

Local Land Services



Landscape Links Grant

Grant guidelines



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More information

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing April 2023. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of Local Land Services or the user's independent adviser.

Habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation are a leading threat to our native flora and fauna, and landscapes that support sustainable regional communities.

This threat has been exacerbated by the three-fold impacts of drought, fire, and floods experienced in the North Coast region since 2019.

The cumulative impact of these events has highlighted the need to improve landscape habitat connectivity to safeguard native species in the NSW North Coast.

Funding support for Landscape Links

Assistance is available for landholders and land managers to create or enhance priority biodiversity habitats and corridors on their property.

Funding between \$10,000 – \$25,000 is available per landholder or property for restoration works within the 2023/2024 financial year. Applicants are required to provide an in-kind contribution equal to or greater than the total amount of funds requested.

The grant will support habitat restoration works including weed control, revegetation, pest animal control, habitat augmentation (for example, nest boxes), fencing, off-stream watering, and minor erosion and sediment control works.

The Landscape Links map on the funding website indicates eligible project areas that are only being offered in the Port Macquarie-Hastings, Kempsey Shire, and Nambucca Valley Local Government Areas.

The Landscape Links Grant is being delivered by North Coast Local Land Services with funding support from the New South Wales Government.

Project focus

The project is focused on the recovery of nationally threatened species and ecological communities listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* by connecting key habitats.

A Landscape Links map has been developed to identify key habitat areas and links for investment across the North Coast region. It includes nationally threatened species and ecological communities, as well as key fauna and climate change corridors, and areas under private land conservation.

Priority will be given to projects that benefit multiple species or ecological communities. An indication of the benefit your project can offer can be seen in the interactive project mapping tool provided. Hence, the Grant will only consider sites that are found within or immediately adjacent to these areas identified on the map.

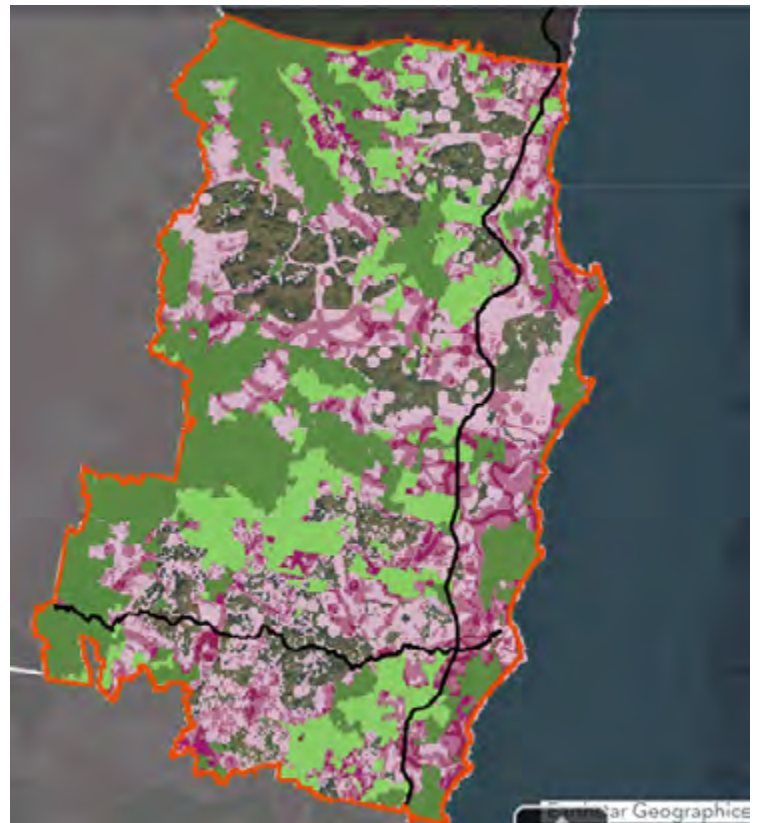


Figure 1. The interactive mapping tool built into the Grant application. Pink areas indicate wildlife and climate change corridors, Threatened Ecological Communities and threatened fauna/flora (EPBC Act), and Collaborative Australian Protected Areas of the North Coast. The darker the shading indicates more layers overlapping, and therefore there is more potential for that area to act as a Landscape Link.

Eligible lands

The grant is open to both landholders and land managers to undertake works on private land, Aboriginal Land, or managed Crown Land. Applicants must demonstrate a management agreement is in place for works on managed Crown Lands.

Applications are limited to one property per applicant. Multiple applications for a single property will not be considered. Applicants must also have \$20 million public liability insurance.

Eligible activities

Eligible activities include:

- Restoration of habitat using a range of techniques, including weed control*, regeneration, and planting of endemic native vegetation species.
- Pest species control activities, including baiting[^], shooting[^], trapping, tracking, and monitoring.
- Habitat augmentation, such as installing nesting boxes or constructed hollows, or management of specific habitat features such as old-growth trees.
- Fencing that better manages stock access into priority habitat areas.
- Off-stream water points for livestock (including troughs and consumables), where fencing impacts stock access to watering points within habitat areas.
- Minor gully erosion and sediment control works that address impacts on priority habitat areas.

** Some weed control works may require permits or special conditions when working in sensitive areas.*

[^]Persons undertaking baiting or shooting must hold the relevant accreditations.

Ineligible activities

Activities that are not eligible for funding include:

- Retrospective works (i.e., works already completed).
- Planting of non-native species.
- Fencing that does not exclude stock from priority habitat areas.
- Instream works or sediment extraction.
- Works that are considered the regular standard obligation of a landholder e.g., repairs, maintenance, and biosecurity obligations.
- Construction of dams, or installation of pumps, and irrigation systems.
- Activities that are funded by another program or related to consent conditions on pre-existing Development Applications or other Local, State or Federal Government Orders.



Delivery

Applicants may use the grant to purchase materials and deliver the project themselves, or use the payment to procure materials and labour from a licensed contractor.

Ability to deliver works before the 5th of May 2024 is critical, with final reporting by the 19th of May 2024. Proof of works, including photos, mapping, and records of expenditure and in-kind support will be required. Successful applicants will receive funds as an upfront payment.

Funding recipients must be willing to enter into a funding agreement and allow for site inspections by North Coast Local Land Services staff.

The following table provides guidance on how eligible works components will be valued and funded through the application process.

Item or activity	Predetermined value	Funds available to the applicant
Weed control	Low level \$3,000/ha Intermediate level \$6,000/ha High level \$9,000/ha	Low level \$1,500/ha Intermediate level \$3,000/ha High level \$4,500/ha
Planting	\$10/plant	\$5/plant
Fencing	\$30/m	\$15/m
Water trough and consumables	\$1,200/unit	\$600/unit
Pest species traps	Pig trap: \$2,500/trap. Deer trap: Cost by quote* Pest predator traps: \$400/cage trap \$120/soft jaw trap	Pig trap: \$1,250/trap Deer trap: Cost at 50% of quote* Cage trap: \$200/trap Soft jaw trap: \$60/trap
Pest predator control	Trapping or baiting: \$2,200/4 nights Ground shooting: \$2,000/4 nights	\$1,100 Trapping or baiting/4 nights \$1,000 Ground shooting/4 nights
Installation and monitoring of habitats	\$1,000/10 boxes \$2,000/10 constructed hollows	\$500/10 boxes \$1000/10 constructed hollows
Erosion control via jute matting	\$300/25-m roll	\$150/25-m roll
Erosion control via coir logs	\$100/3-m log	\$50/3-m log
Other eligible activity	Cost by quote*	Cost at 50% of quote*

*For eligible activities and costs that are above the predetermined value, please provide a quote and justification for the activity and/or expense.

Planting costs include ground preparation, tube stock, weed mats, tree guards, fertiliser, watering, other planting materials, and plant establishment. Fencing includes materials, gates, and installation.

Landcare support

Applicants are invited to nominate if they would like to receive support during the delivery of project works from their Local Landcare Network: Hastings Landcare Inc, Macleay Landcare Network or Nambucca Valley Landcare. This will help applicants access advice and adopt best practices during the implementation of their project. If you are requesting Landcare support, please contact the relevant Local Landcare Coordinator for your region before you start your submission.

Local Landcare Network	Website	Contact name	Contact email	Contact phone number
Hastings Landcare Inc	landcare.nsw.gov.au/groups/hastings-landcare-inc	Stephen Allwood	office@hastingslandcare.org.au	0467 864 465 Hours: Mon–Fri 9:00 am–5:00 pm.
Macleay Landcare Network	www.macleaylandcare.org.au	Louis Marree	louis.macleaylandcare@gmail.com	0458 945 586 02 6562 2076 Hours: Mon–Fri 8:30 am–5:00 pm.
Nambucca Valley Landcare	www.nvlandcare.org.au	Ainslie Ashton	coordinator@nvlandcare.org.au	0456 372 931 Hours: Tues–Wed 9:00 am–3:00 pm

How to apply

Think through your project and planned works before commencing your application. The Landscape Links Grant will be an online single-stage application process. Previewing the application form and collecting the necessary information is recommended before starting the online application form.

The application includes a simple mapping system with instructions. This will help inform the assessment panel of the site's ecological value and its ability to act as a landscape link. The remainder of the form will include check boxes and long and short answers that will assist the assessment panel in scoring the application against the assessment criteria. There will be the opportunity to upload supporting documentation, including site images and a map.

Applications are open from the 22nd of April 2023 and close at midnight on the 14th of May, 2023. On receipt of the application, confirmation will be emailed to applicants. Applications are then assessed against the eligibility and assessment criteria.

Application support

If you experience any technical difficulties or require assistance with the application process please contact North Coast Local Land Services on 1300 795 299 and ask to speak with the Landscape Links project officer. Email requests can be sent to admin.northcoast@lls.nsw.gov.au

Aboriginal Heritage

Where a project involves ground disturbance, the North Coast Local Land Services team will undertake a desktop record search to ensure the works will not impact any known Aboriginal heritage sites. Should any Aboriginal heritage sites be identified, this will be discussed with the North Coast Aboriginal Heritage Officer. In most cases, no change will be required. However, in some cases, changes will be necessary. These changes may involve relocating affected works to another part of the property or more significant changes in rare circumstances.

Funding deed

If approved for funding, all successful applicants will be required to enter into a funding agreement (contract) with North Coast Local Land Services. The agreement will detail the landholder's responsibilities for the project, such as what works are to be undertaken, completion dates and maintenance requirements. This will also require the landholder or manager to commit to providing 10 years of site maintenance after the completion date. Once the funding agreement is signed by Local Land Services and you (and the landowner if you do not own the property concerned), you will need to invoice North Coast Local Land Services for the funding amount.

Works permits and licences

Depending on the works proposed, a range of permits or permissions may be required. It is the responsibility of the applicant to organise and pay for the cost of obtaining any permits or permissions before works commence.

Work standards

Weed control

Carefully planning activities onsite can reduce the spread of weeds in an area. The life cycle of weeds, particularly seeding, should be considered when planning works. The selection of weed control methods should consider the weed infestation scale, the site's sensitivity, and native flora and fauna to off-target damage. Great care should be taken when working near waterways or on highly erodible soil.

Methods

Control option considerations depend on site-specific values, conditions and weed species. Projects will be funded for chemical, mechanical, and hand removal methods to control weeds. A combination of methods is likely to be required. A minimum of three treatment runs should be undertaken during the project.

The use of chemicals to control invasive weeds must comply with all relevant legislation and as prescribed in the chemical label and safety data sheet. There are also requirements under the *Pesticides Act 1999* and the *Pesticides Regulation 2017* to keep records of pesticide use and for pesticide users to undergo training.

Use of machinery for clearing weeds is to be limited to where use is appropriate and is to follow manufacturer instructions for the safe use of equipment and appropriate permits.

It is recommended you seek advice from experienced contractors and research the appropriate weed control and bush regeneration techniques.

Infestation level

Applicants will be required to identify the different levels of weed infestation at your site during the application process. Three levels of weed infestation will need to be identified: Low, Medium, and High.

Low weed infestation

- Native plant species are the majority vegetation type present. There is a low-level presence of weeds which may or may not threaten or impact the site's biodiversity
- A targeted low level of intervention may be required to prevent the potential impact of weeds on the natural assets present (for example, chemical control using spot or foliage spray methods or manual techniques).

Medium weed infestation

- Native vegetation is in average condition. There is a moderate infestation of weeds which if left unmanaged will impact the level of quality of the site.
- A medium level of intervention is required to prevent further deterioration of the site's natural assets (for example, targeted chemical control using spot or foliage spray or mechanical/manual control using cut and paint or stem injection methods).

High weed infestation

- Native vegetation is in poor condition. Weeds are the dominant vegetation with minimal presence of native plant species. Without major management, the site will continue to decline.
- A high level of intervention is required to restore the site's biodiversity and improve connectivity to natural assets adjacent to the site (for example, mechanical control using machinery including harvesters or excavators followed by foliage spray).

For more information see:

- [Weeds of the North Coast of NSW](#)
- [Australian Association of Bush Regenerators](#)

Revegetation

Revegetation plantings should only be used in areas where natural regeneration is lacking. It is ideally used to connect areas of habitat on your property, establish vegetation buffers around sensitive areas, or fill in gaps in existing vegetation.

Any planting must be of native, endemic species that are suitable to the site. Planting designs, plant densities, and species selection will depend on the site conditions present. In general, incorporating a range of plant types (trees, shrubs and groundcovers) and species types (gum trees, wattles, she-oaks, melaleucas, lomandra, and rainforest species) will improve biodiversity outcomes. Allow 2–5 m between trees, with clumps of shrubs between, and aim for 20–30% canopy trees and 70–80% mid-storey trees and shrubs. Contact your Local Landcare Network or bush regeneration contractor for advice regarding planting designs and species selection appropriate for your site.

All revegetation activities funded by North Coast Local Land Services must achieve and maintain at least 70% survival over the life of the management agreement. Stock exclusion fencing must be installed where stock could potentially access the site.

For more information, see:

- [Managing native vegetation after a bushfire emergency](#)
- [Rural Living Handbook](#)
- [Managing native vegetation on a rural property](#)
- [Trees near me](#)

Grazing management

Livestock will need to be excluded from areas undergoing habitat regeneration or revegetation. The use of fencing and off-stream water points will help applicants manage grazing impact on the restoration site.

Controlled grazing (short periods in general) may occur after the first three years when vegetation has re-established and when soil moisture is relatively low. Appropriate stocking rates must be used to ensure no less than 80% of ground cover is maintained at all times. If tree/shrub damage becomes evident, livestock must be removed immediately.

Fencing

All materials used to construct fences should be in new or good-quality condition. All fences are to include a gate for site/management access. Fences should be consistent with wildlife-friendly fencing guidelines by incorporating plain wire at the top and bottom. It is preferable to not use barbed wire at all, but a maximum of 3 strands of barbed wire will be allowed. When fencing around waterways you should place your fence a minimum distance of 10 m from the top of the bank or around water features.

Further information on fencing can be found here:

- [Fencing off your Riparian areas for productivity and rehabilitation](#)
- [Wildlife-friendly fencing](#)

Off-stream watering

Off-stream water points, accompanied by fencing, can reduce stock trampling in restoration areas. Troughs should be concrete or plastic and placed in an area that will not cause erosion (site hardening with gravel may be required).

For more information, see:

- [Reticulated water systems](#)
- [Stock and Waterways: A NSW Manager's Guide](#)
- [Fish Screens Australia](#)
- [Information on water licensing](#)

Pest animal control

Pest animals can have considerable and ongoing impacts on wildlife by damaging wildlife habitats or by direct predation. Addressing pest animal impacts can be challenging for individual landholders that are often better delivered by multiple land managers at a localised scale.

Nevertheless, there are some actions landholders can undertake to reduce the impact on wildlife at a property scale. In this circumstance, having a clear objective that addresses the impact on your biodiversity assets is a good start. You should also consider developing a program that can be replicated annually and will help develop the skills and resources required to sustain the activity. Engaging contractors is an effective method of obtaining property-specific advice and developing your capacity to continue the activity in future years.

For example, you may set up permanent or removable trap enclosures to sustain an annual pig or deer control program. Identifying pest predator movement corridors can help plan for cage or soft jaw trapping programs in selected wildlife habitat areas. Game cameras can be used to monitor pest animal activity and identify suitable trap locations and record trapping activity. Contact your nearest Local Land Service Office for advice on pest animal control and the training workshops available to support this work.

All pest animal management activities should consider the welfare of targeted and non-target species, and comply with the relevant [animal welfare Acts](#). Practical measures to prevent harm include checking traps daily, installing camera monitoring of trapping activity, and the use of humane methods of destruction. Check with Local Land Services or Local Council if you need further advice.

Further information can be found here:

- [Pest animal management](#)
- [Problems with foxes brochure](#)
- [Problems with wild rabbits brochure](#)
- [Problems with feral pigs brochure](#)
- [Problems with wild dogs brochure](#)
- [Feral cats](#)
- [Wild deer](#)

Habitat augmentation

Nest boxes and constructed hollows are 2 commonly used habitat augmentation activities that increase the number of nesting sites available for native birds and arboreal mammals. Nest boxes come in a wide range of sizes and entrance holes that are designed to suit a specific size class of animals. Projects should include a variety of types or size classes, with the greater proportion comprised of the smaller size class and the larger types for forest owls limited to one per standard property size. Constructed hollows are made with a boring tool and are generally limited to the smaller size class. They have a distinct advantage in reducing installation failure and offer a more 'natural' home for wildlife. Any habitat augmentation project should include monitoring after 6–12 months to check for occupation and use.

The placement and installation of nest boxes and constructed hollows are considered significant factors in their success. Nest boxes must be properly secured and placed to suit the target animal. Similarly, constructed hollows are situated to suit the target animal and the host tree. The installation of these structures is also a potentially hazardous activity involving operating at heights often in difficult terrain. We recommend the use of contractors to improve safety procedures and ensure the installation is completed successfully with minimal harm to host trees.

Many organisations supply nest boxes as partially made ‘flat-packs’ or fully constructed boxes with installation fittings provided. Information about constructed hollows is available at www.hollowhog.com.au/ and from selected arborists or contractors.

More information can be accessed here:

- [Wildlife nest box](#)

Erosion and sediment control

Jute matting is a biodegradable material that offers short-term (~3 years) erosion control. It can be used in areas with exposed soil where planting occurs and will support native vegetation establishment and reduce soil loss. Jute matting is best used on steep areas and laid in vertical, overlapping rows. A trench should be dug at the top of the mat which is then pinned and buried in the trench. The mat should then be unrolled, and pinned, using 3 pins/m². When placing more than one roll, create a 10cm overlap for adjacent rolls. If you are going to plant, wet the mat, then create individual slits for each plant.

Coir Logs are rolls of organic fibre (e.g. coconut) enclosed in a robust mesh and installed in disturbed areas using stakes. Coir logs can be used to prevent the risk of soil erosion of recently disturbed creeks and gullies and facilitate the establishment of ground covers to rehabilitate the area. Logs are placed across the slope and the entire log should be in contact with the soil. In some instances, a shallow trench can be dug to anchor the log into the ground. Placement should ensure surface water cannot pass under the log, or soil will be lost. The spacing of logs will depend on the level of the slope, with steeper sites requiring closer spacing. Wooden stakes should be placed every 30 cm on either side of the log, and logs placed end-to-end should be tied together using a natural rope. Planting between the log rows will accelerate site recovery.

Further information can be found here:

- [Erosion: Type, Impacts and Management Actions](#)
- [Gully erosion and control guide](#)

Monitoring

Monitoring of revegetation sites involves the recording and analysis of observations over time. It is an important aspect of any project and provides evidence of work completed and outcomes achieved. Successful applicants will be expected to complete monitoring activities during the project duration.

One of the simplest ways to monitor a project is through photographs. A fixed location must be set up to ensure the same area is photographed over time. These photographs can then provide a record of changes in the vegetation. The photo monitoring point must be identifiable by including a star picket or fixed feature within the photo frame. You should try to take the photo facing south which will provide better detail in the photos produced. When selecting a photo monitoring point, the future growth of vegetation must be considered, this is particularly important when planting trees as the photo point should not be blocked by future tree growth.

Photos should be taken before works commence and after works are completed, and then annually at the same time of year throughout the maintenance agreement. Ensure all the relevant sites and activities are covered in your photo monitoring. Photos will need to be easily found for reporting and should be saved with a consistent and identifiable file name (for example, ProjectName–Site–PhotoPoint-Date).

Where applicable, other information or data may need to be collected for reporting purposes. For example, the occupation rate and species use for nest box or constructed hollows, or the species and numbers of pest animals controlled.

