



ANNUAL REPORT

2016-2017



gwlap

GOOLWA TO WELLINGTON
Local Action Planning Association

Local PEOPLE
Local ISSUES
Local ACTION







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Thank you to Chris Lane and Konica Minolta for generously printing the GWLAP Annual Report



Background

Goolwa to Wellington Local Action Planning Association has been improving the natural environment in the SA Murray-Darling Basin since 1998. GWLAP is a community based not-for-profit organisation, managed by a board of volunteers and supported by range of funding partners and fee for service activities.

GWLAP works on small and large scale bushcare and revegetation projects both on private and public land in a diverse range of landscapes. GWLAP supports local community groups and individuals to undertake on-ground works.

Why Goolwa to Wellington?

The Goolwa to Wellington LAP area as set in 1998, encompasses all of the plains and catchments flowing directly into Lake Alexandrina between Goolwa and Wellington. This includes the Bremer/Barker, Angas and Finniss River catchments, the Currency and Tookayerta Creek catchments, Sandergrove, Monarto South, Mulgundawa, and Brinkley plains areas, the western half of Lake Alexandrina including Hindmarsh Island and Mundoo Islands, and the River Murray Mouth.

Why Local Action Planning?

Local Action Planning groups were set up in the SA Murray-Darling Basin to develop and implement plans to accelerate action to address the important natural resource issues in a local area. Local Action Planning provided a means for the community to decide what should be done to turn existing plans into action. Nearly 20 years on, Local Action Planning is still very relevant. GWLAP is still directed by the community and continues to achieve important, significant, beneficial environmental actions.

Our vision:

To create an environment where human activity and natural ecosystems can sustainably co-exist.

Our mission:

To work with local communities to protect and restore biodiversity and sustainably manage our natural resources.

Our goals:



Promote environmental and agricultural resilience and sustainability within the community



Promote and help implement sustainable land management and farming systems



Manage impacts of climate change



Monitor and evaluate on-ground works



Conserve and restore biodiversity in the GWLAP area



Negotiate with Government



Improve health of creek, river, wetland and coastal systems



GWLAP Team

Board of Management:

Keith Parkes (Chair)
Bruce Brooks (Vice Chair)
Barry Lincoln (Treasurer)
Merri Tothill (Secretary)
Derek Fenton (Public Officer)
Tom Bradman
Ian Grosser
Paul Johnston
Jo McPhee
Harry Seager
Anne Welsh
Magaret Wilksch

GWLAP Staff:

Ross Oke (General Manager)
Caroline Holloway (Finance and Administration Manager)
Will Miles (Operations Manager)
Kerri Bartley (*formerly* Lower Lakes and Coorong Community Revegetation Program Project Officer)
Regina Durbridge (Project Officer)
Leah Hunter (Project Officer)
Ben Simon (Senior Project Officer, Eastern Hills and Plains)
Sherie Bain (Eastern Hills and Plains Project Officer)
John Gitsham (Fleurieu Swamps Project Officer)
Jacqui Wilson (Community Engagement Officer)

Casual Staff:

Jodie Sommerville (Schools Project Officer)

Works Crew:

Alan Bateman
Calhan Bateman-Moore
Gary Brooks
Aaron Cheesman
Rohan Cleeves
Daniel Grindley
Joseph Harvey
Andrew Kirkley
Chad Megaw
Andrew Morris
Dylan Oke
Oliver Roberts
Alyssa Rohrlach
William Sheridan
Alex Thomson

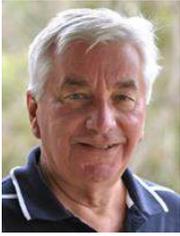
Funding Partners

During the 2016 – 17 financial year, GWLAP received funding for projects from the following organisations.

Australian Government
Department for Water, Environment and Natural Resources
SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board
Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board
District Council of Mount Barker
Alexandrina Council
Landcare Australia Limited
Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure
Trees for Life
Angas-Bremer Water Management Committee



Chairman's Report



Time seems to fly by at Goolwa to Wellington LAP and it is not until we reflect on another passing year that we realise exactly how much has been achieved.

In 2016-17, three major projects came to an end. These projects have achieved incredible outcomes on the ground as well as increasing skills within the Goolwa to Wellington LAP team.

The Fleurieu Swamps Recovery Project finished in June after 5 years of funding through the SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board. Fencing and weed control was undertaken in key areas to protect and enhance the critically endangered Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps vegetation community. In addition to the ecological outcomes, the project forged strong partnerships between Natural Resources, SAMDB, the Conservation Council of SA and Mount Compass Area School and we continue to work together with these groups.

The Mount Compass to Meadows Biodiversity Links Project has restored key watercourses and vegetation communities since 2013. Previously inaccessible creek lines, choked with blackberries and other prickly and woody weeds have been carefully restored to become diverse and beautiful environments, proving that saving these areas is entirely achievable. The experience from the Mount Compass to Meadows project has taught us that it is possible to restore highly degraded sites with great results.

The Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth Community Revegetation Project has been GWLAP's flagship project since 2010. Through funding from the Department for Environment, Water and Natural resources, 1.5 million seedlings planted on 104 different properties, the CLLMM project was in a league of its own. No doubt the experience we gained from managing the CLLMM project has helped us attract other funding and fee for service contracts.

This year we have welcomed a number of new projects, including small and large scale 20 Million Trees projects through the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme. To meet the project targets we have had to adjust our delivery model to a more hands-on approach.

GWLAP has invested in field equipment and a GWLAP works crew and Green Army teams are undertaking significant parts of the on-ground works.

This year GWLAP has taken on the management of Alexandrina Community Nursery and is using it to continue to grow plants as part of the Community Nurseries network. The nursery is staffed one day per week and assisted by volunteers from the Goolwa Coastcare Group.

Over the past 2 years, the GWLAP Board has invested its own money in developing and growing a Fee for Service arm of Goolwa to Wellington LAP. This investment is starting to pay dividends now with 23 contracts ranging from small to large projects taken on in a Fee for Service capacity rather than being funded through grants. We will always rely on grant funding to achieve on-ground works in our area but earning our own income will help us become more independent and has also allowed us to continue to engage local contractors as well as employ staff.

In the staff team, Kerri Bartley left us to take up a role with Natural Resources, Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges in a field that she is passionate about. Kerri did a wonderful job working on the CLLMM project and we wish her all the best for the future. We have picked up a number of casual staff including Jodie Sommerville, who works with schools and our works crew members, Alan Bateman, Calhan Bateman-Moore, Daniel Grindley, Joseph Harvey, Andrew Kirkley, Dylan Oke, Oliver Roberts, Alyssa Rohrlach, William Sheridan and Alex Thomson.

Goolwa to Wellington LAP is looking forward to another positive year.

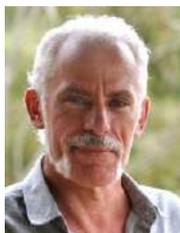
Keith Parkes

Chairperson

Goolwa to Wellington Local Action Planning Association



General Manager's Report



It has been an exciting and very active year for Goolwa to Wellington Local Action Planning Association (GWLAP) during 2016/17. Around 45 separate projects, some continuing, were successfully delivered – an increase from around 24 in 2015/16. This is largely due to an increase in the number of fee-for-service projects but also many small grants such as for a range of coastal works, nursery upgrades and for supporting volunteers. We have again drawn upon all of our resources – staff, board, partners, contractors and community members – in order to successfully deliver these projects. Everyone involved has made a significant, valued contribution.

I would like to highlight the excellent efforts by GWLAP staff members in ensuring that all of these projects were coordinated and delivered efficiently and effectively. In particular, the teamwork and willingness to adapt to changes have been fantastic. It has been a very busy time, with fee-for-service work presenting new challenges for us and also for some of our project partners. I'd like to also thank our contractors and the Community Nurseries Network for working with us to ensure a great result under tighter funding arrangements.

Green Army teams have greatly assisted us in achieving these results and thanks also goes to all who have participated in these teams or supported them. Again, it is a demanding job for GWLAP staff to coordinate all of the various activities for Green Army projects and I very much appreciate everyone's efforts to achieve some great results. Green Army teams will continue with us until June 2019 but the Green Army Programme has been discontinued so there won't be further teams. The Federal Government has recently completed a review of the National Landcare Programme and we anticipate that the recommendations from this review will guide the design of future programmes.

GWLAP has again fared very well over the past year due to our continued efforts to submit worthy project proposals, actively tender and quote for fee-for-service work and to build strong partnerships and credibility. These are the core ingredients that have proven to serve us well. We remain confident that this approach will continue to give us the best chance of future success. Overall, funding for Natural Resource Management remains tight and at the time of writing this, GWLAP has a number of project submissions that are pending assessment and decision. By the time this report is published we will most likely know the outcome of some of these current submissions. Fingers crossed!

I would like to thank the GWLAP Board for their continued support and again acknowledge our great staff, partners and contractors for their efforts, achievements and willingness to adapt and respond to the challenges we face. I hope that you enjoy reading this report which highlights some of what we have achieved in 2016/17. It contains summaries of some excellent projects that I hope will inspire you to continue to work with us to plan, secure funding and deliver more great projects in the coming years.

Ross Oke

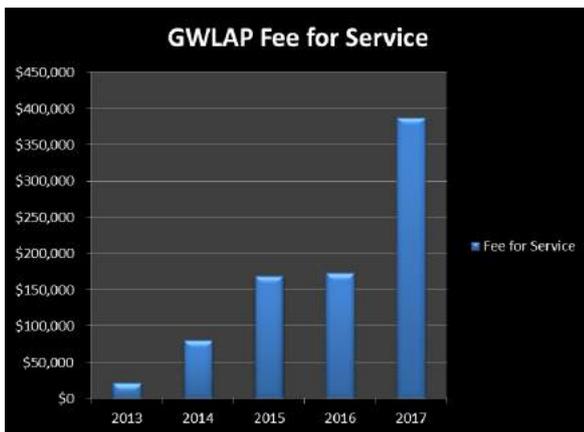
General Manager
Goolwa to Wellington Local Action Planning Association
Inc.



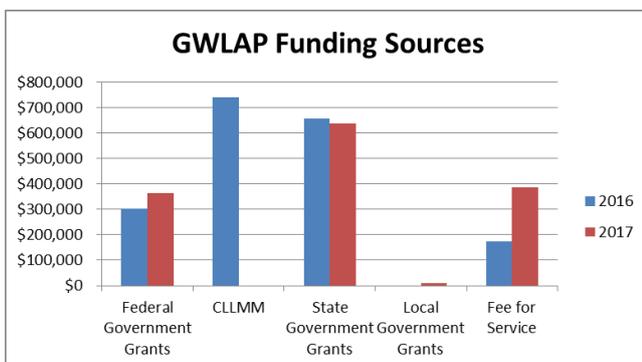
Treasurer's Report 2017



The 2016-17 financial year has been a successful year for GWLAP in attracting more than double the value of Fee for Service contracts compared to last financial year. These contracts included two large scale 20 Million Trees projects in conjunction with Landcare Australia Ltd, two contracts as part of the Paddock Tree project being run by Trees for Life as well as ongoing projects being run with District Council of Mount Barker and Alexandrina Council.



With an annual turnover of \$1.62mill, the decrease of approximately \$300,000 from the previous financial year was due predominantly to the completion of the Mount Compass to Meadows Federal Government Biodiversity Fund grant, the 6 year Coorong Lower Lakes Murray Mouth Program and the changing face of the funding environment over the last two years.



Funding in 2016-17 came through the following major funding sources:

- Landcare Australia Ltd** – just under \$388,000 via the **Australian Government's National Landcare Programme** for the Catchment to Coast and Kanmantoo to Wattle Flat Large Scale 20 Million Trees projects and **Department for Environment (Federal Gov)** - \$150,000 for three small scale 20 Million trees projects valued at \$300,000 over three years. In total, these projects will see an investment of almost \$900,000 over the term of the programs in the planting of 360 Hectares of native vegetation, using a combination of direct seeding and tubestock plantings, across Currency Creek, Finnis, Point Sturt, Hindmarsh Island, Goolwa, Mulgundawa, Kanmantoo, Wattle Flat and Kyeema Conservation Park areas.
- Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) (State Gov)** – over \$344,000 comprised of the final stage of the Community Revegetation Project in the Coorong and Lower Lakes area, part of the SA Government's Murray Futures Program funded by the Australian Government's Water for the Future initiative, as well as the Milang Foreshore Habitat Restoration Project. This new project saw collaboration between GWLAP, the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Alexandrina Council, the Ngarrindjerri community and local community and resulted in the preparation of a Restoration site plan and the propagation and planting of 10,000 native seedlings along the Milang foreshore.
- Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin (SAMDB NRM) Board (State Gov)** – continued to provide significant support to GWLAP of over \$256,000 in the form of multiple Connecting Communities grants enabling engagement of our local community through projects such as connecting schools with local community groups; citizen science projects; Fleurieu swamps, coastal, wetlands and bird monitoring programs and the management of the Strathalbyn Natural Resource Centre.
- Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (Federal Gov)** – through the Biodiversity Fund GWLAP received the final year of funding for Mount Compass to Meadows project totalling \$214,300. This project saw the delivery of targeted and substantial ecological restoration across 1,100 Ha of priority



remnant vegetation on sites between Mount Compass and Meadows in the Mount Lofty Ranges.

- **Landcare Australia SA (LASA)** - \$85,000 for a continued collaborative relationship with GWLAP hosting LASA's Executive Officer, Glenn Gale, and providing financial and HR management to the association.
- **Trees for Life** - \$34,260 for the delivery of components of the Paddock Trees Project which saw the identification and mapping of vegetation at identified project sites and will see the planting and guarding of up to 2,000 paddock trees at multiple sites in the GWLAP region.
- **Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure** - \$31,700 for a Residents Win project which saw the removal of woody roadside weeds with follow up treatment along the Port Elliott Road between Goolwa and Middleton.
- **Angas Bremer Water Management Committee** – over \$22,400 for the provision of a Project Officer as well as Secretarial/Finance services to deliver on the Committee's existing grants, annual irrigation reporting requirements and provide support to the Committee.
- **Mount Barker District Council** – over \$18,000 in the delivery of plantings and habitat creation in the Big Green wetland/floodplain and Emerald Quarry projects.
- **Alexandrina Council** – just under \$10,000 as auspiced grants for Goolwa Coastcare Group, Prospect Hill Bushcare Group and Point Sturt and Districts Landcare Group and over \$2,000 contribution to the Milang Foreshore Habitat Restoration Project.
- **Natural Resources Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges (AMLR NRM) Board (State Gov)** – \$10,000 for two grants targeting pyp grass removal in the Goolwa dunes and continued coastal native revegetation in Newell Avenue, Goolwa

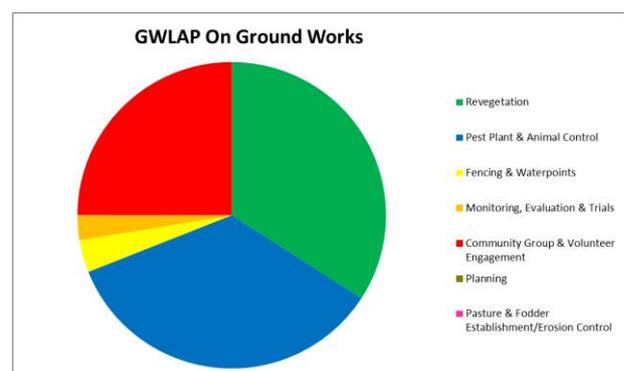
GWLAP has also maintained its fee for service agreement with Terramin Australia Ltd in providing Secretarial services to the Strathalbyn Community Consultative Committee.

In-kind finance and administration support was provided to the Angas River Catchment Group, Prospect Hill Bushcare Group, Friends of Kyeema Conservation Park, Goolwa Coastcare Group, Point Sturt and Districts

Landcare Group, Signal Point Riverine Environment Group, Macclesfield Bushcare Group and the Milang and Districts Historical Society.

Operating expenditure for 2016/17 was just under \$1.7 million in the management of 56 major budget lines resulting in a net deficit of just under \$73,000. This is due to the timing of income and expenditure for individual projects, which can occur over consecutive financial years. ie. project funding may be received in one financial year and expended against in the following one.

A breakdown of how the aggregated funding was spent shows that the majority of funds received was spent fairly evenly between pest plant and animal control (threat abatement), revegetation and community engagement. The following graph shows the allocation of funding for each category of activity and includes project officer salaries according to the time spent on each activity.



Barry Lincoln
Treasurer, Goolwa to Wellington Local Action Planning Association



Summary of projects undertaken by GWLAP in 2016-17

*projects over \$25,000 in value

Funding source	Budget	Delivery Timeframe
Australian Government		
Mount Compass to Meadows Biodiversity Links Project	\$841,900	Sep 2015 – Jun 2017
20 Million Trees Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goolwa to Wellington Connecting Catchment to Coast Kanmantoo to Wattle Flat – connecting endangered Peppermint Box Woodlands sites Reconstructing priority ecosystems in a SE Mt Lofty Ranges biodiversity hotspot 	\$300,000	Feb 2016 – Jun 2018
Department for Water, Environment and Natural Resources		
Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth Community Revegetation Project	\$1,000,000	Nov 2015 – Oct 2016
Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth Milang Foreshore Habitat Restoration Project	\$69,500	Sep 2016 – Jun 2017
SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board		
Fleurieu Swamps Recovery Project – phase 5	\$77,000	Jun 2016 – Jun 2017
Connecting Communities in the GWLAP area	\$278,000	Jul 2014 – Jun 2017
Management of the Strathalbyn Natural Resource Centre	\$32,404	Jul 2016 – Jun 2017
Supporting citizen science in the GWLAP area	\$23,500	Jul 2016 – Jun 2017
Linking schools, sites and community groups in the GWLAP area	\$35,250	Jul 2016 – Jun 2017
Environmental Watering project support and region-wide community frog workshops	\$26,000	May 2016 – May 2017
Department for Planning, Transport and Infrastructure		
Residents Win Contract	\$41,700	Jun 2016 – Jul 2017
Fee for Service Contracts		
District Council of Mount Barker		
Planting Floodplain/Grassland Habitat Stage 3	\$43,150	Jun 2016 – Jul 2017
Landcare Australia Limited		
20MT Programme – Goolwa to Wellington – Connecting Catchment to Coast	\$200,191	Feb 2016 – Jun 2018
20MT Programme – Kanmantoo to Wattle Flat – Connecting endangered Peppermint Box Woodlands sites	\$383,439	Feb 2016 – Jun 2018
Trees for Life		
Paddock Tree Project	\$35,340	Jul 2016 – Jun 2017

Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth Community Revegetation Projects



Since 2010, the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth Community Revegetation Projects have been a large part of life at Goolwa to Wellington LAP. At its peak, the project employed five GWLAP staff as well as many casual site managers. The project officially finished in October 2016.

The CLLMM Community Revegetation Project, funded by the South Australian Government's Murray Futures program and the Australian Government engaged the community to propagate and plant in excess of 1.5 million local native seedlings of 206 different species.

The seedlings were planted into high biodiversity sites around the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth Region on 104 different properties. Many of these sites

were revisited and planted over multiple years. More than 95 local community groups were contracted to undertake the planting, with a large number of groups planting in consecutive years throughout the project.

A celebration of the achievements of the CLLMM Community Revegetation was held at an event at the Hartnett Site in September 2016. The celebration included the opening of the Point Sturt Landcare Reserve by Alexandrina Council Mayor, Keith Parkes.

This closing event was an opportunity to reflect on the project and how far it had come – starting from very concerned and committed residents at the height of the millennium drought, it grew to be a major community achievement over 6 years.



CLLMM plantings at the Watkins site



The CLLMM experience – a landholder’s perspective

Transformation! That perfectly describes the change we’ve seen on our block in the seven short years since the LAP team first ‘knocked’ on our gate. It was 2010 and the Community Revegetation Program was just getting started, and so began our journey too. We hadn’t long purchased the 100 acres on the Finniss River and it literally was a ‘blank canvass’; a long, flat paddock with just a few remnant pink gums and not much else to encourage biodiversity. We had always planned to revegetate the site, but we kicked off much quicker than planned with the help of the LAP team.

And now, at the seven year mark, the difference is remarkable. The diversity of flora was of course planned, with each planting season introducing many new species. It is this revegetation that has formed the ‘bones’ of a functioning ecosystem that has gradually been filled with life. The first time we saw any sign of life - a magpie in the reveg area - was a real thrill. Today we are so lucky to have all kinds of critters calling the reveg area home. A greater diversity of bugs than we thought was possible, frogs and lizards, snakes and swamp rats, raptors and waterbirds, parrots and honeyeaters, and so many more. We have a beautiful display of flowers and some of the plants are now starting to self-seed. And one of our most precious and rewarding new additions is a family of endangered southern emu-wrens that has moved in and continues to grow, with five young ones born onsite so far.

It truly has been an amazing transformation watching the land literally coming back to life. We are both proud of the achievement, and hugely grateful to the entire LAP team and all of the volunteers who have contributed over the years. For all of the birds and the bees and the flowers and the trees, sincerely, thank you.

Damon and Kathy



Mount Compass to Meadows Biodiversity Links Project



Mount Compass to Meadows was a four-year project funded by the Australian Government and was completed on the 30th June, 2017.

The project aimed to restore 1100 Ha of priority remnant vegetation on sites between Mount Compass and Meadows, however this target was more than doubled with 2455 Ha of bushland receiving restoration works .

More than 40 landholders have been involved in this landscape scale bushland restoration project, with more than 16 large farming properties, 15 groups groups and over 300 individuals participating in the project.

Using a small suite of bushland weed control contractors, we set out to vastly improve large areas of high value bushland across a key area of the landscape within a known national biodiversity hotspot between the towns of Mount Compass and Meadows. We employed best practice approaches to the targeted species on each sites using selective herbicides, critical timing and knowledge built up by contractors over the course of many decades. Only contractors with good to outstanding botanical identification skills and a love for what they do were used.

This experience was coupled with considerable knowledge and investment from the GWLAP Project Officer, landholders, groups and agencies, such as the SA Forestry Corporation and the Prospect Hill Bushland Group value adding to this funding.

Sites in this project have spanned over multiple adjoining properties to see large areas of landscape managed as one contiguous patch of bushland. Key corridors of actively managed bushland have allowed the linking of Cox Scrub to the Finnis and Mount Magnificent Conservation Parks, linked Ashbourne to Cox Scrub and seen large section of Blackfellows Creek treated for serious blackberry problems along more than 4km of stream. The Prospect Hill Bushland cluster has expanded with another 2 properties added to total patch of more than 600ha of bushland in one patch.

Key groups involved in this project have been SA Forestry Corporation, DEWNR Rangers, Friends of parks groups, Friends of Prospect Hill Bushland Group, Threatened Flora Recovery project officers, Adelaide

Botanical Gardens Seed Conservation Unit, Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps Recovery Program, Natural Resources SA Murray Darling Basin and the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges, Alexandrina Council, Mount Barker District Council, Aboriginal Learning on Country (ALOC), Local botanists, SA Murray-Darling Basin Threatened Flora Recovery team, Bush for Life (TFL), Various skilled and knowledgeable bushcare contractors and dozens of landholders.



Approximately four months after initial blackberry control with Garlon



Three years later after annual follow-up weed control. Gorse grooming in the background.



Types of vegetation.

Some of the more notable vegetation communities that have been improved as a result of targeted bushcare works include;

- *Eucalyptus ovata* forest
- *Eucalyptus dalrympleana* ssp. *dalrympleana* +/- *Eucalyptus viminalis* tall open forest
- Fleurieu Peninsula Swamp – more than 15ha of previously un-managed swamp has been improved through this project, with one area housing a very large patch of EPBC listed *Hibbertia tenuis* (Yundi Guinea flower) discovered by the GWLAP
- *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* grassy woodland
- *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* forest in drainage lines- with more than 30km of the Finnis River having received extensive restoration works
- *Acacia melanoxylon* over *Adiantum aethiopicum* (Maiden hair fern) in creeklines
- *Eucalyptus fasciculosa* woodland
- *Eucalyptus viminalis* ssp. *cygnetensis* woodland
- *Eucalyptus viminalis* ssp. *viminalis* woodland
- *Allocasuarina verticillata* grassy woodland
- *Eucalyptus odorata* woodland

Monitoring

Through the use of Bushland Condition Monitoring (BCM) we were able to gain baselines of vegetation health from key sample sites within the project. We chose a range of scenarios and vegetation communities to offer a representative sub-set of our restoration program. Nearing the end of the project we re-surveyed the same sample sites.

Results showed a range of improvements with many having increases in native plant species diversity, improvements in the number of plant lifeforms on the site (likely attributed to removal of large patches of blackberry, allowing other lifeforms (fungi, moss, shrubs, grasses etc) to regenerate or become more apparent.) On several sites, Tree regeneration greatly improved from VERY POOR to GOOD.

It should be noted that most bushland monitoring over what is a very short time-frame of less than 3 years, is

unlikely to provide a true picture of the remarkable improvements to these project sites in terms of light factor, removal large areas of structure changing weeds like blackberry, broom and gorse and the opportunities this has provided for native plant regeneration, site access and habitat structural improvements.

Fixed photo points for this project showed dramatic improvements in the presence and abundance of the target weeds.

An assessment of one of our key Finnis River sites for listing as a heritage agreement noted "the river section is in remarkable condition for a river in the Mount Lofty Ranges, with the extensive weed control works being a key contributor to the current condition".

Highlights:

As a result of working with so many landholders on such large areas of bushland we have discovered and managed numerous formerly unknown populations of rare, endangered and critically endangered plant species contributing to national, regional and state knowledge and engaged and inspired many landholders and community members.



Hibbertia tenuis (Yundi Guinea flower)

Some highlights include;

Brachyscome graminea - Grass daisy. 2 new populations. This daisy was previously considered to be extinct in the Southern Lofty, with populations found on our project sites by the project officer and contractor with seed banked at the Botanical Gardens of Adelaide.

Veronica derwentia ssp *homalodonta*- Mount Lofty Speedwell - Critically endangered- 3 new populations found (all by contractor SA Indigenous Flora).

Glycine latrobeana (Clover Glycine) - EPBC listed -2 new populations found (1 by Tim Jury and Keiren Brewer).



Coronidium rutidolepsis (Pale everlasting) - State endangered- 3 new populations found with one being located following the removal of blackberry.

Hibbertia tenuis (Yundi Guinea flower) - EPBC Listed critically endangered - 1 new large population of this plant! Effectively doubled the previously known populations with over 47 plants counted and adding to only a handful of known populations of this plant

Hibbertia hirsuta- (Hairy Guinea flower) only recently known to SA, previously thought to only be endemic to TAS. Largest known patch on mainland Australia found by Ben of GWLAP. Likely to be EPBC listed and critically endangered.

Olearia pannosa ssp pannosa- Nationally vulnerable- a population of more than 120 plants were found on one site near Ashbourne, making it one of the larger known populations for the SA Murray Darling Basin Region.

One new population of the state rare *Mentha diamenica* (Slender Mint) and several patches of the uncommon *Mentha australis* (River Mint).

Many other state rare and regionally significant plant populations were also discovered and recorded as a result of this project.

Fauna

Landholders from the Prospect Hill Bushland group were given some wildlife tracking cameras to capture local wildlife on their blocks. This provided very interesting information with a range of animals recorded including deer, fox, possums, Antechinus, birds and Kangaroos.

Rosenberg's Goanna sightings were recorded twice during the project by landholders or contractors.

Several properties are thought to have Southern Brown Bandicoot and many had the Yellow-footed Antechinus noted.

Many feral deer, a group of goats and numerous foxes were dispatched as a result of this project and the collaborations we had with landholders and DEWNR. A group of feral sheep were also removed from a patch of important scrub through the GWLAP.

Heritage Agreements

More than 8 of our project sites have been listed as heritage agreements since the project commenced. Of these, we have assisted in several of these through raising the opportunity with the landholder and linking them with the Department for Environment and Heritage.

Several other landholders have gone from not really knowing anything about their scrub or its value to being very keen to protect the site in perpetuity, which is testament to their changed attitudes and increased knowledge.

Social benefits and local learning

Many landholders found large and often inaccessible areas of weeds almost insurmountable and overwhelming, and approached us for some assistance to get these areas back to a more manageable level.

Many landholders struggled with the lack of action to control weeds on areas of public land adjoining their sites and this project was able to address some of these issues by working on conservation parks, crown land and roadsides in conjunction with authorities.

Some landholders did not feel that they had the skills or expertise to undertake bushland weed control as they did not necessarily differentiate between native plants and weeds and needed help to identify these and were not confident spraying herbicides in bushland.

Workshops

Several weed control workshops were held to provide landholders and groups with planning and practical hands on experience with typical equipment, scenarios and key weeds found in their bushland and property. Workshop attendees were given specific information regarding correct chemical uses and rates and left with better confidence and understanding of how to tackle their weeds. This workshop was undertaken to bolster the in-kind follow-up many landholders are undertaking to maintain their works.

We also hosted 2 group planning workshops with the Prospect Hill Bushland group to plan and schedule weed control on their sites.

Field tours

Three field tours were delivered for this project. Two were delivered recently and took attendees on walks through multiple properties to view the extensive restoration works undertaken. One was between Finnis Conservation Park and Cox Scrub along the Finnis River and the other was through three adjoining properties at Prospect Hill. These were very popular and feedback from attendees was excellent.

Many farmers took great interest in knowing about the different plants and fauna on their sites and this was well demonstrated when they provided other locations



of the same species that they were shown. Many farmers showed a sense of pride to have a flora or fauna species on their site and this has helped bolster support for the protection and management of their habitat. Farmers generally listen to other farmers, which has worked well for us when implementing works across multiple tenures as they have recommended and greatly assisted in addressing gaps in the management of threat within the landscape.

Case study

Neale Dyster - 40ha of bushland at Prospect Hill.



Discussing how to approach the weed issue.

Neale and Angela purchased their dream bush block but wasn't sure how to deal with the vast areas of blackberry, gorse broom and Arum lily through the creek lines. On talking with a neighbour Neale was pleased to learn about the Prospect Hill Bushland group, who collectively managed their bush blocks together. They said contact the GWLAP as they have been a huge help funding and assisting with restoration of their sites.

The GWLAP were soon linked into the site and Neale signed up for assistance.

Over the past 4 years, the weeds in the creek-lines and large Gorse patch have been significantly reduced, Maiden hair ferns, lilies, herbs and shrubs are returning to the once blackberry infested creeks and slopes and overall the site has been transformed to something they can now manage and access more readily and the fire risk has been significantly reduced.



Shortly after grooming with Mechanical Vegetation Solutions



A year later after following up gorse seedlings and other weeds



Maiden hair fern regenerating under dead blackberry

Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps Recovery Project



The Fleurieu Swamps project was a partnership project funded by the Australian Government, managed by Natural Resources SA Murray-Darling Basin, with the on-ground works coordinated by Goolwa to Wellington LAP.

The project aimed to restore and rehabilitated the EPBC endangered floral ecosystem of SA Fleurieu Swamps. The project worked with local communities on the importance of preserving and rehabilitating this endangered ecosystem, which is important in managing local water flows, springs and filtration of the water system and all the endangered plants and animals that live in this environment.

The main icon species was the threatened Mt Lofty Ranges Southern Emu Wren which the locals and the Mount Compass School embraced as the totem for the project along with rare orchids, frogs, bats etc.

Over 47 local swamp properties, businesses and landholders involved in the project included dairy farmers, beef farmers, alpaca farm, vineyards and fruit growers, lifestyle blocks, Conservation Parks, Alexandrina Council, Nature Foundation of SA and the Mount Compass Area School Swamp, which also included the restoration of the school swamp boardwalk.

The restoration of the boardwalk through other community grants, gave the local community and the school students access to the swamp area for environmental education.

Over the five years of the project, 15,000 habitat plants and trees were planted in 23 swamps to supplement the existing swamp vegetation. Ongoing weed control on 47 properties totalling 950 ha was undertaken to help landholders manage their weeds into the future.

Over 33km of stock fencing was constructed on 25 properties to keep stock from wandering into the swamps, trampling the rare plants and also protecting the stock from becoming bogged, a win-win for the environment and farmers.

All the community landholders embraced the project and it has changed the look and focus of Mount Compass into a green, swamp friendly town and community.

The local Mount Compass School students have regular swamp training days learning about all the animals that use the swamp and how ecosystems work. They also host other schools and teach them about the value of Fleurieu Peninsula Swamps.



20 Million Trees Projects



GWLAP were successful in receiving three 20 Million Trees projects through the competitive grants round which began in February 2016.

Seedlings for all projects have been grown by the Community Nurseries Network and are being planted by the GWLAP Works Crew, Green Army and a host of volunteers from community groups and schools.

Connecting Catchment to Coast – revegetation on 24Ha, across four sites of cleared land adjoining the Coorong and Lower Lakes Ramsar site. The restored vegetation will provide habitat for declining woodland birds and nationally threatened native plant and animal species including Orange-bellied parrot, Southern Bell Frog and Silver Daisy Bush. This project comprises of a former grazing paddock on Lawari Conservation Park and three private properties. Direct seeding was undertaken at one site in August 2016, with follow up infill planting to occur. 10,120 seedlings had been planted by Green Army at Lawari prior to June 30, 2017 with all other planting and direct seeding to occur later in the season.

Kanmantoo to Wattle Flat – connecting endangered Peppermint Box Woodlands sites – Peppermint Box Woodland species will be planted on 20 Ha in the eastern foothills and plains in the Mount Lofty Ranges across two sites, Bullock Hill and some of Jakem Farm. Eastern Fleurieu School students from the Ashborne and Strathalbyn campuses assisted with planting at Bullock Hill as well as students from Mount Compass Area School. A NRM Green Day with NR SAMDB and GWLAP Staff was held at Jakem Farm in June 2016 too.

Reconstructing priority ecosystems in a SE Mt Lofty Ranges biodiversity hotspot – 20Ha of land adjoining high value remnant vegetation in the Kyeema Conservation Park will be revegetated. Previous revegetation and remnant vegetation will be connected to provide habitat for declining woodland birds and nationally threatened species. Initial tubestock plantings and direct seeding were undertaken in August 2016.

Green Army

To assist with the delivery of our 20 Million Trees projects, GWLAP have been fortunate to have help from 3 Green Army teams during the year.

Each team, managed by Workskil ran for six months, the first being from May to November, then November to April and March to August. Two additional teams have started in May and August 2017.

The Green Army teams have worked hard on some of the more thankless tasks relating to revegetation and their help has been invaluable.

Some of the key tasks undertaken by the teams have included

- Tree guard collecting
- Collecting and processing seed
- Fencing

- Plant propagation with the community nurseries
- Taking cuttings
- Undertaking weed control
- Site preparation
- Hand seeding
- Brush cutting
- Site maintenance
- Helping local community groups with other tasks.

In addition to giving the teams lots of work to do, GWLAP have provided workshops and instruction to Green Army participants on topics such as Bird id and monitoring, Water quality monitoring, machinery operation, plant identification and other hands on skills.





Combined Community Engagement Projects



In 2016-17 GWLAP delivered a number of Connecting Communities Projects to engage the local community in natural resource management. The projects were supported by the SA Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and the NRM Levies. The projects included:

- Connecting Communities in the GWLAP area
- Supporting Citizen Science in the GWLAP area
- Management Strathalbyn Natural Resource Centre
- Our Place - Connecting Schools with Community Groups

Through these projects GWLAP was able to offer a variety of workshops, field days and walks to give the community an opportunity to learn about our local environment and how best to care for it.

Over the last couple of years, citizen science has become a popular way of engaging the community in monitoring and gathering information about our local species and habitats. Through the citizen science project we saw a huge increase in the number of people interested in bird monitoring and bat monitoring. GWLAP also supported Natural Resources SAMDB in Bioblitz monitoring days on the Angas and Finniss Rivers. These monitoring activities have attracted people of all ages and it is very exciting to see and increased level of involvement within our community.



Soil erosion workshop

Other highlights of the year included a soil erosion workshop, participating in activities with Young Environmental Leaders, Schools Clean-up day, a Prickly weeds of national significance workshop, schools threatened species day, bat night at Mount Compass, a native grasses workshop and a lot more.

GWLAP has been working to make the Strathalbyn Natural Resource Centre a more attractive place to visit. A new native garden has replaced lawn at the side of the building, plant sales have been introduced and the SNRC now has fancy new signage thanks to a grant from Natural Resources, SA Murray-Darling Basin. A wider range of workshops and activities is being planned for the centre to make it a more vibrant and active location.



Bat night at Mount Compass School



Bird monitoring walk at Bullock Hill