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Waterway Protection Program Fact Sheet 3

Minimum standards and incentive rates

This factsheet outlines the minimum standards for all management activities that are eligible for funding and the standard incentive rates available for project funding.

Overview

The Corangamite CMA funds management activities at project sites which need to meet a minimum standard to receive the maximum incentive rate associated with project funding.

A project may have one, all or a combination of these management activities, and activities will be agreed to by the CCMA and the landholder undertaking the works.

This factsheet covers:

1. Fencing
2. Off stream waterpoints
3. Stock Crossings
4. Revegetation
5. Weed control and willow removal
6. Rabbits and browsing animal control

The CMA may vary minimum standards based on stewardship improvement works in targeted areas. The CMA will approach individual landholders on this basis, and it is not part of the EOI process.

Maximum incentive rates and proposal costing

Those wishing to participate in waterway projects are supported financially and

technically by the CMA and are to make an appropriate contribution to their project.

To achieve a balance for financial incentives, maximum rates for standard practices are applied. This also ensures that projects can be compared consistently for funding allocation, while also allowing for the capture of landholder contribution.

Those lodging a proposal will be given the maximum claimable rates for their individual project by CCMA project officer. It should be noted that these rates are the maximum allowable rates. It is up to the applicant to decide whether they opt for a lesser rate for some or all activities, as a means of making an additional contribution and / or to increase the potential for the proposal to be successful.

All projects are assessed on a cost/benefit basis with the top ranked projects being funded (based on the available funding pool).

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/>

Standards for Fencing

The Corangamite CMA requires that fences funded under this program are maintained to exclude stock access indefinitely to the project area defined within the agreement. Where there is no other means of accessing drinking water after fencing, you are then eligible to receive funds for installation of off-stream watering infrastructure and in some cases stock crossings (see below).

The following criteria will need to be met for approval under the current funding round:

- Riparian land fenced for riparian management purposes should aim to be at least 20m wide on average from the top of the bank and must not be narrower than 10m in any one place. This can be halved for dairy farms.
- Fences should be positioned to avoid or minimise disturbance of native vegetation and soil.
- All fences should include gates as required, to ensure management access when needed.
- Fencing must be maintained to provide stock exclusion indefinitely, unless prescribed in the funding contract for specific conditions only.
- Barbed wire is not recommended due to the potential adverse impact on native animals. If it is absolutely necessary, barbed wire can only be used in the middle strands to minimize impacts on wildlife.
- Bottom wires should not be electrified to prevent adverse impacts on wildlife.
- Wooden posts are recommended, but steel post can also be used, with droppers in between.
- In flood prone areas stock fencing may need to be adapted. For more information visit: [Flood-prone fencing guidelines](#)
- The CMA may vary minimum standards based on stewardship improvement works in targeted areas. The CMA will approach

individual landholders on this basis and is outside the scope of this EOI.

Minimum standards

The following are minimum standards for stock proof fencing only. If landholders are unable to meet all of these standards, we would still welcome you to register an Expression of Interest for assessment in future funding opportunities.

Cattle:

Wire: Four strand plain wire with at least two electrified wires. **Or** seven strand plain wire.

Posts: 1.8m treated pine or steel, no more than 8m apart, with droppers in between.

Strainers: 2.1m treated pine or large diameter steel posts.

Stays: 3m treated pine or steel.

Sheep:

Wire: Six-line ring-lock wire. **Or** seven strand plain wire constricting towards the ground.

Posts: 1.8m treated pine or steel, no more than 8m apart, with droppers in between.

Strainers: 2.1m treated pine or large diameter steel posts.

Rabbits:

In addition to the relevant details provided above:

- 1050mm width; 40mm mesh diameter; and 1.4mm wire diameter rabbit-proof netting.
- Rabbit-proof netting fixed so that it reaches at least 900mm above the ground.
- Netting buried (to 150mm depth) or laid down and secured with pegs, rocks or timber.

Health and safety

You are responsible for ensuring that all works required in implementing the management actions are conducted in a safe manner and comply with the lawful requirements of any

Authority, and with all Acts, regulations and other laws which may be applicable to the Waterway Management Agreement.

Incentive rates available

Type of fencing *	Max rate per metre
Seven wire	\$7.00
Four wire plus electric	\$5.50
Flood fence (Sacrificial)	\$7.00
Flood fence (Drop down)	\$7.50
Difficult terrain fence*	\$10.00
Maintain or repair existing fence	\$3.50

*Note: In the case of fencing, different rates have been established to recognize the additional costs associated with fencing in particular challenging/ expensive terrain (typically particularly steep or rocky country). The CMA Project Officer assigned to your project will be able to advise if your site qualifies for this additional rate.

Standards for off-stream watering

Funding for off-stream watering will consider the following eligibility criteria:

- This grant is payable upon installation of stock exclusion fencing
- Funding for off-stream watering equipment is available as part of a new project area. This is only if the stock previously had access to the waterway, and there is no other means of accessing drinking water after fencing off the waterway.
- Existing stock watering assets are a landholder responsibility, and funding is not provided to maintain these assets.
- Landholders intending to install off-stream watering equipment are required to contact Southern Rural Water (SRW) prior to doing so, in order to check if a license is required

More information can be found at: [Domestic and stock waterway diversion licensing](#)

Access to water

Where landholders need to extract water across a Riparian Management Licence, they will be required to gain a take and use licence. The CMA will reimburse landholders for the application fee for the take and use licence. Southern Rural Water (SRW) will waive the licence fee for the first three years of the 15-year licence.

Watering system design

The design of the system is up to the land manager, however a copy of the system design and quotes are to be provided to the Corangamite CMA project officer to ensure the system meets the approximate cost of the incentive rates, and includes a contribution from the land manager.

Incentive rates available

The CMA will provide up to **\$5000 per kilometre** of river frontage protected from stock access toward the cost of:

- Provision of pumps to move water.
- Tanks (capacity equivalent to 5 days storage, preferably poly tanks) and troughs (concrete or polyethylene). Size and number must be justified by stock numbers and paddock size.
- Tank footings stands and site excavations.
- Poly pipe (size justified by flow rates required to troughs).
- Fittings (joiners, T-pieces, elbows, floats).
- Renewable energy sources may also be considered for funding

The CMA will not contribute funds towards:

- Ongoing running costs or the maintenance of pumps.
- Provision of electrical power to pumps.
- Delivery charges on materials.
- Labor for installation.
- Repair and maintenance of any damage to any materials and equipment.
- Trenching and pipe laying.

Stock Crossings

CCMA may provide up to \$3,000 toward the cost of crossings where fencing is installed, and it prevents access to the opposite side of the waterway. Minimum standards will be discussed on a case-by-case basis with the project officer. Waterway crossings will **require a Works on Waterways permit** from CCMA. Talk to the project officer about this or call 1800 002 262.

Standards for Revegetation / Supplementary Planting

Revegetation is the planting of indigenous (locally native) species at a site. Supplementary planting involves revegetation into a site which has some existing vegetation but is missing a component that would be expected in a more 'natural' environment, for example planting with understory species where there is already a good cover of canopy trees.

Choosing plants

All revegetation and supplementary planting should occur using a range of suitable indigenous plant species. You will be provided with a guidance list for species that are suitable for your site as a part of your Management plan. This list is a guide only and you are encouraged to talk to your local indigenous nursery or Landcare Network to decide on the final plant list.

Plants should be ordered from a quality supplier well in advance of scheduled planting. Ideally this is **at least 6-8 months prior**.

Plants should be chosen on the basis of the diversity and structure of the vegetation type (Ecological Vegetation Class) predicted for the site, local environmental conditions, ease of propagation, locally sourced, and the size of the area to be planted. Hiko cells and/or tube stock plants are the recommended seedling forms for revegetation sites and supplementary planting. Direct seeding can be done; however, a larger area is generally needed for this to be economically viable.

Site preparation

Weeds within the area to be planted should ideally be treated at least twice prior to planting out. Rabbits and other browsing animals should also be controlled. Please

refer to standards for weed control and rabbits for further information.

Protection and maintenance of planted vegetation

Plants should be guarded / protected appropriately if needed against rabbits, deer, kangaroos and wallabies etc. Protection from various species requires different responses and each case should be discussed with the project officer.

Watering may be needed at the time of planting if being planted in very dry ground. Otherwise, with adequate preparation there should not be a need for additional watering. Further watering has been found to encourage shallow root growth.

The revegetation site should always be fenced to exclude stock if the paddock is stocked. If there is no project on the opposite river bank, then the area should be already fenced out from stock or the river itself should form a natural barrier to stock entering the revegetation site.

To maintain and allow the plants to survive, spot spraying should be considered around the guarded plants at least once per year until established.

Incentive rates available

Type of revegetation	Rate per stem
Grasses (no guards)	\$2.00 ea
Trees (with guards)	\$4.00 ea

Standards for Weed Management

Effective weed management forms an important component of most waterway conservation programs. For projects which include a revegetation component, appropriate weed management is critical to ensure a good result. Weed management should seek to address the highest threat weeds, which typically means woody species as well as perennial herbaceous (non-woody) species.

Where large scale woody weeds such as willows present a significant risk during and / or following the removal process, the Corangamite CMA manages these projects directly.

The following minimum standards apply in for projects where the management agreement includes a requirement to undertake weed management.

The need to comply with requirements to control or eradicate weeds listed under the **Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994** remain. For more information about what species are listed, and associated requirements, visit the following webpage: [Invasive plant classifications | Weeds | Biosecurity | Agriculture Victoria](#)

- Monitor and eliminate any new or emerging weeds. It is far more cost effective and requires less effort to manage emerging weeds before they are able to establish and reproduce.
- Prevent or minimise disturbance to native vegetation.

- Minimise soil disturbance. This limits areas of disturbance where new weeds tend to readily populate.
- Aim to control weed populations before seeds are set.
- Always read the herbicide label prior to use.
- Use an aquatic-friendly herbicide around waterways.
- If chemicals are being used, you are required to comply with the current legislation.

Willow control

Willow removal is eligible when a project meets all the other eligibility criteria. Willow removal will only be funded where there are clear benefits for the river system. It will not be funded if excess erosion may be caused at the site or elsewhere in the system, if it contributes to spread of aquatic weeds, or where there is a substantial risk of re-invasion from populations that may be upstream or on the opposite bank.

The cost of this is paid for in full by the CMA and you do not need to apply for incentive funds for this component. The removal, disposal of willow waste and maintenance is managed by the CMA.

Willow projects are assessed in a separate cost/benefit ranking to projects that do not have willow control to ensure the additional cost involved in willow projects are compared fairly.

Summary of Weed Management Techniques

Woody Weeds	
Felling / ringbarking	Useful for tree and large shrubs that won't re-sprout. Considerable care should be taken to avoid the potential dangers of future limb drop and trees with sizeable branches, and particularly in areas used for human traffic.
Cut and paint with suitable herbicide	Use on trees and shrubs that are likely to re-sprout from cut stumps. Cut close to the ground and paint immediately (within 20 seconds) with systemic herbicide.
Drill and fill with suitable herbicide	Use on trees and shrubs that are likely to re-sprout. Drill a number of holes or make horizontal cuts at an angle of 45° into the sapwood (moist wood below the bark) and immediately fill hole with systematic herbicide.
Grasses / Herbs	
Spot-spraying and wick-wiping	Spot spraying or wick wiping selected weeds with an appropriate herbicide (refer to herbicide label) ensuring that due care is taken to minimise impacts on non-target species (useful for perennial grass/herb control).
Slashing and mowing	May be used to stop seed set and to allow for easier herbicide application (use only where there is a dense weed infestation and where included in the Management Agreement).
Hand weeding	Removing selected plants by hand or chipping (useful where infestations are small or where herbicide use is not desirable).
Grazing	Grazing by domestic stock to control the further spread of dense weed infestations. This method is only used when ecologically appropriate and there is no commitment to stock exclusion.
Burning	Burning may be appropriate in areas where 1) it is safe to do so and 2) the impact to non-weedy species can be managed. This method can be useful to manage significant infestations of woody weeds by reducing the biomass to provide improved access and by substantially reducing the amount of follow up spraying with herbicide that is required.

Incentive rates available

Type of weed management	Maximum rate of contractor per hectare of infestation*#
Initial knockdown (year 1, each item): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-woody Weed Control (spray) • Woody Weed (spray) • Woody Weed (cut/paint) 	\$750 / hectare
Weeds- year 2 maintenance	\$500 / hectare
Weeds- year 3 maintenance	\$250 / hectare

***Note:** The 'per hectare' rate is based on the equivalent of one hectare of significant infestation. A CCMA Officer will be able to advise the 'per hectare' area to be applied.

Standards for Rabbit and Browsing Animal Management

Rabbits pose a major threat to native vegetation, in particular to the recruitment of young plants, and should be managed. Employing a combination of complementary control techniques will achieve the best outcomes, as different methods will pick up different sections of the rabbit population at different times of the year.

The most appropriate control technique for your site will depend on the vegetation type, soil, steepness of the land, rabbit numbers and existing programs within your area. Rabbit control should aim to effectively control rabbits, while protecting the native vegetation within the site.

Rabbit control methods

Burrow fumigation and hand collapse:

- Collapse burrows by hand following fumigation.
- Mechanical ripping of burrows is generally not permitted within riparian zones to eliminate the potential for impact to items of cultural heritage (refer to fact sheet number 6).
- Mechanical ripping of burrows is generally not permitted in areas of native vegetation under management agreements.
- This is to minimise damage to native understorey and prevent further soil disturbance.
- As far as possible, avoid disturbance to native vegetation when hand collapsing burrows.

Shooting:

- Shooting is appropriate, as part of an integrated approach to control, where rabbit numbers are low.
- Shooting can be carried out year-round.

Rabbit-proof fencing:

- In native vegetation, that is highly sensitive to grazing by rabbits, and where there is a high risk of rabbit invasion from areas adjoining the site, you may choose to build a rabbit-proof fence. See the fencing fact sheet for more information.

Removal of harbor:

- Remove harbor provided by rubbish on site and weeds (e.g. Blackberries, Gorse etc.), where access is available.
- Ensure any harbor to be removed is not providing habitat for native animals (e.g. ground-dwelling mammals or reptiles and small birds). If necessary, consider options for providing supplementary habitat using revegetation with indigenous species.
- Removal of native vegetation to reduce rabbit harbor is generally not permitted.

Baiting:

- If chemicals are being used, you are required to comply with the current legislation (*Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act 1994*).
- Free-feed first to determine whether the rabbits are feeding in the paddock or native vegetation.
- Use only hand-trail baiting, with due care taken to minimise impacts on non-target species.
- Take appropriate precautions to minimise risk to the user and others (including notification to neighbours, warning signage, minimum distances to dwellings and waterways, etc.).
- Where predatory birds are using the area, monitor for and dispose of rabbit carcasses after baiting to reduce the risk of poisoning.

Other Pest and Browsing Animals

Revegetation sites can be impacted by deer, kangaroos, wallabies and other animals.

Funding is available to help manage these impacts. Different solutions apply to different animals in different settings. The project officer can help with this.

actions are conducted in a safe manner and comply with the lawful requirements of any Authority, and with all Acts, regulations and other laws which may be applicable to the Waterway Management Agreement.

Health and safety

You are responsible for ensuring all works required in implementing the management

Incentive rates available

Type of control	Maximum rate per hectare of infestation *
Rabbits Year 1 initial knockdown - High population density	\$750 / hectare
Rabbits Year 1 initial knockdown - Low/moderate population density	\$450 / hectare
Rabbits – Year 2 maintenance (high/low density)	\$500/\$250 / hectare
Rabbits – Year 3 maintenance (high/low density)	\$250/\$150 / hectare
Deer, kangaroo, wallaby browsing prevention (to be determined based on level of threat and agreed actions for each individual site).	Up to \$500 / hectare

***Note:** The 'per hectare' rate is based on area equivalent to one hectare of significant infestation.

Following the site assessment, the CMA Catchment Officer will be able to advise the 'per hectare' area to be applied.