



2008 ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS INCENTIVE GUIDELINES

Guidelines for individuals, groups and organisations applying for Incentive Funding to **implement on-ground works** to address **Environmentally Significant Areas** in the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority.

Applications are now invited from landholders interested in the Lower Murray Darling CMA's Environmentally Significant Areas Incentive Program. A total of \$165,000 (\$140,000 for significant vegetation types / communities and ephemeral lakes / swamps and \$25,000 cultural heritage areas) is available to landholders to carryout on-ground works to protect Environmentally Significant Areas.

Incentives include:

1. Total exclusion fencing for protection of flora and endangered ecological communities i.e. fencing designed to exclude herbivores, including rabbits and goats,
2. Payment for the on-going maintenance of fencing,
3. Payments to implement Threatened Species Priority Actions in the protected area and,
4. Payments for the protection of Indigenous Cultural Heritage.

APPLICATIONS:

Applications may be hand delivered, faxed or posted to the:

Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority

32 Enterprise Way (PO Box 363)

Buronga NSW 2739

Phone No: 03 5021 9460

Fax No. 03 5021 1308

Funded by:



Australian Government

“Caring For Our Country”

CLOSING DATE:

Applications close at 5pm **Friday 3 October 2008.**

Works must commence and invoices submitted by the end of December 2008. Works must be completed by June 2009

CONTACTING THE LOWER MURRAY DARLING CMA:

The best approach to submitting an application is by working with the staff of the Lower Murray Darling CMA.

Our Officers listed below are available to assist you in determining if you have any Environmentally Significant Areas on your property.

Location	Position	Name	Contact
Buronga	Biodiversity Officers :	Claire Wilkinson John McLaughlin	03 5021 9460
	Catchment Support Officer (Aboriginal Communities)	Greg Warren	03 5021 9460

The CMA Catchment Officers and RMAP Staff listed below are able to assist you in submitting the best possible application for your project.

Buronga	Catchment Officer (PVP & Projects)	Jacinta Cain	03 5021 9460
	Implementation Officer (PVP)	Jade Temby	03 5021 9460
	Rangelands Officer	Phil Baird	03 5021 9460
Wentworth	Project Officer (RMAP)	Sheree Scott	03 5027 2416
Balranald	Project Officer (RMAP)	Scott Cracknell	0427557533

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND CATCHMENT TARGETS

The LMD CMA Catchment Action Plan aims “to protect and enhance the natural environment across the catchment thereby achieving the highest possible level of biodiversity”. Some of the management activities for Environmentally Significant Species include:

- retention and protection of existing remnant vegetation, especially high conservation value communities, threatened vegetation communities and habitat of threatened species,
- management to enhance remnant vegetation for threatened taxa (taxa - a grouping of organisms given a formal taxonomic name such as species, genus, family, etc),
- restoration of strategic vegetation blocks or linkages.
- maintenance or rehabilitation of ecological processes,
- habitat preservation and rehabilitation (terrestrial and aquatic),
- wetland rehabilitation,
- threat abatement including pest control.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

1. Individual landholders, groups, non profit organisations and local government agencies within the NSW Lower Murray Darling Catchment with natural resource management responsibilities.
2. Landholders who have received a similar incentive over the same area of land or have used the area as an offset for clearing may NOT be eligible for funding.
3. All on-ground works must be conducted within the Lower Murray Darling CMA area, and be completed and assessed by CMA staff prior to June 30, 2009.
4. Applications must address at least one of the communities or project areas listed below.
5. Successful applicants must attend an information day to discuss the implementation of projects with biodiversity and/or cultural heritage staff.

6. Applicants with current LMD CMA incentives that are past the contracted finish date or have uncompleted milestones will NOT be eligible for funding
7. Landholders undertaking significant works must be willing to enter into a Property Vegetation Plan (PVP) or Management Agreement (MA) with a minimum of 15 year timeframes.

There is, within the funds available, no upper limit on the funds for which an individual landholder may apply. However all funds will be distributed on the basis of best value for money, and the level of landholder in-kind contribution.

Projects and Works Funded

On ground works and stewardship payments may include:

- total exclusion fencing for protection of existing remnant vegetation, especially high quality vegetation, threatened vegetation communities and habitat of threatened species,
- management to enhance remnant vegetation for threatened flora and fauna,
- eradication of weeds from remnants,
- restoration of strategic vegetation blocks or linkages,
- maintenance or rehabilitation of ecological processes,
- habitat preservation and rehabilitation (terrestrial and aquatic), and
- payment for the on-going maintenance of fencing, monitoring, pest control etc.
- protection of Indigenous cultural heritage.

What are our Environmentally Significant Areas and how do I know if I have any?

Significant Vegetation Communities:

Sand Plain Mulga Shrublands

- *Sandplain Mulga tall open shrubland of the semi-arid and arid climate zones*
- *Purple Wood wattle shrubland of the arid zone sandplains*
- *Nelia tall open shrubland of semi-arid sandplains*
- *Yarran shrubland of the sandplains and plains of the semi-arid (warm) and arid climate zone*

Dune Mallee Woodlands

- *Bullock - Moonah - Black Box open woodland on sandy rises of semi arid (warm) climate zone*

Riverine Sandhill Woodlands

- *Slender Cypress Pine - Sugarwood - Western Rosewood open woodland on sandy rises of the semi-arid (warm) and arid climate zones*
- *Semi-arid shrubby Bullock - Slender Cypress Pine woodland*
- *White Cypress Pine open woodland of sand plains, prior streams and dunes mainly of the semi-arid (warm) climate zone*

Inland Floodplain Woodlands

- *Lignum shrubland of the semi-arid (warm) plains - mainly in the Riverina and Murray-Darling Depression Bioregions*
- *Black Box - Lignum woodland of the inner floodplains in the semi-arid (warm) climate zone*

Ephemeral Lakes and Swamps of the Rangelands

- *Black Box and Bimble Box grassy open woodland of rarely flooded depressions in south western NSW*

- *Canegrass swamp of drainage depressions, playa lakes and pans of the inland plains*
- *Australian Boxthorn open shrubland*
- *Nitre Goosefoot shrubland on clays of the inland floodplains*

Site Specific Indigenous Cultural Heritage (including cultural vegetation) areas:

- *Especially those with evidence of multiple living sites, hearth sites and scarred/carved trees.*
- *Particularly when in relation to significant landscape features and environmental values.*

What is a PAS action?

Many of the broad management actions that if implemented would improve the conservation status of threatened taxa in NSW have been identified. The more important actions are known as Priority Actions. A statement of these actions (the Priority Action Statement) for each threatened taxa in NSW is available at the NSW Department of Environment & Climate Change threatened species website www.threatenedspecies.environment.nsw.gov.au. Applicants should ensure that their proposed project actions are consistent with, and do not conflict with, identified PAS actions.

DETERMINING A PROJECT BUDGET

- Once the management options have been decided, you are required to complete a two part budget for your project.
- This funding is intended for areas with high public / low private benefits, which is reflected by the LMD CMA's willingness to pay **up to** 100% of the project costs, including ongoing management expenses.
- The **1st part** outlines the costs of materials and labour to establish the on-ground works (fences etc)
- The **2nd part** outlines the ongoing cost for the maintenance and on-going management required for a period of 15 years (i.e.: fence maintenance, baiting, rabbit warren ripping etc).

Part 1: Project Setup Costs

- Please include all in-kind costs (your labour, time, materials, maintenance, monitoring, etc.). An individual's time can be costed at \$30/hr.
- Employment of contractors may be costed into the project.
- If using your own plant, please cost the machinery at 80% of the current market (contractor) rates.
- Please obtain relevant quotes from suppliers.
- Itemise all materials, attach quotes if too numerous.
- All budget figures must be GST **exclusive**.
- Be aware that money allocated to projects will be based upon the submitted budget and no allowances will be made for price increases in materials.

Part 2: Ongoing Management of the Area for up to 15 years

This budget is to be completed following the same process as above although only for the ongoing component of the project.

Example Budget

Activity to be undertaken & items to be purchased	Number of items	Units	Cost per Item	Total cost	CMA Funding Sought	Landholder Contribution
2 km TGP fencing						
Fence line Preparation	10	hrs	\$150	\$1,500		\$1,500
Purchase of fencing equipment						
Hinge joint - 200m	10	rolls	\$179	\$1,790	\$1,790	
H/T barb wire 1.8mm	4	rolls	\$78	\$312	\$312	
End assemblies	4	sets	\$175	\$700	\$700	
Steel star pickets	200	pickets	\$4.29	\$858	\$858	
Labour						
To erect the proposed fences	20	hrs	\$25	\$500		\$500
		Total			\$3660	\$2,000

Budget Part 2: Ongoing Management of the area for up to 15 years

Activity to be undertaken & items to be purchased	Times over term	Amount of work undertaken	Units	Estimated Cost per Unit*	Total cost	CMA Funding Sought	Landholder Contribution
Rabbit Ripping	3	100	Ha	10	\$3,000	\$3,000	
Fox Baiting	30	20	Baits	2	\$1,200	\$1,200	
Fence Maintenance	15	2	km	20	\$600		\$600
		Total				\$4,200	\$600

* Remember to consider **all** the costs when calculating your *Estimated Cost per Unit* eg. materials, fuel, labour, equipment hire, etc.

PROJECT PLAN / MAP

Your project plan should provide a map showing the location of the project area, and where on the property it is located. It is recommended that you consult the CMA office for a current, high quality property map and indicate all relevant data on this map.

Alternatively you may also choose to draw a schematic plan of the proposed project. It is important that all existing reference points and infrastructure are indicated on the diagram as well as proposed works.

Drawn diagrams do not need to be to scale, but should provide distances and areas relevant to the project area. It is recommended you develop your property plan, location map and site map in consultation with LMD CMA staff.

Monitoring and evaluation of outcomes

- If your project is funded you will be required to carry out certain monitoring of the outcomes from your project.
- Monitoring will be required for the whole term of the contract.
- At times, LMD CMA staff may require property access for project monitoring purposes. You will be advised in advance of any access requirements.

Payment Schedule:

If your application is successful and an incentive agreement signed, payment will be made on submission by you of evidence that works have commenced, and an invoice for the agreed amount.

DELIVERY MECHANISMS

An Incentive Funding Property Vegetation Plan (PVP) or 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 waterpoint control.

Both PVPs and MAs are voluntary, legally binding agreements under the *Native Vegetation Act 2003*, between the landholder and the Lower Murray Darling Catchment Management Authority. 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. A CMA officer will advise you of the minimum standards for each proposed project.

HOW DO I APPLY FOR FUNDING?

1. Complete Incentives Application Form – Complete an Application Form with your details and a brief and clear description of what you would like to do, along with your project budget, Forward this application and budget to the Lower Murray Darling CMA before the identified closing date. If you need any assistance in identifying the plants on your property or in completing the application form, please contact one of the nominated CMA Officers. (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).

What happens once my application is received by the LMD CMA?

2. Site Visit and Environmental Assessment – After receipt of the application, a CMA Officer will determine whether the application meets the indicated eligibility criteria. If it does, an inspection the proposed site will be arranged with you, to confirm the environmentally significant area present and that suitable management actions (PAS) have been proposed.
3. Assessment and Ranking of Applications – After the site visit and environmental assessment, the Technical Panel will assess the applications on a number of key criteria including;
 - Conservation significance of the taxa in the proposal
 - How well the proposal addresses LMD CMA catchment targets
 - The quality and number of the Management Actions proposed,
 - Impact on other species (both beneficial & detrimental)
 - Landholder contribution (monetary & in-kind)
 - Number and nature of cultural heritage sites
 - Condition of the taxa in the project area
 - Size and shape of the area to be protected
 - Capacity of proposed work to link to reserves or corridors?
 - Value for money.
 - The indicated tenure of the proposed agreement
 - Past demonstrated capacity of applicant to successfully implement CMA-based funding (if applicable)

The Technical Panel will rank applications. CMA Management will make a final determination on which properties/applicants will be funded.

What happens if my application is successful? Successful applicants will be notified by a LMD CMA officer.

Information Day Attendance. If successful, the applicant will be required to attend an information day organised by the LMD CMA. This information day will cover issues such as management action implementation and on-going monitoring and reporting requirements.

4. Draft Agreement – A draft Incentive Property Vegetation Plan or Management Agreement will be sent to the landholder outlining the management actions and outcomes required, along with a proposed schedule of milestones and payments.
5. 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. Please note that in this incentive funding round, works must be commenced, and an invoice received by the LMD CMA, prior to the end of December 2008. Works must be completed by June 2009.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:

Environmental Assessment: Once a proposed project is known to meet the applicable minimum eligibility standards, the field officer will carry out an assessment to evaluate the environmental benefits of the project. The higher the environmental benefit of the proposed project, the greater the chance that the project will receive funding.

- *Application Assessment:* A Technical Panel will be nominated by the LMD CMA PVP Committee for GM approval, to assess the applications on the criteria indicated above. The Technical Panel will rank applications and make recommendations to the General Manager, who will make a final determination on which applications will be funded.

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

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