



Community On-Ground Projects 2026-28

Guidelines

These Guidelines cover community on-ground activities to be delivered within 5 Rivers NRM Natural Heritage Trust and State NRM funded Projects across the 5 Rivers NRM Catchment.



Australian Government



**natural resource
management program**



These projects are jointly funded by the Australian Government, 5 Rivers NRM, a member of the Commonwealth Regional Delivery Partners panel, and supported by funding from the Western Australian Government's State NRM Program.

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5 Rivers NRM Community On-Ground Projects

These Guidelines are to assist landholders, community groups, schools and local governments who have submitted EOI's for on-ground projects that can be completed by May 2027, unless otherwise agreed with 5 Rivers NRM.

The Program supports groups and individuals to undertake projects that protect and enhance natural assets or implement sustainable agricultural projects in accordance with 5 Rivers NRM Natural Resource Management (NRM) Strategy. The NRM Strategy is a key document guiding all community-based natural resource management in the Peel-Harvey Catchment.

Under our Regional Strategy, the On-Ground Community Projects program is currently targeting projects which protect, manage or improve the protection and/or enhancement of:

- **Habitat of numbats as well as woylies and chuditch.**
- **Banksia and Tuart Woodlands of the Swan Coastal Plain Threatened Ecological Community.**
- **Habitat of Carnaby's Cockatoo, as well as Baudin's Black Cockatoos.**
- **On-farm native vegetation, native fodder and wildlife habitats** which lead to benefits for on-farm productivity, biodiversity and/or soil health.
- **Innovative native pasture plantings** which lead to benefits for on-farm productivity, biodiversity and/or soil health.
- **Internationally significant Ramsar 482 wetlands and waterways.**

Note: other projects which meet sustainable agriculture and scope outside of the above projects may be considered dependent on other 5 Rivers NRM project deliverables and outcomes (for example Healthy Estuaries WA #2).

Project proposals must address one or more of these priorities and ensure that they comply with all requirements included in these Guidelines.

Applications must be received on the Form provided to you. A 5 Rivers NRM officer will discuss your project ideas, ensure they are in accordance with these Guidelines and support you to complete the Application Form.

You can contact 5 Rivers NRM via:

- **Phone (08) 6369 8801**
- **Email: grants@5rivers.org.au**

The Community On-ground Projects program is jointly funded by the Australian Government, 5 Rivers NRM, a member of the Commonwealth Regional Delivery Partners panel and supported by funding from the Western Australian Government's State NRM Program.

For more information on 5 Rivers NRM, visit www.peel-harvey.org.au. Our Regional Strategy can be found on our website at [https://peel-harvey.org.au/resources/5 Rivers NRM-publications](https://peel-harvey.org.au/resources/5-Rivers-NRM-publications)

Funding priorities

Your project proposal must address one or more of the following priorities, and comply with all requirements included in these Guidelines. Your 5 Rivers NRM officer support you in this process.

Projects must be **completed by 30 May 2027**, unless otherwise agreed by 5 Rivers NRM. Priorities are:

- The **Numbat Neighbourhood** Project: Supporting the community to protect our endangered numbats.
- A World for Woodlands – Support the community to protect **Banksia and Tuart Woodland** Threatened Ecological Communities.
- Moordidjabiny: Protecting **Carnaby's Black Cockatoos** for the future.
- Restoring **Ramsar 482 Wetlands** and Waterways - Phase II.
- **Future Ready Farming** Project
- **Resilient Farms, Nature and Communities** Project

Note: other projects which meet sustainable agriculture and scope outside of the above projects may be considered dependent on other 5 Rivers NRM project deliverables and outcomes (for example Healthy Estuaries WA).

Eligible activities

Activities must be undertaken within the 5 Rivers NRM catchment to remove threats, maintain, protect and/or enhance habitat of the above listed Threatened Species or Threatened Ecological Communities.

Eligible activities may include:

- **Fencing** to increase habitat by protecting remnant vegetation, including water courses and drains* and/or remove threats such as stock and unmanaged human access.
- **Restoration and Revegetation** (seedlings and seed) to improving habitat condition and extent.
- **Feral animal control** to remove threat of predation and threats to habitat with a focus on a) feral cats and foxes; and b) rabbits and pigs.
- **Weed control** to remove threats to habitat.
- On farm **native fodder/forage plantings** or **innovative native pasture** plantings

*Note: Drains are relevant to Swan Coastal Plain landholders only.

Funding

Funding of between \$1,000 and \$20,000 is available. Note: Applications for funding over \$20,000 may be considered on a case-by-case basis, please discuss with your 5 Rivers NRM officer.

Applications over multiple years will be considered and discuss with your 5 Rivers NRM officer.

Project application

5 Rivers NRM officer/s will work with applicants to complete applications for funding, with consideration for project priorities, deliverables and available funding. Round 1 **completed applications are due on Friday 4th September 2026**.

Applications will be assessed against the selection criteria by our Panel who make recommendations for approval. All applicants will be notified of the Assessment Panel's decision at the conclusion of the assessment process, by **the end of September 2026**. The On-Ground Community Projects program is a competitive process, and each application is assessed on its merits for **access to a limited pool of funds**.

5 Rivers NRM will offer Funding Agreements to successful applicants by early December. Terms and Conditions that are in accordance with specific funding body requirements will apply to all Agreements and are available at <https://peel-harvey.org.au/resources/procurement-contracts>

On signing of Funding Agreement, and receipt of an invoice, 5 Rivers NRM will provide 60% of the funded amount to support the commencement of the project. Works to implement funded projects can only commence after the signing of the Funding Agreement. Agreements will require that all project activities and reporting must be completed by 30 May, 2027 (unless otherwise agreed).

Upon successful completion of projects and/or project milestone, and provided all criteria is met as set out in the Funding Agreement in accordance with 5 Rivers NRM Minimum Standards for Fencing and Revegetation (Appendix 1), the applicants will be paid the balance of the funded amount owing (i.e. final 40% of funding application) following a site visit by a 5 Rivers NRM officer and on receipt of:

- A completed and signed final project report and acquittal statement.
- An Invoice and relevant receipts; and
- Photo evidence and GPS monitoring of the project.

Where there are more than two milestone dates for a project (i.e. fencing and revegetation) a progress report and site visit may be required for each milestone and the relevant payment made as per the agreement.

Important dates

1. Applications	Dates
• Application completed with 5 Rivers NRM officer	4 September 2026
• Letters of offer & Agreements to successful project applicants	October 2026
2. Delivery For successful applicants:	Dates
• Commencement of project & first payment	On signing of Agreement & Invoice
• Deadline for completion of projects	31 May 2027 (unless otherwise agreed)

Activities eligible for funding (quotes required)

It is important that your project proposal focuses on at least one of the priority areas described on page 4 of these Guidelines. When developing your project please ensure activities you propose match some or all of the eligible activities listed to contribute towards the environmental priority objective.

If the activities you propose are not listed on page 4, and you consider they will address the relevant environmental priority, then please discuss this with your 5 Rivers NRM officer.

Quotes are required for each of the materials (or other eligible activities) for which you are seeking funding.

Fencing and access control

Fencing and access control are recognised as key management tools, being a means of protecting native vegetation, controlling stock access, and reducing over-grazing and unauthorised access. In most cases, fencing to protect vegetation and/or waterways or to control stock access will be eligible for funding. However, there is a presumption against the funding of fencing on a property (cadastral) boundary using Community On-Ground Projects program, as this is generally a landholder's responsibility.

Exceptions may exist where the Assessment Panel may consider an application for funding of fencing on a property (cadastral) boundary where:

- a. The overall proposal will deliver an exceptional NRM outcome and is of significant public benefit.
- b. The NRM outcome is long-lasting or is guaranteed to be managed into the long-term (e.g. linked to an in-perpetuity conservation covenant); or
- c. Fencing in proximity to a property boundary may be supported where the proposed fence is to create a riparian corridor adjacent to a Crown Reserve or Unallocated Crown Land. In these cases, the proposed fence must meet or exceed the Minimum Standards for Fencing and Revegetation (Appendix 1).

In the case of riparian land, fences must be at least 15 metres from the high-water mark of the watercourse, or at least 5 m within the landholder's property, whichever is the greater.

- In the case of a vegetation corridor, it must be at least 15 m wide on the applicant's property.
- Refer to minimum standards (Appendix 1) for temporary fencing standards.
- When completing the budget, please ensure you attach quotes for each of the materials for which you are seeking funding.

The 5 Rivers NRM Community On-ground Work program provides a standard grant towards the cost of fencing. In the 2026/27 program this is \$6,000* (exc GST) per kilometre and must be reflected in your project budget. These funds contribute towards the purchase of fencing materials, including gates. **Note: the rate per kilometre for fencing may be adjusted dependent on a review of current fencing material costs.*

Weed control

Effective weed control is an important part of many projects, and in many cases will be eligible for funding. However, there is a general presumption against using the program to fund the control of weeds that are required to be controlled under Local, State or Australian Government legislation (e.g. Declared Plants) as this is a landholder's legal responsibility. Exceptions to this may exist where:

- a. The control of Declared Plants is incidental to the control of other species, and the Declared Plants are not the primary species targeted by the project.
- b. The control of Declared Plants is a small, but important part of a larger project.
- c. The control of Declared Plants is key to, or permitted by, the funding body from which the project may be supported.
- d. The funding of weed control will support public-private partnership projects, with a comparative contribution from all partners.

Please consult your 5 Rivers NRM officer if you require further information and guidance regarding weed control components of your project.

Activities not eligible for funding include

- Activities that fall outside the 5 Rivers NRM catchment boundary.
- Activities that have already been undertaken or commenced (there is no retrospective funding).
- Activities that do not have an on-ground emphasis.
- Activities with the potential to adversely impact on any [Matter of National Environmental Significance](#) as identified under the EPBC Act or any other locally or regionally important natural assets.
- Activities that involve the planting of species locally recognised as weeds.
- Activities that involve the planting of species for agroforestry purposes.
- Activities that are considered a statutory responsibility of governments or of private land managers, such as standard boundary fencing, or that are a condition of any kind of development approval (including building licences and subdivision approvals).
- Activities that are required as part of environmental approvals, including management plan conditions or environmental offsetting.
- Activities that are solely for the purpose of beautifying or improving amenity and/or aesthetics.
- The production or purchase of promotional material, equipment, clothing and merchandise.
- Purchase or hire of equipment, materials and major capital items that are normally part of a landholder's or organisation's responsibilities, unless it can be demonstrated that it represents value for money and contributes to State or Australian Government priorities.
- Providing bounties for the control of vertebrate pests.
- Business development activities, commercial activities or activities considered to be predominately of private benefit.
- Activities that have already received funding or have been funded previously through other State or Australian Government programs where those activities are substantially the same and in the same location.

Assessment of project proposals

Project Applications will be assessed on a competitive basis and submission of an application does not guarantee the project will be funded.

All applications must:

- Ensure proposed works are technically feasible and will meet or exceed Minimum Standards (See Appendix 1) and note your 5 Rivers NRM officer will support you through this process.

Assessment will be undertaken by a Panel who will make recommendations for approval using the information provided in the application, against the following criteria:

- Extent to which the project protects or improves the environmental priority/natural asset.
- Extent to which the project addresses priority threats to natural assets.
- Public-private benefit – extent to which project delivers a sound public benefit.
- Relative ecological viability or long-term sustainability of the project area/site.
- Value for money – degree to which the project represents value for money.
- Is there a site management plan applicable to the project, for example:
 - Farm plan
 - Land for Wildlife site assessment
 - Conservation covenant/zoning management plan
 - Threat management plan (e.g. weeds, dieback)
- Applicant or land manager's commitment to ongoing management.
- Applicant's capacity to deliver the project including monitoring, evaluation and reporting responsibilities.
- Level of innovation in project, or strategic importance of project (where relevant).
- Partnerships or collective efforts (where relevant).

Your 5 Rivers NRM officer can provide advice on how you can best demonstrate how your project will meet the above criteria.

APPENDIX 1: Minimum Standards for Fencing and Revegetation

In applying for funding, landowners and managers must agree to undertake works in accordance with the following Minimum Standards for the Peel-Harvey Catchment Community On-ground Works, unless there are exceptional circumstances which have been approved by 5 Rivers NRM. Please include these Standards in the design of your project. Note that these are minimum standards and some local conditions may warrant higher specification works. Your 5 Rivers NRM officer can provide additional advice to these standards as required based on your project site conditions. **Any proposed variation to these standards must be submitted with the Application form for assessment and approval.**

FENCING MINIMUM STANDARDS

Funding provided for fencing is at a set rate per kilometre to contribute to the purchase of new materials. Please discuss fencing rates per project with your 5 Rivers NRM officer. Any fence is required to be constructed in accordance with local laws/best practice in your relevant local government area. These fencing standards are designed for stock control. Consult with your 5 Rivers NRM officer where fences are required for other purposes. Fences should be fit for purpose and temporary fencing to exclude pests or stock may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Ringlock – stock proof **ringlock to 7 strands** with **galvanised star-picket posts** at approximately **7 to 8m spacing**. A top wire (plain not barbed) may be required to make it 7 strands depending on the ringlock.

Plain wire – **7 strands**, with **galvanised star-picket posts** at approximately **7 to 8m spacing**.

- Where fencing is undertaken along a waterway, the fence must be placed at a minimum distance of 15m from the high-water mark on that bank. If the waterway runs through the property, both sides of the waterway must be fenced.
- If a contractor is used to install the fence, the landholder is required to oversee any works undertaken by the contractor to ensure that the proposed works are undertaken in accordance with the Project Application and Minimum Standards.
- Fencing of native vegetation refers to remnants patches with a minimum width of 15m, that contain some understorey and is of an appropriate size and has the potential to create links in the landscape.
- Temporary fencing to exclude stock or pests generally include panels to 1.8m tall and installed to be difficult to climb or crawl under, however, specifications for temporary fencing are like to vary for each site. Please discuss your temporary fencing specifications with your 5 Rivers NRM officer for guidance.

REVEGETATION MINIMUM STANDARDS

SITE DESIGN AND SET-UP

- Vegetation corridors are to be a minimum width of 15m.
- When undertaking revegetation within the riparian zone, the vegetation buffer on each bank must be at least 15m wide from the high-water mark. Required width is 30m minimum. Preference will be given to wider riparian zones.
- Revegetation sites on private land must be fenced to exclude stock (if stock occur on the property).

TUBESTOCK PLANTING

Site Preparation

- Site preparation must be appropriate to site conditions with consideration to existing vegetation, soil type and soil water repellency. Seedlings placed in dry soils quickly desiccate. Ensure the soil isn't dry before planting, especially at the depth where seedlings will be planted.
- Site preparation should be undertaken once stock have been permanently removed.
- Site preparation may include ripping, and/or mounding, and/or scarification and may be undertaken to create optimal soil conditions for seed germination and seedling establishment (e.g. when the site is dry or sufficiently moist, but not saturated).
- Ripping depths of up to 200-500mm below the soil surface can improve the growth of seedlings and should be done when the soil is dry.
- Mounding is recommended on soils which are prone to water logging. The topsoil in the mound is beneficial for plant survival.
- Weeds **must** be sprayed before planting takes place and weeds must be effectively controlled up to the time of planting. Two applications of selective herbicide are recommended, if regrowth of weeds occurs after revegetation has taken place. Applications of a knockdown herbicide and a pre-emergent herbicide have given the best results, allowing sufficient time for chemical breakdown so as not to reduce native species growing success.

Tubestock and planting

- All seedlings must be locally indigenous to the area (though seed can be sourced more broadly) and selected in consultation with a 5 Rivers NRM officer.
- Seedlings are to be selected and planted according to soil type and topography.
- The species selection and composition and density of seedlings must be discussed and agreed with a 5 Rivers NRM officer. This is typically 1,500 stems per hectare with 60% understorey species and 40% overstorey species.
- Tree guards should be used where rabbits and kangaroos are likely to graze within the revegetation area.
- For woody seedling, ensure they are planted deeply (up to half the length of the stem), that water repellent soils are avoided (easily seen when a hole has dry sand), that planting is done after deep soaking rains.
- Discuss site specific requirements with your 5 Rivers NRM officer. This could include the use of fertiliser pills (e.g. native, organic, slow release) added to the bottom of the hole were appropriate.
- For seedlings planted on the Swan Coastal Plain, a soil wetter/conditioner such as TerraCottem or Bactivate, should be used to enhance seedling survival if evidence of efficacy can be demonstrated. Seedling should be watered for at least the first two summers. Recommend including Seasol (or other plant stimulant) when watering seedlings in sandy soils.

REVEGETATION MINIMUM STANDARDS

DIRECT SEEDING

Site Preparation

- Site preparation should be undertaken once stock have been permanently removed.
- Site preparation, such as ripping, mounding, and/or scarification should be planned and undertaken to create optimal soil conditions for seed germination and seedling establishment (e.g. when the site is dry or sufficiently moist, but not saturated).
- Weeds **must** be sprayed before seeding takes place and weeds must be effectively controlled up to the time of planting. Two applications of selective herbicide are recommended, if regrowth of weeds occurs after revegetation has taken place. Applications of a knockdown herbicide and a pre-emergent herbicide have given the best results, allowing sufficient time for chemical breakdown so as not to reduce native species growing success.

Seed mixes and seeding

- Revegetation sites on private land must be fenced to exclude stock to enable establishment and maintenance of revegetation.
- All seed must be of species indigenous to the area, with preference for local provenance seed. Where revegetation is establishing an area of mixed native species fodder, non-local Australian native species may be considered. Please discuss with 5 Rivers NRM officer.
- Use of seed of known provenance and quality from an accredited seed supplier is strongly encouraged.
- Seed mixes are to be prepared and distributed according to soil type and topography.
- Composition of seed species to be a minimum of 60% shrubs and to include a minimum of 20 species in most settings. Minimum seeding density is to be at least equivalent to 1,500 stems per ha (in areas where there is no vegetation). Where prior plantings and/or natural vegetation is occurring the seeding composition and rates are to be discussed with 5 Rivers NRM officer.
- Revegetation areas are to be free of weeds and vegetative material prior to broadcast of seed.
- Where possible, and if available on the site, the laying of brushing is recommended to reduce seed being eaten by birds.

SITE MAINTENANCE

The landholder is responsible for all aftercare and maintenance of the project site(s).

If the Application for funds is successful the land owner/manager agrees that:

- Fencing will remain in place in perpetuity to meet these Minimum Standards.
- Pest animals and weeds within the fenced area will be controlled.
- Stock will be excluded from the revegetation site in the first three years to enable plant establishment, and thereafter only introduced for limited (crash-graze) periods to reduce fuel loads and weed growth at an appropriate time using best management practices (i.e. before grasses set seed, limited to approximately two days). These methods will allow for the natural regeneration of native vegetation and will ensure that revegetation is not compromised.
- Chemical (i.e. grass selective herbicide) and other weed control methods may be used during revegetation establishment to reduce fuel loads. Please discuss with your 5 Rivers NRM officer.

- Alternative stock management practices can be discussed with 5 Rivers NRM officers where planting is establishing an area of mixed native species fodder.
- To ensure the asset has been maintained for the long term it is expected that the applicant will commit to the management of the project for a minimum period of 10 years.
- Landholder to advise 5 Rivers NRM of any change of land ownership or contact details.