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Waterway Protection Program Fact Sheet 1

Background for waterway protection works

To encourage participation in waterway restoration the Corangamite CMA offers funding through the Waterway Protection Program for those who wish to complete works that will improve the health of the waterway.

Background

Rivers, estuaries and wetlands are important natural assets that underpin a range of important social, economic and environmental services valued by the community. These services include but are not limited to; the provision of clean water, recreational opportunities, habitat for native species and aesthetic and cultural values associated with the strong attachment people have for waterways. In recognition of this importance, the Victorian Government is providing through the Water for Victoria – Water Plan funding for on-ground works, providing land managers and community groups the opportunity to be supported in protecting or enhancing their waterways.

The Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) as the regional caretaker of waterway health, is responsible for coordinating management actions across the region, to protect and enhance waterways. Priority waterways for action have been identified within the Corangamite Waterway Strategy 2014-2022 (CWS), with the aim of protecting key social, economic,

environmental, and cultural values across the region. The CWS is one of several key sub-strategies under the Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy.

Who can apply

Corangamite CMA seeks to partner with interested farmers, land managers and community groups who are committed to achieving the protection of their local waterways. Incentives can be paid that will contribute to works and assist land managers to increase water quality, biodiversity, farm productivity, aesthetics, reduce erosion or sediment and nutrient input by excluding stock, removing willows and other weeds and protecting or re-establishing indigenous vegetation.

Corangamite CMA partners with Landcare on waterway projects. If you wish to partner with your local Landcare Network, please indicate this on the EOI registration form, or contact them to submit an EOI on your behalf.



Willow removal works along the Gellibrand River, during removal (top) and the site recovering 3 years (middle) and 8 years (bottom) after removal.

How to apply

The application process begins through an Expression of Interest (EOI). Only certain sites are eligible for funding (see below) however, anyone can submit an EOI.

The steps to the application process are outlined here:

1. **Check eligibility requirements** in Fact Sheet 2 found at <https://ccma.vic.gov.au/waterways/waterway-management/waterway-protection/>
2. **Submit an expression of interest form** (EOI). You are encouraged to submit an EOI for any project site, whether it is eligible for this funding round or not. If you wish to partner with Landcare please check your groups box on the form.

Once you submit an EOI:

- If your site is eligible for funding, a staff member will call you to ask some questions about the project site, tell you about the process and funding conditions and check you are keen to proceed. You proceed to Step 4.
 - If the site is not currently eligible for funding, we will confirm receipt of your EOI and keep your details on record for future funding opportunities.
3. A CCMA project officer will organise a **site visit** to discuss the scope of the project and the potential activities, collect environmental data, write a site management plan and cost the potential project.
 4. You receive a **draft management plan to review** the proposed works and a costing bid sheet that contains the maximum amount of incentive funding per activity you can claim. If you wish to proceed with the project, you fill out the bid form showing how much of the

maximum funding you wish to claim. For further information on maximum rates and minimum standards for works please view Fact Sheet 3.

5. Once applications close, the CMA will rank all projects based on cost/benefit for site preference, potential river health outcomes and cost. Funding, subject to availability, is offered to the highest ranked projects.
6. Successful projects are offered a Management Agreement and the funds (as indicated in the bid sheet) to complete the activities listed in the management plan.
7. Management Agreements will be signed and then works can commence. Where working in partnership with Landcare these Agreements will also be signed by the Landcare Network who will manage the project with you.

Management agreements

To accept funding supplied by the Corangamite CMA, landholders abutting waterways or community groups must sign a legally binding contract, known as a Waterway Management Agreement. These agreements detail the project that is being funded, its terms and conditions and the landholder's or community group's long-term management obligations for the project area.

By signing an agreement, landholders or community groups are committing to take on the management of that area into the future. This is an important component of this program, as it is aimed at building capacity within individuals, and provides for security of investment by the CMA on behalf of the Victorian Government.

Project eligibility

It is important that government investment in on-ground restoration works is targeted

towards priority waterways identified in the CWS and the investment focus area. To find out if your potential project site is eligible, view the waterway eligibility map on the Corangamite CMA website and check out Fact Sheet 2 – Eligibility requirements.

Further information

Please visit the Waterway Protection Program page on the Corangamite CMA website or call **1800 002 262**

<https://ccma.vic.gov.au/waterways/waterway-management/waterway-protection/>