in topics including: animal scoring, pasture identification, soil test interpretation, sheep marketing options, animal health issues, financial administration and pest control.
- The ladies meet in school friendly hours.
- The training is designed to be hands on and in the paddock, teaching practical farm skills.

Benefits
- The Ladies in Livestock training program creates a supportive environment for women to learn.
- The program gives hands-on, technical training to boost women’s confidence to make informed and sound decisions that lead to practice change and an increase in profitability, productivity and sustainability on farm.

Key achievements
- 46 women engaged in the program
- positive feedback from participants involved in the program
- sponsorship opportunities identified
- excellent media coverage of the program.

Total investment
- $15,000

In collaboration with
- cattle and sheep producers in the Guyra region
- Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme.

“Ladies often come into farming businesses with significant skills from previous careers. Ladies in Livestock is helping them to feel more confident and engaged in their family farming operations. It provides women with a supportive and positive environment to learn in.”
- Guyra cattle producer, Kirsty White.
Trees on Farms program

The challenge
To change landholder attitudes to value native vegetation and biodiversity as integral to their farming systems.

Work undertaken
• The program promotes the production and profitability benefits of native vegetation and allows engagement with landholders to achieve on-farm revegetation and restoration activities.
• The program uses a series of humorous cartoons to encourage landholders to do revegetation work on farm.
• Areas with little to no native vegetation were targeted in the Guyra, Armidale, Uralla and Walcha areas.

Benefits
• The Trees on Farms program is into its third year and, in that time, has developed over 80 partnerships with local landholders all undertaking works to protect and enhance native vegetation on farm.
• Neighbouring properties are now undertaking works and linking vegetation corridors.
• Revegetation works from the first two years are currently being implemented in favourable conditions due to above average rainfall, boosting survival rates.

Key achievements
• 210 expressions of interest were received from landholders wanting to plant native vegetation on their farms.
• 65 partnerships with landholders were developed in 2016.
• Continued maintenance of the Northern Tablelands seed bank, providing local provenance seed for all our tree planting programs, increasing revegetation survival rates.
• 70 people trained as Florabank accredited seed collectors, providing a powerful seed collecting network across the Northern Tablelands.
• 120 hectares of revegetation works planting 43,530 native plants back in the landscape in 2016.
• 764 hectares of remnant vegetation protected.

In collaboration with
• landholders across the Northern Tablelands region
• Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme
• NSW Catchment Action.

“Many farmers recognise the benefits of healthy natural bushland, such as shelter for stock and pastures, improved water quality, and habitat for natural predators that keep pests in check. The outcomes of the Trees on Farms and Biolinks projects are demonstrating a success story.”
- Northern Tablelands Local Land Services, Senior Land Services Officer, Iestyn Taylor.
Riverina Local Land Services

The Riverina region is bounded by Harden in the east, Hay in the west, Hillston in the north and Lockhart in the south.

The area covers about 67,000 square kilometres of land, is serviced by 17 local councils, and has more than 166,000 people. Wagga Wagga, with its population of more than 62,000 people, is the largest centre in the Riverina Local Land Services region.

The region has a diverse agricultural sector, dominated by wheat, livestock and horticulture, with the gross value of agricultural production at $1.7 billion.

There is also considerable irrigation development along the Murrumbidgee and Lachlan rivers associated with licences to pump water from the river or from bores. The mix of enterprises includes dryland cropping, pastures and irrigated crops such as lucerne, rice, cotton, cereals, maize, millet and sorghum.

Communities in the Riverina region see agricultural production as important to the country’s food security and work toward being resilient to climate variability and the changing economy.

Our year in review

Riverina Local Land Services continued to deliver relevant and valued services to our customers, who are always at the front and centre of our decision-making. We have a strong focus on engagement when designing and delivering programs and services.

Notable highlights in 2016 include:

- receiving more than 400 expressions of interest in our grants program
- over two million hectares managed for pest animal control
- a coordinated customer initiated feral pig control project with Murray and Western Local Land Services
- an innovative grant program for irrigation areas
- approval of a $900,000 grant from NSW Office of Environment and Heritage for plains-wanderer habitat protection with Murray Local Land Services
- the development of the Riverina Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan.

Innovation continues to be an important part of how Riverina Local land Services operates with customers, seeing the benefit of incorporating innovations into business as usual activities. Examples include a strategic wild dog aerial baiting program which was developed from the wild dog GPS collaring project and GPS collaring of foxes with real-time surveillance cameras in malleefowl habitat to improve management programs for pest predation.

Financially, Riverina Local Land Services is in a strong position and operating within budget. External funding from both the NSW and Australian Governments has seen over $3 million invested in managing and protecting natural resources by providing grants to building the capability of land managers. Advisory services are also an important part of Riverina Local Land Services’ work.

Rates income continues to be used for preventative measures for biosecurity risks including surveillance activities, providing livestock health and management advice and providing proactive pest management advice.
Get in the zone project

The challenge
Land managers face many production constraints which are related to differences in soil type and characteristics within paddocks and across properties. Precision agriculture tools allow these differences to be identified and ideally overcome.

Work undertaken
Rapid and grid pH sampling was conducted on five properties across the mid district, by Precision Agriculture and a Veris unit, and targeted soil cores were collected. Delta provided rapid eye satellite imagery for the 2016 season.

Planning is now underway for variable rate opportunities for the 2017 season based on the results.

Benefits
- Ability to identify constraints and divide paddocks into management zones.
- Soil cores quantified constraints and highlighted opportunities for soil health improvement.
- Outcomes of the project were delivered at a FarmLink open day which promoted interest in other landholders.
- Resulted in the Stay In the Zone project offering small grants of $1,000 to 60 landholders.
- Interest in the project resulted in its extension for a third year, offering small grants in 2017-2018.
- Development of Precision Agriculture working groups will encourage the results to continue beyond the map.
- A three-year funding cycle gave the Get in the Zone project continuity so it could be extended into two years of small grant allocations.

Key achievements
Landholders know their paddocks can be variable.
Precision agriculture tools identify the boundaries and can quantify where and how to make changes for improved production.

Total investment
- $110,000.

In collaboration with
- landholders
- Precision Agriculture
- This project was supported by the Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme.

“...the three year commitment of the project has allowed the five demonstrations sites to identify soil constraints using precision agriculture tools, follow up with targeted deep soil cores and quantify strategic management practices based on the identified zone requirements, taking the results from the map to the paddock.”
- GrassRoots Agronomy, Kirrly Condon.
Increasing awareness of on-farm biosecurity

The challenge
Ovine Brucellosis (OB) is a reproductive disease in sheep. It leads to significant production and economic losses. It is caused by a bacteria that infects the male reproductive organs reducing fertility. The Australian sheep flock has moved from primary wool production to meat production. With changes in breed predilections and the introduction of the OB accreditation programs, producers have neglected annual ram fertility assessments. Consequently, cases of OB in commercial flocks have recently occurred. In the Riverina region, some local areas were found to have confirmed infections in groups of neighbouring flocks, suggesting local hot spots of disease. Riverina landholders in these areas raised their concerns about the apparent increase in OB detections with Riverina Local Land Services district veterinarians.

Work undertaken
We have been working with landholders to raise awareness, and teach and help with ram fertility assessment, and to test for OB with the aim of significantly reducing the incidence of this disease. Our vets discuss implementing an on-farm biosecurity plan in order to avoid future infections.

Benefits
- increased awareness of the disease
- educating producers on ram assessment
- identifying the importance of early detection.

Key achievements
- More than 75 properties and 950 rams have been tested across these areas.

In collaboration with
- producers
- sheep health/production groups.

“Working closely with producers to both eradicate and raise awareness of ovine brucellosis has been widely accepted. Our clients find great value in this service and veterinarians are enjoying this opportunity.”
- Riverina Local Land Services, District Veterinarian, Eliz Braddon.
South East Local Land Services

The South East Local Land Services region covers 55,600 square kilometres from Stanwell Park in the north to the Victorian border in the south, and westward from Boorowa in the north to Thredbo in the south. The area covers 698 kilometres of coastline or 40 per cent of the NSW coast.

The South East Local Land Services region is home to approximately 605,000 people including over 16,500 Indigenous Australians. The majority of people live in regional centres along the coast, with Wollongong, Shellharbour, Kiama, Bomaderry, Nowra and Ulladulla being the largest of these centres. The tablelands regional centres include Goulburn, Yass, Queanbeyan and Cooma.

The current economic prosperity of the South East Local Land Services region is dependent upon natural resources which support a variety of highly diverse land uses including agriculture (sheep, beef, dairy, cropping and horticulture), aquaculture, water harvesting, commercial and recreational fishing, heavy industry, forestry, surface and underground mining, urban and lifestyle development and tourism and recreation. The value of the region's agriculture is approximately $644 million per annum.

Our year in review

South East Local Land Services continues to work with landholders to improve primary production and help rural and regional communities be profitable and sustainable into the future. The work done throughout the year by Local Land Services staff, customers, local communities and various other partners, has helped protect productive agriculture and added value to regional landscapes and economies.

A range of on-ground work and activities was undertaken in 2016 by South East Local Land Services across our core business functions of biosecurity, emergency management, productive agriculture and natural resource management.

Some highlights from 2016 include:

- The introduction of six teams across the region: South Coast, Goulburn/Highlands, Yass, Palerang, Far South Coast and Monaro. Each team is headed by a local manager who oversees staff with a mix of skills and experience so we can meet the needs and expectations of customers.
- The development of local service delivery plans for each local area. This has enabled us to better meet the needs of our customers and local communities by providing our core services in a more targeted and effective manner while also aiding our ability to respond to emergencies.
- The development of signature programs including; Feral Fighters, the Small Farms Network, a ‘mountains to sea’ water management program and a long term productive agriculture program, which have enabled us to focus on specific threats and opportunities across the region, build capacity among customers and communities and encourage self-reliance and sustainability.
- We held 37 events to raise awareness of Aboriginal culture and heritage.
- More than 4,131 hectares of land was managed for sustainable grazing in the region.
- In the past year district veterinarians and biosecurity officers attended 1,170 general consultations and conducted 397 disease investigations.
A feral fighters success story

The challenge
The Gunning District Landcare (GDL) Regional Fox Control Program began in 2015. Previous control efforts were ad-hoc and uncoordinated with the various groups baiting at different times throughout the year. The program was devised with the aim of developing a community led initiative which would deliver a strategic, coordinated group response to the problem of foxes. The program brought together 16 local groups with each group led by a local organiser, who coordinated participants and collated bait requirements for their local area. This provided an efficient and effective system, enabled clear lines of communication and increased ownership of the program by group organisers and provides a good example of biodiversity tools being used to achieve outcomes. The GDL working group has set an ambitious aim of reducing fox populations by 90 per cent, with a target of laying 10,000 fox baits annually.

Work undertaken
- GDL programs were run in 2016
- five vertebrate pesticide training courses
- participant survey.

Benefits
- Increased coordination of fox control programs.
- Effective communication with land managers.
- More effective use of Local Land Services staff time.
- Increased lambing percentages.
- Anecdotal evidence of increased biodiversity.

Key achievements
- 309 participants
- 9,000 1080 baits laid
- 225,000 hectares of land baited
- 89 per cent of participants considered the program successful.

Total investment
- $8,500

In collaboration with
- Gunning District Landcare.
Soil interpretation workshop

The challenge

Soil health is essential for sustainable rural enterprises of all sizes, but it is a complex and technical area that is often hard to grasp. To address this knowledge gap we hosted soil interpretation workshops to demonstrate to landholders how properly recorded data could be used to help them make better land management decisions.

Work undertaken

Participants were trained in soil collection techniques in the two weeks prior to the workshop dates. Two workshops were then run, one week apart. Workshop one was an on-ground session with sampling demonstrations and discussions about the local geology and how it helps shape soil content. Day two was an information session where participants were shown how to interpret results and use them to make better management decisions.

Benefits

- The workshops ‘demystified’ soil test interpretation.
- Built capacity and encouraged self-reliance among the community.
- Increased involvement and data recording will aid future planning.
- New skills help landholders make informed decisions about how to manage their land.

Key achievements

- 25 local participants
- 130 soil samples taken and analysed
- 30 soil test interpretation reports
- 90 per cent of participants said their knowledge had improved as a result of the workshops.

Total investment

- $9,600.

In collaboration with

- Small Farms Network
- South Coast Beef Producers Network
- NSW DPI.
Western Local Land Services

The Western region is the largest Local Land Services region, covering 314,500 square kilometres, or 40 per cent of NSW. The region is sparsely populated with 45,000 people, 13 per cent of whom are Aboriginal.

The majority of the population live in Broken Hill, followed by Cobar, Balranald, Bourke, Hillston, Brewarrina and Wentworth.

The region is renowned as one of the most diverse rangeland areas in Australia, and has been shaped by highly variable and unpredictable climatic conditions. Periods of drought are common, along with other extreme weather events like summer storms.

While the soil and climate is largely unsuitable for intensive farming, the region still supports a wide range of other agricultural industries.

Sheep, cattle and goat grazing is common throughout, while cotton, horticulture, viticulture and cereal production occur in southern parts.

Carbon farming has emerged in recent years, with carbon projects increasing in number and type in north-eastern areas.

Our year in review

Western Local Land Services achieved a number of significant outcomes during 2016 and continued to strengthen relationships with ratepayers, landholders and communities by delivering the services and support that meet the diverse needs of our customers.

Highlights during 2016 include:

- The Western Region Kangaroo Management Workshop, which was an initiative of the Western Lands Advisory Council (WLAC) and was brought about with the support of several parties. This workshop brought key stakeholders together to address increasing grazing pressure from the high kangaroo populations and the associated negative impacts on our region’s natural resources.
- In 2016, wild dog baiting programs resulted in 419,179 baits being delivered on 808 properties, covering 16,834,494 hectares. Of these baits, 51,763 were delivered through aerial baiting, which was a subsidised program with landholders.
- We welcomed two locally based veterinarians, Dr Charlotte Cavanagh at Bourke and Dr Sophie Hemley at Broken Hill, to ensure stock in the Western region remained disease and residue free and complied with the NLIS.
- In the past year, District Veterinarians attended 197 general consultations along with conducting 64 disease investigations.
- We increased the capacity of land managers to improve primary production and natural resource management, highlighted by the fact that 1,506 customers attended training events.
- More than 152,782 hectares of land was managed for sustainable grazing in the region.
- 83 conservation management agreements were negotiated to protect and conserve the biodiversity enhancement of 171,825 hectares of land while 152,782 hectares received support to better manage sustainable grazing.
- Western Local Land Services has allocated more than $744,000 for the operation of local Landcare networks and the delivery of regional Landcare facilitator functions for the three-year period from 2015 to 2018.

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Predator program – spring baiting

The challenge
Wild dogs and foxes are a significant problem in western NSW. They prey on livestock, causing losses to productivity and profitability at the farm gate. This project is about coordinating landholders and groups to achieve landscape scale predator control outcomes.

Work undertaken
Western Local Land Services coordinated the delivery of 103,425 baits across 230 properties covering more than 900,000 hectares. Pest management and Landcare groups across the region had direct input into the development of the coordinated program. Landholders were subsidised 50 per cent of the cost of bait material, with some landholders and groups opting to provide some or all of their own baits. In a program that was interrupted by rain events, 71 properties participated in aerial baiting over inaccessible country and a further 159 participated in ground baiting.

Benefits
• Decreased number of wild dogs and foxes in the western region.
• Increased production and profitability for landholders.
• Increased native species protection and groundcover.
• Landholders increased their skills and knowledge to manage wild dogs and foxes.
• Decreased damage to native and domesticated animals and vegetation.
• Development and participation of groups across the region.

Key achievements
The strategic and coordinated predator program provides the best approach to the reduction of wild dogs and foxes in the western region. All stakeholders had input into program development, providing the platform for a coordinated program to be delivered in difficult circumstances with multiple rain events across the region. By continuing to build the capacity of landholders and groups, the management of wild dogs and foxes will continue to improve year on year which will provide biodiversity and production benefits to all in the Western region.

Total investment
• $180,000.

In collaboration with
• NSW Farmers Association
• National Parks and Wildlife Service
• Western Local Land Services pest management groups.

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Fish nursery project on Tar-Ru land

The challenge
The feeding behaviour of adult carp damage to water quality and can impact on plant and plankton emergence, thus reducing the suitability of wetlands as native fish nurseries.
The aim was to promote the development of productive nursery habitats for native fish and to monitor the effectiveness of this management intervention for juvenile populations of flow-pulse specialists.
We hosted soil interpretation workshops to demonstrate to landholders how properly recorded data could be used to help them make better land management decisions.

Work undertaken
The installation of temporary carp exclusion screens on the inlets of two wetlands, organised by Western Local Land Services in partnership with NSW DPI, resulted in water quality improving because adult carp were excluded.
The wetlands were totally dry when the temporary carp exclusion screens were erected. This helped the habitat and aquatic communities become established.

Benefits
- Enhanced water quality.
- Less turbidity (reducing light penetration and photosynthesis).
- Improved aquatic plant establishment and density.
- More juvenile fish using the site.
- Increased stakeholder knowledge and understanding of native and pest fish, aquatic habitat and water management.
- Increased skills of local Aboriginal natural resource management stakeholders.

Key achievement
Water quality and native fish species have benefited significantly from carp exclusion. These projects could serve as a template for further use of adult carp fencing to achieve positive results within regulated river areas and wetlands.

Total investment
- $14,567 for the carp exclusion fencing.

In collaboration with
- NSW DPI
- Tar-Ru Aboriginal land managers
- private landholders.