

LMD CMA FACT SHEET No. 038 RIVER & FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT INCENTIVES

The Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority (LMDCMA) offers a number of incentives to assist landholders to manage Riparian areas and Floodplains for conservation through the establishment of either Conservation Reserves or reserves set aside for Strategic Grazing.

The incentive funding is designed to assist landholders in minimising the impact stock have on floodplains and riparian areas and in doing so; *improve the condition of the native vegetation communities* on their property, *to increase the area of each vegetation community reserved in the catchment to 20% by 2054*, and *to reduce the incidence of blue green algal blooms* in accordance with the LMD CMA Catchment Action Plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The banks of waterways and the adjacent floodplains are in many areas prime grazing lands. They are often highly productive and have a valuable role in maintaining stream bank stability, water quality and the general health of aquatic environments.

Waterways are also favoured by stock which, if allowed unrestricted access, can lead to considerable damage to the waterway. Bank erosion, water pollution, stream sedimentation and blue green algae outbreaks due to nutrients entering the waterways, are some of the negative effects of uncontrolled stock access to rivers.

Managing stock does not mean permanent exclusion of stock from river and floodplain areas. Rather, stock movement and grazing pressure are managed to maintain the valuable functions of the river and floodplain area. The most simple and effective way of managing stock access to waterways is to fence these areas from adjacent paddocks, often in conjunction with off-stream watering points.

Whilst any vegetation communities on the floodplain may be considered, proposals that which target the priority vegetation communities such as:

River Redgum Black Box Wetlands Lignum Shrubland

will generally score higher.

There are three areas where this incentive applies as follows:

1. Short Term Conservation Stewardships,
2. On-Ground Works necessary to establish a reserve, and
3. Implementation of a Strategic Grazing Reserve.

for areas such as:

- River banks and floodplains of the Murray and Darling Rivers, and
- Billabongs, lagoons and tributaries of the Murray and Darling Rivers.



1. Riparian and Floodplain Reserve Establishment Stewardships

Short term Stewardships are available to assist with the establishment of new Riparian or Floodplain Reserves, whereby stewardship payments may be available to eligible landholders that wish to permanently manage an area of their Floodplain for conservation according to an agreed Property Vegetation Plan.

2. On-Ground Works

The CMA will provide funding for the on-ground works necessary to establish a Reserve. Works funded includes:

- Exclusion fencing, and
- Water point management

3. Implementation of a Strategic Grazing Reserve

The incentive is flexible, and allows landholders to use combinations of other on-ground works incentives available, such as water-point management, in conjunction with preparation of a grazing plan to establish a strategic manage total grazing riparian reserve.

FUNDING AMOUNTS

Stewardship Payments (Conservation or Strategic Grazing Reserve)

Stewardship Payments will be made on a \$/hectare based and calculated according to a Environmental Services Score, which is made up of scores for vegetation significance, river health, water quality, site condition and management activities agreed.

On-Ground Works

1. Exclusion fencing

The CMA will provide up to \$1,500/km for standard fencing and up to \$2,700/km for total exclusion fencing. (Total grazing exclusion fencing is only available where stock and feral herbivores can be excluded from both sides of the river.)

2. Water Point Management

Funding is available for the provision of alternate water points to the river. This includes provision of an alternative watering point in conjunction with fencing of riverine frontage as follows;

- Up to \$4000 per water-point for provision of a tank (up to 10,000litres), trough, pipeline(up to 300m) and solar pump up to \$2,000 value (in conjunction with fencing of riverine frontage), at a rate of 1 watering point per 4km radius from LMD CMA funds.
- additional funds of up to \$1,700 for total exclusion fencing or yard including a trap gate to allow removal of goats for each trough.

MINIMUM DESIGN STANDARDS

Total Exclusion Fencing

All fencing for this activity needs to be to a standard that will effectively exclude domestic stock (sheep, goats & cattle), feral herbivores (goats) and native herbivores (kangaroos).

Standard Fencing

All fencing for this activity needs to be to a standard that will effectively exclude domestic stock (sheep & cattle).

Water Design

For water systems the Landholder must obtain a design from the equipment supplier or design specialist showing that the key design factors such as pipeline diameter, pump size and pump power are suitable for the required duty.

New Troughs

New troughs must have a gate valve to allow control of water and thus total grazing pressure.

Polyethylene Pipelines

Any polyethylene pipeline laid as part of a CMA funded watering project must be buried to prevent destruction or damage from fire or UV light.

Sustainable Grazing Plan

A Sustainable Grazing Plan is to be developed which incorporates the principles of Sustainable Grazing described in the Sustainable Grazing Courses and addressing how this will achieve the vegetation outcomes required by the LMD CMA targets.

MINIMUM TARGETS AND REQUIRED OUTCOMES

For this incentive the Landholder will need to address the following criteria;

- Riparian area and floodplains managed to maintain and improve ecosystem functions under an approved PVP
- Riparian and Floodplain must be adequately fenced to so that access by domestic stock, feral and native herbivores can be managed.
- The Landholder completes training workshop on Biodiversity Assessment or Sustainable Grazing (fully funded by CMA), and agrees undertake annual monitoring and submitted results to the LMD CMA

Whilst addressing the relevant Catchment Action Plan Targets of increasing the percentage of *vegetation community reserved* and *improving vegetation condition*.

The Landholder will also be required to address how this will be achieved and monitored. Indicators which the Landholder may use to measure this include:

Minimum Level of Groundcover

To achieve the aim, landholders are encouraged to achieve a minimum level of 40% groundcover as this will reduce wind and water erosion and result in a more rapid recovery of vegetation when conditions are suitable.

Reduction in Numbers of Feral and Native Herbivores

Landholders may target reduction in the numbers of feral and native herbivores. For example, goat populations may be monitored with a target of maintaining populations below 5 goats per km².

Improvement in Vegetation Condition

Removing stock from a reserve and preventing access to water for feral and native grazing animals will better allow native vegetation to recover from grazing impacts. This will help our catchment meet the CAP vegetation target. This may be monitored through photo points and measurement of ground, mid storey and over storey % cover.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND GENERAL CONDITIONS

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants include landholders and groups within the NSW Lower Murray Darling Catchment who have natural resource management responsibilities.

DELIVERY MECHANISMS

A Property Vegetation Plans (PVP) or PAMS Management Agreement (MA) will be the primary incentive delivery mechanism for the LMD CMA incentives.

A PVP generally requires detailed mapping and significant field assessment and will be used for the larger property scale projects of \$10,000 or more.

Management Agreements will usually only require a simple map and little or no field assessment. They will be used for smaller projects of typically less than \$10,000 such as goat traps or water-point control.

Both PAMS MAs and PVPs are voluntary, legally binding agreements under the *Native Vegetation Act 2003*, between the landholder and the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority (LMD CMA). They are a record of the terms of agreement and include; standard conditions, special conditions, agreement objectives, agreement period, activities and milestones, landholder and property details and the payment schedule.

An Incentive Funding PVP can be negotiated to last for any length of time and is transferred to the new owner if the property is sold. Some project types have a minimum agreement length, please check the minimum standards for each project.

COST SHARING

- Funding for all incentives is on a dollar for dollar basis (ie. 50% landholder contribution required).
- A landholders labour/time component of a project will be considered as an in-kind a (at \$30/hr), as will the use of the landholder's own machinery (at 80% of a contractor's rate).

HOW DO I APPLY FOR FUNDING?

Application to the Lower Murray Darling Incentive Program is open at all times.

Complete Incentives Application Form – Complete an Application Form with your details and a brief description of what you would like to do, then return it to the Lower Murray Darling CMA. (If there is no application form attached contact the LMD CMA on 03 5021 9460 and a form will be sent out, alternatively download the relevant forms from the internet at www.lmd.cma.nsw.gov.au).

Discussion - Once the completed Application form is received, the landholder will be contacted by a PVP Officer to discuss their ideas in more detail and organise a site visit, if appropriate.

Site Familiarisation Visit - During the site visit, a PVP Officer will inspect the proposed site, provide technical advice and guidance on the 'minimum standards' which the proposal is required to meet. The Officer will also discuss funding options and assist in estimating the funding required.

Environmental Assessment - Once a project meets the applicable minimum standards, the field officer will carry out an environmental assessment to evaluate the environmental benefits of the project. The higher the score, the higher the environmental benefits of the project. The score will then be checked against the funding criteria to determine if the project value meets the requirements.

Draft Agreement – A draft Incentive Property Vegetation Plan or PAMS Management Agreement will be sent to the landholder outlining the management actions and outcomes required, along with a proposed schedule of milestones and payments.

Final Agreement – Once the landholder accepts the offer or negotiates amendments that are acceptable to all parties, a final agreement is produced and approved. Works may then commence and an invoice for the first payment instalment may be submitted.

ALL RELEVANT LEGISLATION, PERMITS AND LICENSES THAT MAY BE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THE PROPOSED PROJECTS MUST BE ADHERED TO. ALL RELEVANT PERMITS AND LICENSES ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LANDHOLDERS TO OBTAIN BEFORE ANY WORKS ARE CARRIED OUT.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The Lower Murray Darling CMA will not fund:

- Standard boundary fencing that is a land manager's normal responsibility under the *Western Lands Act 1901*.
- Works or training that has been commenced or completed prior to a incentive funding application being approved.
- The same or similar activities on areas of land which have previously received public funds
- Purchase, lease or acquisition of land, computer hardware or software, photocopiers, GPS equipment or media equipment, motor vehicles, watercraft or aircraft.
- Overseas travel or research.
- Running conferences (support may be provided for local community workshops or field days).
- Activities that are inconsistent with the Lower Murray Darling's Catchment Action Plan (CAP).
- Offsets required under a development PVP.

PLEASE NOTE

UNDER THE *NATIVE VEGETATION ACT 2003*, APPLICANTS WHO ACCEPT FUNDING FOR ACTIONS OR WORKS ON AREAS OF LAND MAY BE INELIGIBLE TO USE THOSE FUNDED AREAS AS OFFSETS IN A CLEARING PVP.

Further Information contact:

PVP Team
LMD CMA Buronga Office
32 Enterprise Way
Buronga NSW 2739

Phone: 03 5021 9460
Fax: 03 5021 1308



Australian Government
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
National Landcare Program

Lower Murray Darling CMA
Respect for our communities
& the environment



STATE SUSTAINABILITY
FUND (til June 2007)

NOTE - This document was current at time of production; please check latest details with LMD CMA.

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