



ANNUAL REPORT 2013–2014



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Using resources wisely and sustainably
while protecting the environment.

We are NRM

Contents

Natural Resource Management (NRM) is about using our resources wisely and sustainably while protecting the environment. NRM South works closely with government, landholders, research organisations, community groups and others to build partnerships, lead on-ground action and share information resources and knowledge about our region. We are focused on delivering economic benefit to the community and the state and demonstrating the value of managing our natural assets.

VISION

That the southern region's natural resources will be protected, sustainably managed and improved for the shared environmental, social and economic benefit of our region by a well-informed, well-resourced and actively committed community.

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Our Region



As one of the most environmentally diverse regions in Australia, Southern Tasmania has a wealth of natural resources. It features near-pristine river systems and lakes, rich flora and fauna, including many species endemic to Tasmania, a range of complex landscapes, internationally recognised natural icons and a long and intricate coastline.

The southern Tasmanian NRM Region covers 2.5 million hectares, including Hobart, its urban fringes and towns, and supports almost half of Tasmania's 513,000 population. It spans the 12 municipalities of Brighton, Central Highlands, Clarence, Derwent Valley, Glamorgan Spring Bay, Glenorchy, Hobart, Huon Valley, Kingborough, Sorell, Southern Midlands and Tasman as well as the state and federal electoral divisions of Franklin, Denison and roughly one-third of Lyons.

Its people cover a broad social and demographic spectrum, and are employed in a variety of industries from aquaculture to government administration, renewable energy to food production. Industries such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry and tourism rely on the region's natural resources for current and future success, and contribute significantly to the region's economy and identity.

Southern Tasmanians are energetic volunteers and there are over one hundred community groups caring for bushland, coastal areas and cultural heritage in the region. There are also many active landholder and farmer groups working together to improve the management of natural resources.

It encompasses the world heritage areas of the South West Wilderness and Macquarie Island, four internationally recognised Ramsar-listed wetlands, seven national parks and 22 marine reserves, and an array of varying ecosystems with high terrestrial, estuarine and marine biodiversity.

Southern Tasmania's wealth of natural resources underpin its economic, social and environmental wellbeing. Its richness of natural assets and diversity presents both opportunities and complex management challenges.

Our Role

NRM South is one of three natural resource management bodies in Tasmania and forms part of a national network of 56 similar bodies. NRM South is responsible for identifying the region's priorities for natural resource management, working with the community to prepare a regional NRM strategy and facilitating its implementation.

As a non-government leader in natural resource management we act as a regional 'hub'. We build partnerships, securing and directing investment, connecting knowledge and expertise to action and increasing the capacity of others to engage in NRM activities.

We engage and work with the other regional bodies on issues of statewide significance, all three tiers of government, research, industry, other non-government organisations and the community to protect and enhance our region's land, freshwater, coastal and marine environments and the variety of life and industries they support.

Our team members are located across the region, at our office in Hobart and in regional centres through our partnerships with local government and local NRM groups working to ensure that land management in the region is sustainable, improving productivity and long-term viability, contributing to the economy, the community and the health of the broader environmental landscape.

Ultimately our mission is to lead and support improved management of natural resources in Southern Tasmania so that all Tasmanians can continue to benefit from our environment.

Chairman's Review

Seems the only certain thing these days in the natural resource management industry is uncertainty and change. This can be destabilising for organisations but the best ones are flexible and resilient enough to deal with these perturbations without taking their eye off the ball of service delivery. All the evidence demonstrates that NRM South is one such organisation.

During the past year we have experienced considerable change with our CEO, Kathleen Broderick, and some other of our most senior staff leaving us for opportunities elsewhere. There have also been changes of government at both the federal and state levels with consequent changes in policy emphasis and in their expectations of us. While our funding levels from both governments has remained stable, there was little guidance from the new Australian Government as to how they expected us to use the resources they provided. This, in particular, made meeting community expectations difficult.

In the face of this turbulence the organisation has continued to perform at a high level with considerable achievements evident in all major programs. Many of which are outlined in this annual report.

There are few other parts of Australia where natural resources play such a pivotal role in the lives of its people than in southern Tasmania. The beauty and the bounty of these natural resources is the reason many of us live here and a substantial portion of us earn our living from them. In this region our major industries – aquaculture, tourism, agriculture and forestry – rely on healthy natural resources for their ongoing viability. Here we can truly say that the economy is a fully paid up subsidiary of the environment.

Many of our projects focus on maintaining and improving the natural resource base on which these industries depend. NRM South is, therefore, an important component of the organisational economic infrastructure of this State. That's not to say we only deal with those natural resources with an economic significance. Quite the contrary, we recognize the intrinsic value of many of the region's environmental assets and work, in areas such as our threatened species projects, to ensure their long-term survival.

It is both a privilege and a challenge to work in the natural resource management field in southern Tasmania. Our staff do it because they love it and, to a large degree, because of a keen sense of mission. This is important work.

And, of course, the organisation would not achieve anything without our staff to whom I provide my heartfelt thanks and congratulations on a year full of good work. In particular I thank our new CEO, Donald Coventry, who, since he has joined us in January, has instilled a great sense of stability within the organisation.

On behalf of the Board may I also thank our major funders, the Australian and Tasmanian Governments. We greatly appreciate the confidence they continue to place in NRM South by maintaining significant levels of funding during the past year. I would like to single out the invaluable assistance we have received for many years from Lee Drummond, Don Thompson and Rocky Sainty our environment, agriculture and Indigenous Australian Government local departmental contacts. They have all been stalwarts of the Tasmanian natural resource management movement for decades and we couldn't have asked for better support than they have provided.

The year past has set a very solid foundation for NRM South to confidently move forward into the future. My colleagues on the Board look forward to the journey.

Max Kitchell
Chairman

CEO's Report

Late last year I saw the advertisement for the CEO's role with NRM South, I had not planned to move to Hobart but now I'm here and very pleased to be a newly fledged Tasmanian and excited about the potential that Tasmania and NRM South offers.

NRM South is a well built, flexible and active organisation, with a committed, talented and passionate leadership team and staff. It has a strong, engaged and cohesive Board and a well-connected and supportive range of community, government and industry stakeholders.

I have been impressed with the level of community based NRM in Southern Tasmania, it is complex, mature, numerous and very active and I was delighted to find that NRM South has a positive, integrated and trusted role in supporting that activity. So as a new CEO I have a head start in what I aim for and can expect from NRM South.

NRM is a complex and dynamic process where both getting it done and getting it right is not easy, it takes a long time and is often difficult to quantify success or change. This annual report identifies the high level of activity and achievement that NRM South has attained in the past year and this reflects not only the planning, organisational and delivery skills of our staff but also our connection and ability to work effectively with our partners on-ground, be they government, industry, academic or community. Rather than list any particular project I would encourage you to read our report, visit our website or become engaged in one (or more) of the community groups we work with to better look after this island landscape.

The AGM and annual report time is an opportunity to not only reflect upon the past year but also to consider what the future may bring and what skills and attributes we may need to progress. Our organisational values of innovation, excellence, collaboration, passion, impact and achievement form a very sound culture to build from, but beyond this we will be working to build a more sustainable organisation, to look to new opportunities and income streams and to build new partnerships into sectors and activities that we have not traditionally been engaged with.

We now live in what has been described as a "full" world and the decisions and actions we take as a society will increasingly need to reflect how we manage that situation. I believe that sustainable NRM and the regional model offers the right scale, skills and knowledge to best deliver fit for the future pathways. I look forward to working with my Chair, Max Kitchell, the Board, the NRM South team and the Tasmanian community over the next twelve months.

Donald Coventry
Chief Executive Officer



Community members undertaking Vegetation Condition Assessments

Performance Highlights

1

Regional Strategy development

The development of the new NRM Strategy has enabled the alignment of statewide principles around NRM planning, a cohesive approach to engagement and an immense exchange of information, knowledge and experience.

2

Aboriginal Engagement

The pakana services land management business begun trading this year and has successfully trading, established an excellent reputation and client base and now provides employment to 10 Aboriginal community members.

3

Real action, real results

Our High Value Places, Community Engagement and Sustainable Agriculture programs have all exceeded expectations in terms of participation, uptake of new practices, or actions to protect threatened species and with clear community involvement.

4

Management performance

NRM South has successfully managed a number of changes this year including completion of the five-year Caring for Our Country program, preparing for the new National Landcare program, a new leadership team and contribution to the development of NRM nationally.

5

Engaging the community

Empowered by the NRM South Facilitator Network, we led or contributed to 306 events this year, delivering timely, relevant content to an estimated 7900 attendees

6

Contribution to national issues

NRM South has continued to influence NRM discussion at a national level with contributions to key policies and papers and through the role of NRM South Chair, Max Kitchell, who is now also Chair of the national body, NRM Regions Australia.

7

Bushfire recovery

Run over two years, the highlight has been the sustained energy and commitment from the community to support recovery works on farmland. This year \$230,000 was delivered to 24 farmers, two community groups and two councils for farm recovery.

8

The North Bruny Biodiversity Project

Outstanding restoration value for threatened species including the Forty-spotted Pardalote and varieties of sea eagle. In 2013-14, 188.7 hectares of weed treatment and 50.2 hectares of revegetation was undertaken and 12,135 plants put in the ground.

Investment Overview

There are a number of principles that guide NRM South's activity and investment decisions. These include making balanced decisions based on an ecosystem approach, integrated management, effective prioritisation, prevention rather than cure, developing partnerships, and sharing responsibility. Other key information includes the Natural Resource Management Strategy for Southern Tasmania 2010-2015; NRM South's Corporate Plan; our Organisation Values; Investment Guidelines and Investor Priorities.

2013-14 was a year of transition. While one Caring for our Country funding cycle ended after five years, another started. This brought with it the welcome surity of a further five years of funding. A change of government nationally has seen the winding down of that program and the development of the new National Landcare Programme which will also rollout to 2018.

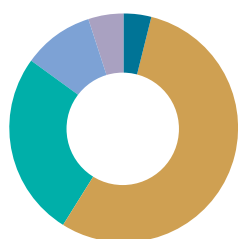
In an era of increasingly restricted funding availability NRM South has continued to work to improve value for money and leverage investment, with support for activities that have co-investment and in-kind support.

As such, NRM South established several five-year programs to focus on areas of importance for the region and community, to effectively allocate resources and target investment and build on the successes of past years.

In addition NRM South has taken action to develop and grow the business with the intention of increasing investment and diversifying income streams over the long-term.

The figures shown in Figure 1 include amalgamated funding sources and therefore do not reflect the exact figures in the financial report.

FIGURE 1. SOURCES OF FUNDING 2013-14



55%	CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY BASE	Regional allocation to NRM South, including Regional Landcare Facilitator initiative
26%	AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT (OTHER)	Clean energy Futures Carbon Farming Initiative Communications, North Bruny Biodiversity Fund Revegetation and Restoration, Regional Natural Resource Management Planning for Climate Change Fund (Stream 1) and FaCSHIA-Indigenous Coordination Centre funding
10%	STATE GOVERNMENT	Funding from the Department of Premier and Cabinet for Bushfire Recovery support and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE)
5%	OTHER	Contributions, co-investment and donations for project delivery
4%	FUNDS FOR FY14-15	Early funding received for the following financial year from DPIPWE and project delivery partners

Note: No Caring for our Country Competitive Grants received in FY13-14.

Strategic Overview

The role of the NRM Strategy

The Natural Resource Management Strategy for Southern Tasmania 2010–2015 (NRM Strategy) provides a framework for the management of natural resources and assets within Southern Tasmania.

It provides guidance and a focus for our work and for regional NRM and engages the many groups, businesses, organisations, councils and state government agencies in improving coordination of planning and activities, particularly between sectors and across geographical boundaries.

The NRM Strategy brings together community and local needs and aspirations so they can be addressed at a regional level to improve long-term outcomes. Key areas of performance in the Strategy are: maximising return on investment; increasing community awareness and commitment; managing threats; measuring and reporting change; and increasing understanding and capacity of the community to utilise our natural resources.

NRM South works to ensure that investment is well directed so that our region's natural resources are protected, sustainably managed and improved for the shared environmental, social and economic benefit of our region by a well-informed, well-resourced and actively-committed community.



Southern Coastcare Association of Tasmania members Sally and Chris Johns.

Our Corporate priorities

Our corporate priorities align with the vision articulated in the Natural Resource Management Strategy for Southern Tasmania 2010–2015. These priorities guide the day-to-day work of our staff and Board and enable focus for the delivery of our programs and for how we run the business.

The corporate priorities are:

1. Develop and share knowledge of the region's resource condition, natural values and threats
2. Build partnerships and engage the community in positive action
3. Sustainable management practice – delivery of on-ground works
4. Optimise existing resources and increase investment
5. Govern and manage the business well

Investment priorities

The protection, management and improvement of the natural resources within Southern Tasmania relies on investment based on sound priorities and effective guidelines for delivery. This may include monetary investment into programs, projects and grants, and also devoting time and resources.

NRM South receives investment for the protection, management and improvement of our natural resources from a number of sources, but primarily through the Australian Government, the Tasmanian Government and in partnership with local councils.

Our delivery mechanisms, which include the projects we manage, grants we make available, the NRM South Facilitator Network, the events and activities we hold, and various partners we engage with, ensure the effective delivery of outcomes that meet both NRM and stakeholder needs for Southern Tasmania.

Summary of achievements

High Value Places		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 formal and informal partnerships developed • \$340,000 of cash or in-kind support provided • Continuation of the Tasmanian Frog Conservation Project • Development of the Biosecurity Network partnership • Community activity in recovery actions for 32 EPBCA listed species
Community Engagement and Partnerships		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nearly 8,000 people engaged at our events • Total of \$496,700 in grants supplied via four different categories to more than 65 groups and individuals • \$230,000 in bushfire grants delivered to 24 farmers
Waterways to Coasts		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of the South East Regional Shorebirds Alliance (SERSA) • 3196 people engaged in shorebird activities • 10 main partners involved in delivering activities • Penguin surveys in high profile tourism areas
Sustainable Management Practices		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased local engagement through the NRM South Facilitator Network • Increased landholder and community participation • Farmer willingness to innovate, trial new practices and share knowledge • 39 farming entities adopted sustainable land management practices • 150 land managers attended sustainable agriculture events
Regional Strategy development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural principles aligning Tasmania's three NRM strategies • Working with scientific professionals to inform climate, biophysical, social and economic aspects of the Strategy • Exchange of information, knowledge and experience • Development of cohesive statewide and regional approach to community engagement
North Bruny Biodiversity Fund Project		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outstanding on-ground delivery of the program over two years. • Significant on-ground work during 2013–14 building on previous activity • Community engagement and commitment to the project • Aboriginal community interest and support of the project • Long-term environmental, landholder and community benefits expected
Aboriginal Engagement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pakana services Board established • 10 Aboriginal community members employed • Training pathway to Conservation Land Management Certificate II established • Partnership established with weetaipoona Aboriginal Corporation

High Value Places



The High Value Places program has made some tremendous gains this year. The program is multifaceted with strong partnerships, co-investment and a number of different small projects all focused on the protection and conservation of places, species and vegetation communities of national significance within Southern Tasmania.

The diverse nature of the program means it is a powerful tool for the engagement of volunteers and organisations with the common goals of protecting threatened species and communities. It also relates closely to other programs run by NRM South and its partners. As such, its achievements have been significant.

The program delivered conservation outcomes through a suite of projects including:

- Biosecurity communication and awareness
- Community threatened species recovery
- Orchid conservation program
- White gum regeneration trials
- Miena cedar gum mapping and threat recovery
- Alpine Sphagnum Bogs mapping and threat recovery
- TWWHA buffer and Interlaken weed control project
- Ptunarra Brown Butterfly and European Wasp monitoring
- Non-project support of community groups
- Delivery of on-ground outcomes through NRM South's Naturally Inspired and Public Benefit grants

The program has delivered on-ground environmental outcomes on both public and private land through extension, professional advice and partnerships that accelerate this work. It has generated support and engaged and supported land managers and groups to undertake work that improves the management of the following biodiversity values:

- Threatened species habitat (EPBCA – *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*)
- Threatened plant communities (EPBCA)
- Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area buffer areas
- The Interlaken Ramsar site

Volunteers and landholders have contributed strongly in driving threatened species recovery actions including those for 32 EPBCA-listed species and three vegetation communities. This continuation has occurred across the entire portfolio, and because of the diversity of partners and areas of interest community engagement has been high.

The program has been supported by other NRM South programs, with delivery assisted by the NRM South Facilitator Network and the Regional Landcare Facilitator. The program began in 2013 and is scheduled to deliver outcomes through to 2018. It is funded through the Australian Government and partnership contributions.



Highlights

The program has generated over 30 different partnerships and provided \$340,000 of cash or in-kind support to help protect and conserve places, species and vegetation communities of national significance.

Protecting the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area's (TWWHA) outstanding universal value and integrity: Development of the Tasmanian Frog Conservation Project and Biosecurity Network partnerships, and dissemination of the 'Check Clean (Disinfect) Dry' field hygiene messages to help manage threats to the TWWHA and species within it.

Threatened plant recovery actions: Recovery actions for 23 threatened plant species (15 EBPCA-listed and 22 TSPA-listed [*Threatened Species Protection Act 1995*] including improving and maintaining habitat by protecting against threats such as weeds and rabbits, and by extension surveys, population monitoring and threat assessment. Support for volunteer skill sharing and development with specialised training course to assist in their contribution to threatened species recovery actions.

TWWHA buffer and Interlaken weed control project: Facilitated by Derwent Catchment NRM Committee the partnership of more than 20 organisations focused on the eradication of high-threat weeds in the Central Highlands. NRM South's investment was focused on areas adjacent to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and the Interlaken Ramsar site (33 hectares of weed control undertaken including 23 hectares at the Interlaken Ramsar site).

Ptunarra Brown Butterfly and European wasp monitoring: Focused on the effects that land management practice and the presence of the European wasp have on populations of the threatened Ptunarra Brown Butterfly.

Community support: Provided through other programs such as NRM South's Naturally Inspired and Public Benefit Grants and through various field days, events and involvement in committees.



Glamorgan Spring Bay Council Facilitator
Terry Higgs undertaking a vegetation survey.

Partners



Science and community providing homes for the Forty-spotted Pardalote

Great news! After three years of targeted monitoring activities we've found White gum seedlings on North Bruny Island that have survived the summer.

This exciting observation was among the data collected from a series of regeneration trials, set up in late 2011 at Murrayfield Station, a lamb and fine wool property at the northern end of Bruny, owned by the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC).



Forty-spotted Pardalote is one species helped by the work on North Bruny Island.

The trials were set up in response to observations by Dr Sally Bryant from Tasmanian Land Conservancy back in 2010 that White gum (*Eucalyptus viminalis*) is in decline in the region, which could signify the end of the Forty-spotted Pardalote, whose survival depends on the tree. Hollows in old White gums provide nesting habitat and young trees provide food in the form of lerps and manna. Sally's study showed that in many areas on Bruny both young and old white gums are in short supply.

In an endeavour to restore this habitat NRM South teamed up with scientists and the community to launch a research partnership with The Understorey Network and Kingborough Council.

The team wanted to find some practical methods that farmers could use to promote White gum growth as an alternative to planting, which can be time consuming and expensive. A series of experiments using trial plots that were variously fenced, mildly burnt, 'scalped' (where the top layer of soil is removed) or treated with herbicide was set up.

NRM South's Dr Magali Wright talks about the outcomes. "While the numbers of established seedlings are not what we'd hoped for we have learned that fencing is crucial, and that both burning and scalping seem to offer great promise, with a couple of dozen seedlings going strong in those trial plots. It will take another two to three years before we'll have enough data to make solid conclusions."

The North Bruny community has embraced the plight of the White gum and the Forty-spotted Pardalote, and another champion has recently come on board. The weetaapoon Aboriginal Corporation, the cultural advisory body to the ILC, is taking the lead role in addressing conservation and cultural heritage issues on Murrayfield Station.

At a workshop held this year on the island, members of weetaapoon learned more about the bird and its habitat from Sally Bryant, Oliver Strutt from the Understorey Network, and Amanda Edworthy, a PhD student from ANU. There was lots of information sharing and some participants got their first sighting of the bird they have been working for years to protect.

Amanda has been spending her summers on Bruny using artificial nest boxes to encourage Forty-spotted Pardalotes back to their diminished habitat, with great success; the number of suitable tree hollows is currently so low that the nest boxes are proving to be a valuable addition to the landscape. Her work prompted weetaapoon to apply for an NRM South Naturally Inspired Grant, and with the proceeds they began installing Amanda's nest boxes.

Also at the workshop we explored the application of the 'state in transition' model, developed by The Understorey Network, to help with planning for Forty-spotted Pardalote recovery. Using the model we began prioritising actions to restore habitat. Simply put, the model enables weetaapoon to get the biggest bang for their buck through the identification of sites that have the most potential for the regeneration of habitat back to a useful status. This work had an added benefit in that the method for prioritisation was extended beyond Murrayfield to support restoration decision making for the North Bruny Biodiversity Fund Project.

The partners in these recovery actions are the Understorey Network, Kingborough Council, weetaapoon Aboriginal Corporation, Indigenous Land Corporation, Tasmanian Land Conservancy, and a host of volunteers to whom we are eternally grateful. The White gum regeneration trials are one part of a wider conservation picture that will inform a Land and Sea Country Plan for Murrayfield Station, that weetaapoon will develop with the assistance of NRM South and other project partners in the coming year.

Getting the biosecurity message out there

Wildlife disease biologist David Sinn is a fan of prevention over cure. Too often, he says, scientific work to preserve a population takes place only when a problem has already taken hold, leaving biologists to fight an uphill battle. Often it is too late to do anything but manage the issue as best they can.

David has been brought on deck through a partnership between NRM South, Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment (DPIPWE) and Hydro Tasmania to ramp up efforts to protect our native frogs from Chytrid fungus, which, while already present in the state, hasn't yet penetrated past the margins of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area.

In the cold of winter nights, David and his team have been quietly roaming the wilderness making observations and recording data while the frogs are in their peak breeding season. In the process he's developing remote monitoring techniques using microchips and sound recorders to track the population dynamics over time. The intention is to find out more about where the fungus is and which frog populations are most at risk, which will help us to better manage the threat.

The Tasmanian Frog Conservation Project, as its known, is part of a wider effort in preventing the introduction and spread of pests, pathogens and weeds throughout remote and sensitive areas of Tasmania. Chytrid – like many other pests and pathogens that threaten our native wildlife – can become established when people unwittingly carry contaminated soil and water into a pristine area.

The Check, Clean, (Disinfect) Dry campaign has been around for a while and recently the agencies interested in biosecurity commenced and even bigger push to get the message out there. The Biosecurity



The Tasmanian Frog Conservation Project champions the Check Clean (Disinfect) Dry message. Shown here David Sinn and co-worker with one of the frog species.



Network comprises professionals from NRM South, DPIPWE, Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife, Inland Fisheries Service, Hydro Tasmania, Cradle Coast NRM, NRM North, Ecological Society of Australia, Biosecurity Tasmania, Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER), Forestry Tasmania, and the Livestock Biosecurity Network.

Dr Magali Wright has been leading NRM South's activity. "These organisations have been working hard for years to protect our environment from nasties, but this is the first time the larger group has collaborated on a single awareness drive. We realised that we all needed a consistent, coordinated approach to get the message out there, so we've formed a small subgroup of people who will act as a hub of communications effort.

"We're currently engaged in selling the benefits of good hygiene practice to people who are at risk of inadvertently spreading pests or pathogens – bushwalkers, kayakers, fishers, four-wheel-drivers, fieldworkers and farmers, really anyone who enters wilderness areas. The good news is that for all the different threats, for all the kinds of activities in which we engage, for all the equipment we use there is a simple protocol: Check, Clean, (Disinfect) Dry."

"The campaign encourages visitors to plan their route carefully to ensure they don't move from contaminated areas to clean ones. Great resources such as DPIPWE's Natural Values Atlas are developing nicely, providing people with information on which nasties are where and how to avoid spreading them."

The goal of the program is to make it easier for people to do their best when it comes to field hygiene. The more people that follow safe protocols, the more we reduce our risks. Between the new campaign and growing monitoring and research efforts we have a fairly solid defence in place. When you consider that a South American native, Darwin's Frog, is now considered to be extinct as a result of Chytrid then there's every reason to keep pushing the message.

Community engagement and partnerships

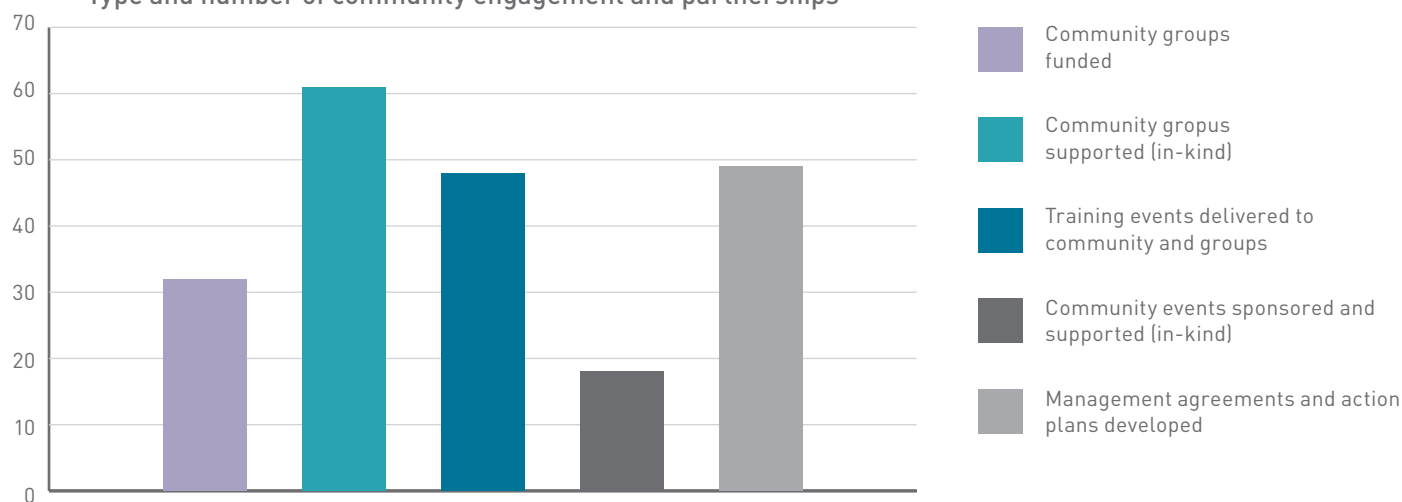


As always, working with partners and the community this year has given us some great NRM outcomes; and the way that these partnerships have accelerated the work protecting our natural assets has been a real highlight in 2013-14.

In 2013-14, NRM South focused on a number of mechanisms to generate new or support existing action within the region:

- **Support by NRM Facilitators**, who accelerated on-ground outcomes by working with the community, agencies, landholders and community groups in each region.
- **Development of partnerships** to maximise the success of programs, including shared investment, joint promotions, events or publications, agreements and MOUs, statewide consultation or program development, and partnerships with business and industry.
- **Community grants** (Naturally Inspired Grants and Bite-sized Grants) that supported community action to protect and restore natural assets in Southern Tasmania.
- **Landholder grants** (Public Benefit Grants) which funded a range of actions to improve sustainable production and biodiversity outcomes.
- **Events and workshops** that shared knowledge and information on natural resource management practices with a diverse community.
- **New communications mechanisms** such as social media, and traditional sources, that provided greater access to more members of the community.
- **Engagement on NRM values and priorities** through the initial planning stages for the development of the new NRM Strategy for Southern Tasmania.

Type and number of community engagement and partnerships



NRM South's Naturally Inspired Grants support community groups throughout the region.

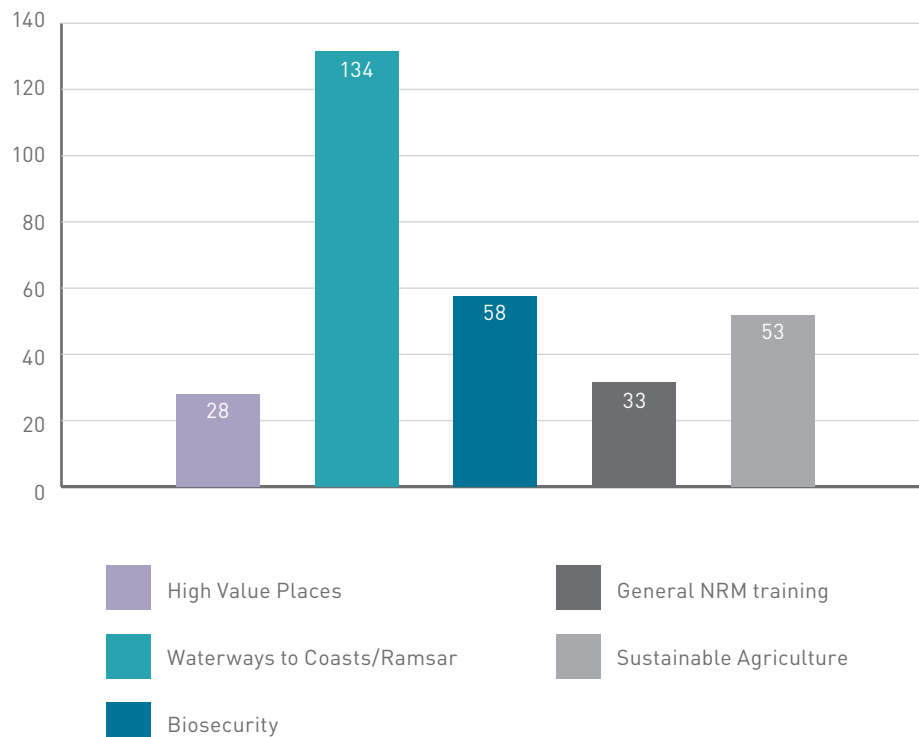


Community engagement activities

NRM South led and supported 306 events this year, engaging nearly 8000 people in total, from the general public through to community NRM volunteers, those employed in the sector and landholders.

The activities were wide-ranging and included knowledge sharing events, support to attend NRM events, working bees, clean-up events, information stands and displays at local shows through to property management planning and technical training. Topics covered in the activities included orchid recovery, weed management and the Swift Parrot and Forty-spotted Pardalote. Parks and Wildlife Service Discovery Rangers activities were a highly-effective engagement tool that saw the delivery of biosecurity and shorebird protection messages on location to engaged audiences. NRM training and agricultural events were also an effective mechanism for engaging landholders to build their understanding in areas such as soil health and improve management practices.

Type and number of NRM South events run in 2013-14



NRM South Facilitator Network

The NRM South Facilitator Network continues to be an effective tool for the delivery of on-ground outcomes throughout the southern region. It is committed to ensuring that local knowledge and aspirations are understood and support is provided to projects and initiatives that make a difference to landholders and community groups in the region.

NRM South supports the employment of six NRM facilitators across Glamorgan Spring Bay, Tasman, Sorell, Derwent Valley, Central Highlands, Huon, Kingborough and Hobart Council areas and these people form the NRM South Facilitator Network. These roles enable NRM South to better understand local issues and aspirations and support regional projects that are delivered at a local level, with facilitators also providing support to community activities, external industry and within local government.

Employment of NRM facilitators is in partnership with eight councils and one NRM community group, who provide office hosting, contribution to wages and staff management. These roles also support council capacity to deliver local natural resource management activities, such as weed management, conservation projects and planning, community training and weed compliance.

Work this year focused on extending local networks and providing support to a broader audience to ensure delivery of outcomes. NRM facilitators supported activity in the following areas: the High Value Places program; Sustainable Agriculture; community engagement; monitoring and reporting of resource condition; and Tas Farming Futures – a program run through a partnership led by RM Consulting Group (RMCG).

NRM facilitators delivered a significant number of NRM South's events this year. They included workshops, field days, networking, property management planning, volunteer capacity building events and presence at large trade events and shows. Facilitators have also supported 29 community groups (including schools) to access funding through NRM South Naturally Inspired and Naturally Inspired Bite-sized Grants, and nine landholders to access Public Benefit Grants.



Public Benefit Grants

Landholders were offered funds of up to \$5000 to undertake targeted actions and implement sustainable land management improvements. These included the implementation of new or revised on-farm action plans that;

- Improved the condition and productivity of soils, water or vegetation on the property, or
- Supported delivery by, or engagement with, indigenous people in NRM relating to these target areas.

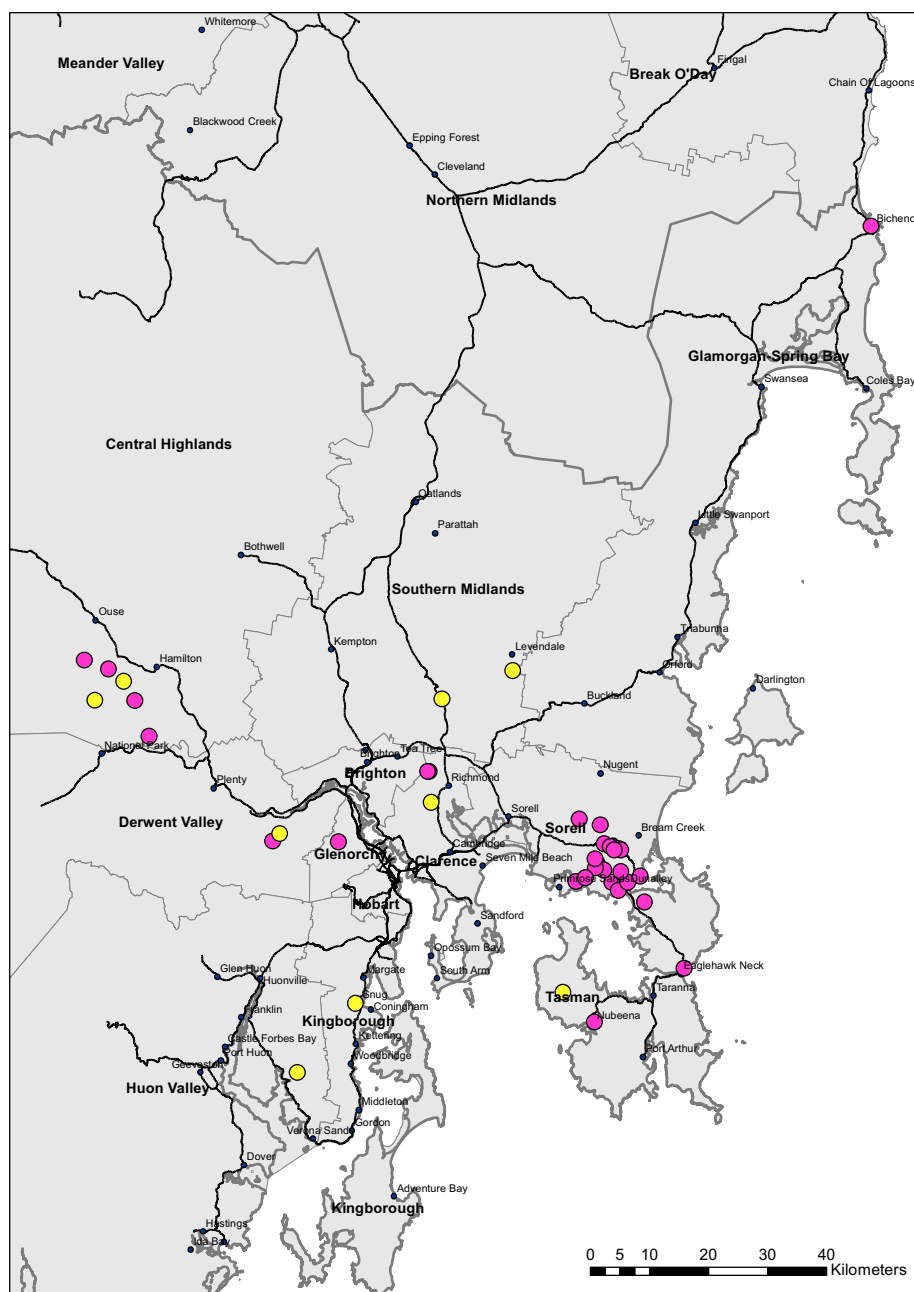
Delivered through the NRM South Facilitator Network, the grants supported nine landholders with \$38,360.

Bushfire Recovery Grants

In 2013–14, NRM South completed delivery of the Farm Bushfire Recovery program, which was developed in response to the devastating January 2013 bushfires and included a total of \$230,000 delivered to 24 farmers, two community groups and two councils who assisted farmers. The program was funded by the Australian and Tasmanian Governments.

The grant was run in partnership with a number of organisations including Weed Aid, a community-led group which formed in response to the fires. The work was a true measure of community commitment to help farmers restore land that in many cases had been devastated. Work occurred on the Tasman Peninsula, east coast and in the Derwent Valley and involved farm recovery planning, technical advice, on-ground works to rebuild fences, control of weeds, replanting shelter belts and management of soil erosion.

Map of the region showing Bushfire and Public Benefits Grants



Grants

- Bushfire Recovery Grants (29 Properties, 21,351 Ha, 1.2 KMs fencing lines)
- Public Benefit Grants (9 Properties, 56.5 Ha, 8.54KMs fencing and infrastructure lines)
- Major Highway and Roads



Supporting community groups

Round 7 of Naturally Inspired Grants included 16 successful projects totalling \$72,500. Applications presented innovative approaches to the delivery of positive environmental outcomes, reflecting the increased technical support provided to applicants via a grant writing workshop. The grants supported community groups with on-ground activities that met specific priorities and criteria.

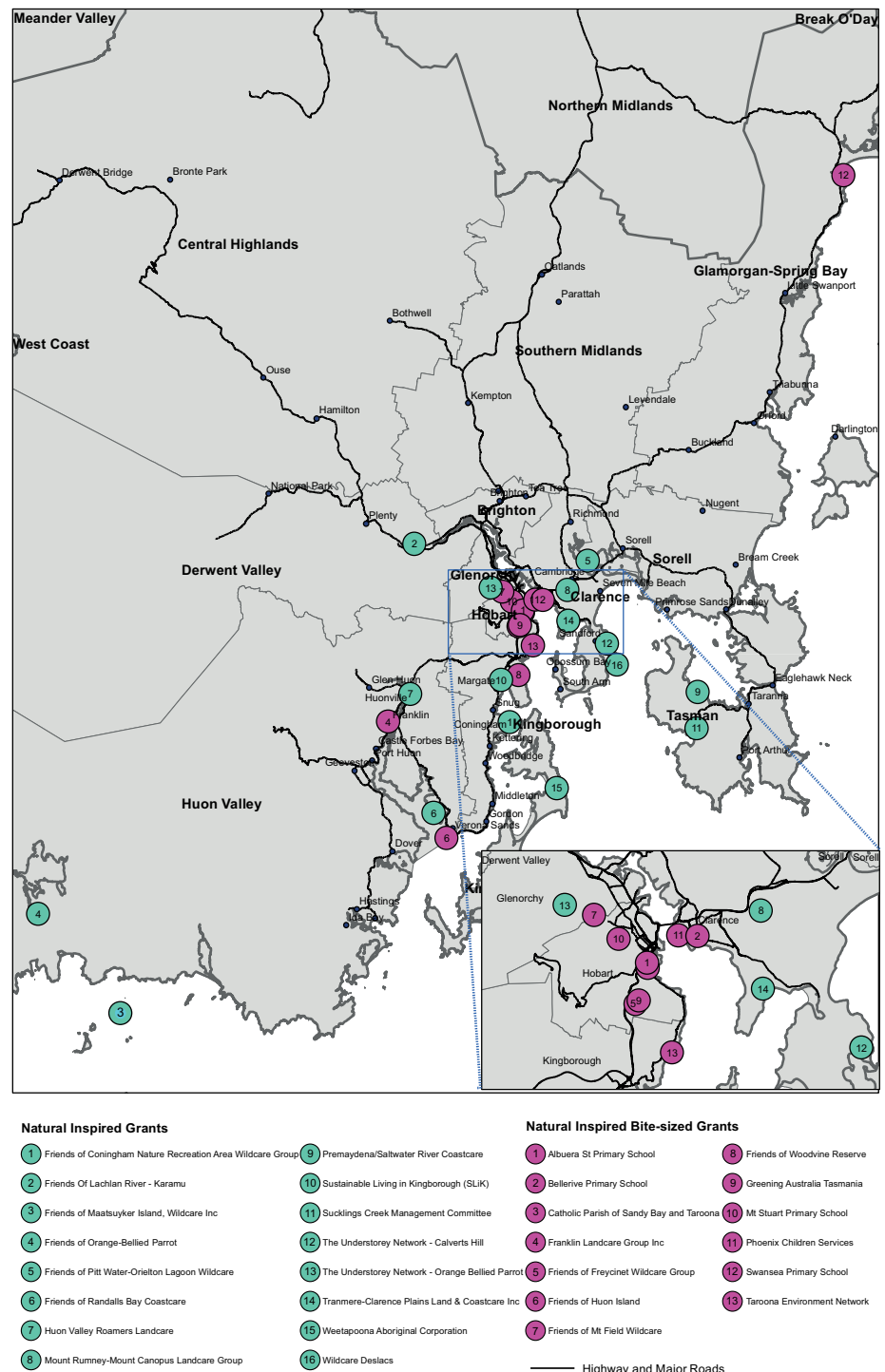
The Bite-sized Grants were created this year to help organisations get funding for smaller, short-term projects that range in cost from \$200 to \$500 and are available all year. In 2013–14, 13 community groups and schools shared \$5,600 for projects including weed control, foreshore rehabilitation, native revegetation, website upgrades and establishment of bush tucker or kitchen gardens.

The community training and collaboration partnership supported 72 environmental volunteers in four different training opportunities – understanding fire ecology, provide first aid, remote area first aid and chainsaw operator's licence.

Connecting with the community

In 2013–14 NRM South developed a number of new communications mechanisms to support the delivery of our programs. These included the commencement of an upgrade to our website that will deliver content based on user needs and enable easier communication of information within the community. We also adopted social media tools including Facebook and Twitter, which have already generated a good following and has made information more-easily available and easier for the NRM community to share. These new tools have complemented traditional communications and media activities.

Map of the region showing Naturally Inspired and Bite-sized Grants



Engagement highlights

JULY	Pasture and soil health for horse and pony owners, Richmond
AUGUST	Carbon sequestration on Tasmanian farms workshop, Ross
	Climate Change and Regional Strategy Review initiation
OCTOBER	Southern Region Land Use Mapping Forum, Hobart
	State Landcare Conference, St Helens
NOVEMBER	Huon Show, Huonville
	Tasmanian NRM organisations annual event, Tasman Peninsula
DECEMBER	Discovery Rangers Summer program, Statewide
	Coastcare Handbook Launch with Southern Coastcare Association Tasmania, Hobart
JANUARY	Volunteer Consortium meeting, Hobart
	Monitoring and reporting consultation with Australian Government, Hobart
	Sustainable Agriculture partnership launch, Redlands Estate, Derwent Valley
FEBRUARY	Naturally Inspired grant writing workshops, Hobart
	Orchid survey with Threatened Plants Tasmania, Mt Wellington
	Weed management planning with Tasmanian Land Conservancy, Glenfern
MARCH	Kingborough Sustainability Festival, Kingston
	Bream Creek Show, Bream Creek
	NRM Knowledge Conference and field trip, Hobart/Launceston
	Field Botany with Threatened Plants Tasmania, Southport Lagoon
APRIL	Small Land Holdings PMP program workshops, Huon and Channel
	Treadlightly Harvest Festival – Botanical Gardens, Hobart
	Slug management, dung beetle/earthworm workshops, Southern Tasmania
MAY	Vegetation Condition Assessment Training and Refresher, Hobart
	Graham Hand planned grazing workshop, Dunalloy
	North Bruny Biodiversity Workshops, Bruny Island
	Liawenee Trout Weekend with Quarantine Tasmania, Central Highlands
JUNE	World Environment Day activity, Bellerive School
	Regional Shorebird Alliance meeting, Seven Mile Beach
	Marketing and Sustainable Ag workshop, Geeveston
	Carbon Farming Hamilton Discussion Group on Biofumigation trials, Ellendale
	Fruit Growers Tasmania annual conference, Launceston



Partners



Aboriginal engagement



NRM South is committed to providing support to undertake activity and build capacity in the Aboriginal community that will benefit our landscapes and build social and economic value with biodiversity, coastal and conservation outcomes. We do this by looking for opportunities for involvement across our whole business and supporting key initiatives that will benefit both Aboriginal and non-aboriginal lands.

Supporting a connection to the landscape

In 2013–14 we built on several years of extensive work with many committed partners developing a sustainable business model, hosting pakana services. This first year of trading has seen the business increase in independence with the development of its own Board and training. It is a not-for-profit social enterprise providing work and training for Aboriginal people in the natural resource management and agricultural sectors.

pakana services started trading in August 2013 with future plans to expand its offering and explore further opportunities to undertake natural resource management work. The business has grown to provide employment for 10 Aboriginal community members with on-the-job training and a development pathway leading to a Level II Conservation and Land Management qualification.

Murrayfield Station

NRM south has continued to worked extensively with the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) and more recently with weetaipoona Aboriginal Corporation (wAC) to implement NRM outcomes on Murrayfield Station, Aboriginal farm enterprise, to improve pasture management and other land management practices and preserve high conservation value landscapes. Recent focus has been on:

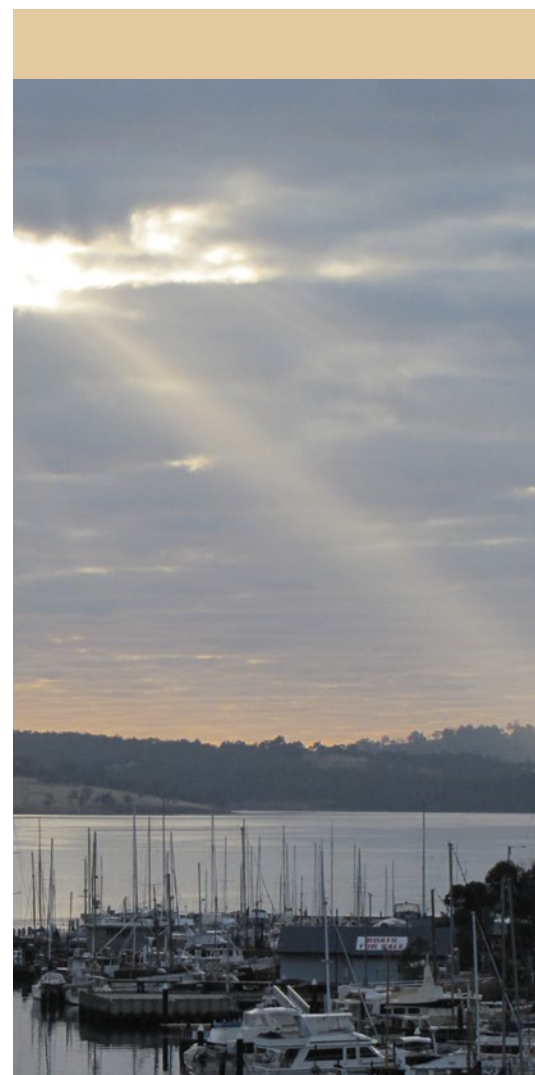
- Planning, revegetation and restoration to improve habitat for the Forty-spotted Pardalote and other threatened species
- Trialling practical methods to stimulate White gum regeneration in agricultural landscapes
- Trialling sustainable agriculture methods such as holistic grazing
- Planning and on-ground works to improve the health of wetlands.

We've established a partnership to work collaboratively on NRM issues to support indigenous participation and the development of training opportunities, support the development and implementation of a Land and Sea Country plan for Murrayfield Station, skill sharing and Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training.

We will continue to work with the Aboriginal community on projects that consolidate NRM South's activity and develop a strategy that takes into account land and sea aspirations as well as important local knowledge to assist us in improving natural resource management activity. We look forward to exploring areas of importance for NRM to local Aboriginal community, now being delivered through the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Saltwater River

The Support was also provided to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land and Sea Council, through the grants program, developed an action plan that will enable focused effort on rehabilitation and regeneration of the Saltwater River site enabling an upgrade to the property and improved access by both the Aboriginal and wider community. Building on the current management plan and previous work, the plan covers information about the people and place, weed management, management of threatened species and stakeholder engagement providing guidance for future works.



pakana services – we’ve come a long way

It took a two minute video shot by one of his younger employees at pakana services to really bring home to John Easton just how far the Aboriginal land management business has come since its launch in August 2013.

“A while back I modified my excavator so that I can push back the topsoil at tree planting sites and create a nice, clean bed in which to plant tube stock,” says John.

“Eighty per cent of the seed bank sits in that top layer of soil, so by pushing it back you’re taking out 80 per cent of the weed seeds that would normally compete with young, growing trees.

“When I saw this little video shot by one of our younger workers showing not just how to strip back the top layer but also explaining how it helps young trees grow, I thought to myself, haven’t we come a long way in a short time.

“When he first started, this fellow had no experience planting trees, now he’s making instructional videos displaying an in-depth knowledge of tree planting that can be used to train other personnel.”

pakana services is a not-for-profit social enterprise developed to provide work and training for Aboriginal people in the natural resource management, agriculture and other industry sectors. The enterprise derives income from trade, but all profits are reinvested to assist the Aboriginal community.

Its primary focus is on-ground land management activities such as brush cutting, weed control, spraying, cut-paste and hand weeding, fencing and tree planting, but pakana services will consider any work opportunity and is happy to work with other service providers and be written into contracts.

John has instilled into the culture of pakana services that all activities must be completed in a safe, professional manner and to a high standard – this is critical to the future growth and survival of the business.

pakana services provides a wide range of hands-on training, much of which results in accreditation for the trainee. It gives the participants key skills and puts money in their pockets.

“Everyone in the team likes working outdoors, being connected to country and learning new skills,” says John. “And having a reason to get out of bed in the morning and take on new challenges is good for everyone’s health and wellbeing.”

Hosted by NRM South until it becomes a fully independent, self-funding enterprise, pakana’s first year of operation has had plenty of challenges, but also rewards.

“There’s no doubt about it, to get to the stage we’re at has been tough,” says John.

John has worked hard at making sure people in the industry know that pakana services is ready and open for business. The hard work has paid off and they have attracted a broad range of clients.

“We’ve done work for a number of agencies, councils and organisations who need this kind of work done,” says John. “People have been really willing to give us a try, which is great.”

pakana has 10 Tasmanian Aboriginal employees on its books with a core working crew of seven casual staff, some of whom have been with the business since it started.

Being part of NRM South until the business can stand alone has allowed John to tap into resources often beyond the reach of new businesses.

“You can’t put a dollar value on having access to help from the team at NRM South,” he says. “It’s just been so important to be able to tap into knowledge about natural resource management and the practical business management expertise needed by any organisation to be successful.”

John hopes he’ll eventually have 12 to 15 crew on the books so he can run two teams throughout the week.

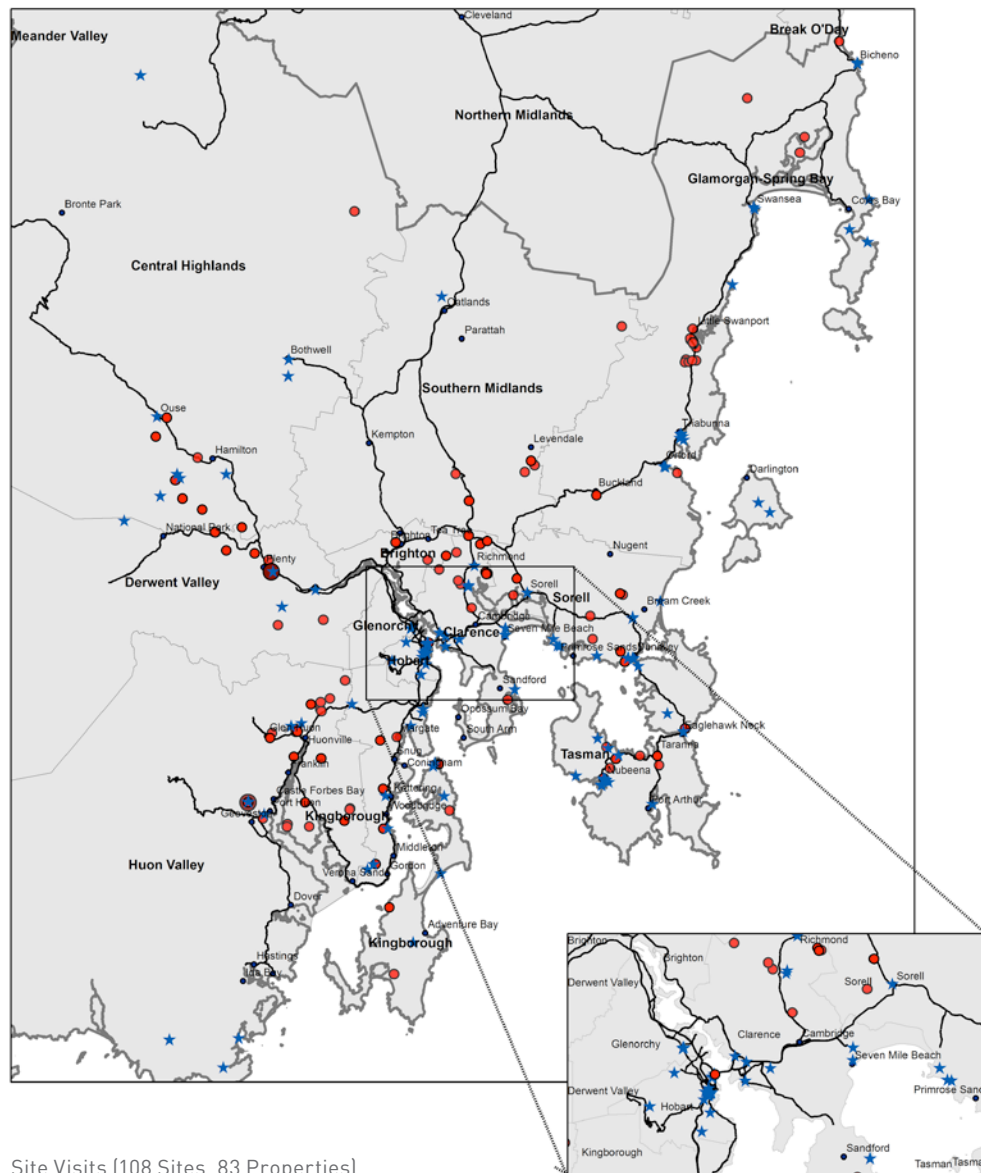
“Everyone loves an opportunity to show off their abilities, and I’ve instilled in the team the idea that we are only ever as good as our last job.”



One the pakana services team undertaking works on North Bruny Island.



Map showing activity in NRM South region - Site visits & events



Small landholders reap rewards of property planning

The hardest thing for Tim Ackroyd about running NRM South's Small Landholders program has been turning people away, but that's also a sign of its success.

"My only regret is not being able to get everybody onto the program," he says. "I hate having to turn people away."

Aimed at hobby farmers, small-scale farmers and 'lifestyle blockies' on properties in Southern Tasmania's Huon and Channel regions, the program has just seen out its second year, and, based on participant feedback, there's no sign of demand slowing down.

"We're trying to assist people who take part in the program to make well-informed decisions about how they manage their land, both in terms of seeing positive environmental gains and ending up with a productive agricultural system," says Tim.

"The first step is to help them develop a property plan that sets out clear goals, defines the limitations of their property, and maps out the potential of their land so that they have a vision of what they can actually achieve."

The program is based on a pilot scheme developed by Cradle Coast NRM in Northern Tasmania and includes four full-day workshops given by experts in fields such as soil health, planned grazing, weed management, native vegetation, wallaby control and animal husbandry.

Kingborough and Huon Valley Councils have been closely involved with the program, which was jointly run by NRM facilitators Tim Ackroyd and Andrew Winkler.

"So far about 40 people from 23 properties have been through the program," says Tim. "They've all developed a property plan that will continue to evolve and provides the first steps to guide landowners in making positive management decisions. Participants of the program have already started to implement a number of positive changes to improve their properties' natural resources."

And as much as the program is about giving small landowners the tools to manage their own properties it's also about creating a network of people that will provide long-term support to each other and the wider farming community into the future.

"After one of the workshops one group got together, pooled resources and bulk bought wallaby-proof fencing," says Tim. "It's exactly the sort of network sharing I hoped would come out of the program."

That network is now officially in place through the creation of the Huon and Channel farming discussion group.

"Those that get involved in the program come from a range of backgrounds, with a large proportion only recently moved to Tasmania, and while some have had farms before, others are completely new to the game," says Tim.

"They all have a high stewardship ethic, want to do well on their properties, but may not be particularly skilled in certain aspects of land management or have limited knowledge of natural resource issues, especially those specific to Southern Tasmania."

One of the keys to the program has been the participation of presenters who tell it like it is.

Presenters have provided realistic appraisals of participants' properties, including assessment of their soil and pasture samples. This provides landowners with impartial and realistic advice about the capabilities of their land and the role of lifestyle as part of this picture.

Presenters have included Stipa's Graeme Hand, who discussed planned grazing techniques, Robbie Gaffney from the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, who spoke about issues surrounding the control of native mammal browsing, and the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture's Marcus Hardie, who discussed soil health, not to mention several other presenters from a variety of organisations.



NRM South Facilitator Tim Ackroyd

"Robbie's talk proved to be of particular interest," says Tim. "Most people didn't initially prioritise native mammal browsing as a subject of interest or something they need to know about when joining the program, but by the end of the course that was the most important subject for nearly everyone."

"And that's probably what I like most about the program, it takes participants on a ride across all facets of land management, it gets them thinking about a range of things, rather than just the areas they are initially interested in."



One of the many landholder events held in the southern region this year.

The Church in the Bush

Naturally Inspired Grants recipient

One of the first things to strike you about St Pius X Catholic Church in Taroom is its surroundings.

Set in coastal bushland, parishioners must find it difficult to keep their eyes on the pulpit when the church offers beautiful views of surrounding eucalypt trees and the broad River Derwent.

“Esmond Dorney didn’t want curtains used in the church,” says Paul Picone, who has been helping St Pius X restore the celebrated architect’s original vision of the church and the way it interacts with its surroundings, by creating several native garden beds.

“His vision was for the eucalypts outside to provide a natural bush curtain, letting in dappled sunlight.”

Built in 1957 the church’s modernist design (using lightweight steel pipe) has been listed on the register of the National Estate and is now recognised as the first modernist church in Australia.

Instead of using traditional stained glass windows, its eastern, southern and northern facades are made of clear glass window panes, which flood the interior with natural light.

Unfortunately disease and safety precautions have taken a toll on the eucalypts that once shaded the church, but with the help of NRM South’s Naturally Inspired Grants, the parishioners are slowly bringing Dorney’s original vision back to life by surrounding the church with native trees and shrubs.

The native garden was first started with the help of the Country Women’s Association, and the church has also had help from Paddy Dorney, Esmond Dorney’s son and himself an architect by profession, who explained his father’s original vision of a church at one with its natural surroundings.

Local botanist Kris Schaffer has provided valuable expertise, along with the dedicated volunteers of the Taroom Environment Network, in identifying and removing invasive weeds such as blackberry, cape weed and boneseed, and also in providing advice on suitable native species to plant.

“NRM South has been critical to the success of this project by providing funds on two occasions. We’ve been delighted by how supportive they have been. Without their support this project would not have happened,” says Paul.

Strolling through the church grounds it’s obvious that Paul is impressed by just how quickly the native gardens have established and by the beautiful reflections they are already creating in the huge windows so integral to Esmond Dorney’s original vision.

“From every angle you get a different reflected view of the bushland,” he says.

“But my favourite view is from directly outside the front of the church. From here you can look in through the window and see the altar and church pews framed by a reflected image of the outside eucalypts. It’s just beautiful.”



Naturally Inspired Grant recipient, the PIUS X Church team, undertaking works.

Waterways to Coasts



The Waterways to Coasts program, has this year achieved its aims to protect, maintain and restore marine, coastal, estuarine and riparian environments within Tasmania's southern region and the many species, communities and values they contain.

The program prioritised management of the following ecological assets or values:

- Coastal threatened species' habitat (EPBCA)
- Coastal Ramsar sites (Pitt Water Orielton Lagoon, Apsley Marshes and Moulting Lagoon)
- Land adjacent to coastal Ramsar sites
- Saltmarshes
- Riparian areas near the coast

The success of the program has been highlighted by the commitment of various partners to develop shared plans for the protection, maintenance or restoration of Southern Tasmania's waterways and coasts.

Standout elements of the program have included the Shorebirds Alliance, D'Entrecasteaux and Huon Collaboration, and East Coast penguin surveys, support to Coastcare Week and the Southern Coastcare Association of Tasmania (SCAT) have all generated genuine community commitment, building on existing partnerships and extending the reach of these programs.

Specifically, more than 2,000 community members across four coastal government areas were directly engaged in activities aimed at increasing awareness of shorebird breeding and potential impacts. Ten main partners were involved in delivering these activities, including a campaign around World Wetlands Day, and Discovery Rangers Summer activities ensured increased awareness to visitors and local community. .

Other achievements of these projects included temporary fencing of priority locations to protect breeding pairs, completion of 26 beach surveys (including Moulting Lagoon), interpretive signage, media articles, banners and educational resources and capacity building events run to support these messages.

An ongoing partnership with the D'Entrecasteaux and Huon Collaboration saw the completion of a joint action plan for the project, delivery of a penguin survey and habitat condition assessment on Bruny Island, work with aquaculture industry for contribution to the plan as well as the development of a waterways report card.



Highlights

Development of the South East Regional Shorebirds Alliance (SERSA) including a collaborative approach to promote the protection of shorebirds and their habitats, as well as events and activities to protect sites. The partnership includes representatives from local councils, Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service, BirdLife Tasmania and NRM South.

Ongoing partnership with the D'Entrecasteaux Channel Project focusing on waterway management, penguin habitat management as well as community and industry activities to generate more widespread interest in waterway management.

Penguin surveys in high-profile tourism areas to collect critical information, support visitors to understanding threats to penguin habitat and to improve weed management practices in and around these areas

Coastal Hotspots Project and Swift Parrot recovery with Huon Valley Council to support collection of data on current condition of temperate saltmarsh and propose remediation steps to protect these environments. This includes the Shipwrights Point project assessment of existing mature trees towards conservation of Swift Parrot breeding and feeding habitat.

Other projects supported through Naturally Inspired Grants and sponsorships

NRM South supported a range of coastal projects with community including Coastcare Week, marine debris consultation sessions, Pitt Water Orielton weed control, saltmarsh restoration, habitat restoration, protection of shearwaters, karamu control in New Norfolk, Sucklings Creek Action Plan development and reducing waste in Kingborough.



Partners

Glamorgan Spring Bay Council	Southern Coastcare Association of Tasmania	BirdLife Tasmania	
D'Entrecasteaux and Huon Collaboration	Derwent Estuary Program	Kingborough Council	
Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service	Friends of Pitt Water-Orielton Lagoon	Bookend Trust	
Sorell Council	Tasman Council	The South East Regional Shorebirds Alliance	Landcare Tasmania
Friends of PWOL – Wildcare	Premaydena/Saltwater River Coastcare	Friends of Randalls Bay Coastcare	
University of Tasmania	DPIPWE's Threatened Species and Marine Section	Wildcare Deslacs	
Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment	Friends of Lachlan River		

Next stop, Pitt Water-Orielton Lagoon

It's a major stopover for tourists travelling the East Asian-Australasian flyway but unless you're one of them, such as the Eastern Curlew, Bar-tailed Godwit or Red-necked Stint, you may not have heard of it.

These feathered tourists fly up to 25,000 kilometres every year from the northern hemisphere to Pitt Water-Orielton Lagoon, the most southern feeding grounds for migratory shorebirds in Australia.

It's also the only Ramsar wetland in Tasmania found within an urban landscape. It has inspired a dedicated group of local volunteers to form a new Wildcare group, the Friends of Pitt Water-Orielton Lagoon.

Convenor of the group, Sandy Leighton, has walked most of the Sorell side of the lagoon. She's passionate about clearing the area of weeds which threaten the habitat of these international visitors, and has been instrumental in securing an NRM South Naturally Inspired Grant for the work.

"The Naturally Inspired Grant has helped us create a template for the work we want to achieve and it gives us a timeline to follow for the next 12 months," she says.

Although parts of the lagoon have suffered from close proximity to an urban area – rubbish and backyard weeds often find their way into the Ramsar-listed site – it still holds incredible natural values.

Apart from the migratory shorebirds that travel to the lagoon once a year to feed and forage, it's also an important shark nursery and supports some of the most significant saltmarshes in Tasmania.

Threatened plants include Lemon Beauty Heads, New Holland Daisies and Yellow Sea Lavender. The site is also home to a remnant of the critically endangered vegetation community, Lowland Native Grasslands of Tasmania.

The new Wildcare group has already put its NRM South grant to good use, tackling weeds on the difficult-to-reach Woody Island.



"Our relationship with the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service has been critical to this work," says Sandy. "They supply two staff and a boat to help us reach and work on the island."

Apart from the difficulty of getting to Woody Island the group's work is also restricted by the local birdlife. Thankfully Eric Woehler from BirdLife Tasmania has guided the group to help work out when to tackle the weed infestations without disturbing the migratory and breeding patterns of the many different bird species that inhabit the lagoon.

Some of the weeds the group has in its sights are African boxthorn and Boneseed as Boneseed is a woody, erect shrub that forms dense infestations that can smother native vegetation and Sandy has found dead Cormorants caught in the thorny branches of the African boxthorn.

The first major assault on Boneseed was carried out a few years ago by contractors, and now the job is to keep the seed bank under control until it exhausts itself.

"When we returned after the primary control had taken place we pulled out more than a thousand Boneseed seedlings from Woody Island. Boneseed takes a bit over 12 months to go from seedling to flowering. We don't want any more of the seed bank developing, so we have to stop them before they get to that point," says Sandy.

Studies show it will take more than a decade to exhaust the seed bank. With friends like the Pitt Water-Orielton Lagoon Wildcare group this long timeline is okay – they have the passion and commitment needed for such a daunting task.

Sustainable management practices



Graham Hand presenting training to a local group of landholders

The sustainable management program including sustainable agriculture and work undertaken by the Regional Landcare Facilitator and NRM South's NRM Network has been a great success this year this year. It has increased the number of farmers, land managers and community groups who have undertaken land and water management practices to improve production, profitability and environmental outcomes within Southern Tasmania with a highlight being the interest and willingness of landholders and land managers to initiate or build on existing sustainable farming practices.

One factor in this success is the effectiveness of the NRM South Facilitator Network, including the Australian Government funded Regional Landcare Facilitator. This network is our primary mechanism for engaging farmers. It provides a range of quality events and activities in each region, ensures relevant information is shared with farmers, and relies on the knowledge and expertise of staff, and presenters, to connect with and understand the needs of the community.

Our communications and extension activities have provided expert information and knowledge on improved farming practices and NRM, which has led to more farmers conducting innovative trials on their properties. We have also provided property management planning to support farmers to develop strategic programs to improve farm outcomes, and our grants programs have enabled farmers to implement on-ground activities.

This approach allowed the 2012–13 pilot Small Landholders Property Management Program to be refined, expanded and rolled out in two regions this year with excellent results. Activities included workshops, field days, communications, demonstrations and trials. We have also extended the options available to farmers to include whole-farm planning and grazing information.

Success measures include the uptake, acceptance and application of practices that improve production, profitability and environmental outcomes within Southern Tasmania. The evidence of success is in farmers encouraging other farmers to undertake the program and the numbers of people who have engaged in events and field days (more than 1750 participants from more than 50 events) and have then sought to undertake activities on their property. As a result 48 management agreements or action plans have been established with evidence of positive landscape or production change starting.

Our work around sustainable management practices has exceeded its targets, been a great tool for agricultural engagement, and has created a strong base on which to build in 2014–15.

Highlights

Increased local engagement through the NRM South Facilitator Network: Facilitators have worked with farmers and other land managers in their communities to identify specific needs; provide knowledge and information through organised events and materials to increase understanding; and support farmers in adopting sustainable practices through our grant programs, advice provided and monitoring of farm trials and demonstrations.

Increased landholder and community participation in natural resource management activities: Our engagement work and communications have resulted in increasing numbers of individual landholders and groups (e.g. Landcare, farming system groups, industry, and other community groups) engaging in NRM activities on farms and in surrounding catchments.

Willingness of farmers to innovate, trial new practices and to share success or knowledge: Farmers have increased their commitment to on-ground works including revegetation (e.g. shelter belts), weed management, protecting remnant vegetation and riparian areas, improving pastures through reconfigured internal fencing and livestock grazing management, and improving soils and managing erosion.

Thinking outside the square: We have researched the most effective ways to reach landholders no matter their interests and then tailored content of events and communications to meet the audience needs.

Achievements:

- 39 farming entities adopted sustainable land management practices (including 14 new farming entities)
- Approximately 150 land managers attended NRM South events such as field days, seminars and workshops to improve their knowledge and skills in NRM
- 40 land managers engaged in specific NRM activities as a result of NRM South's activities (this includes 25 people who completed Small Landholders Property Management Program, which covered soil health, grazing management, native vegetation, browsing mammals, weeds and animal husbandry)
- 13 landcare community members or landholders increased their capacity in NRM and farming practices (this included the use of native grasses in holistic grazing management, soil health trials, biological farming practices and red meat production and marketing)

Exploring innovative agriculture

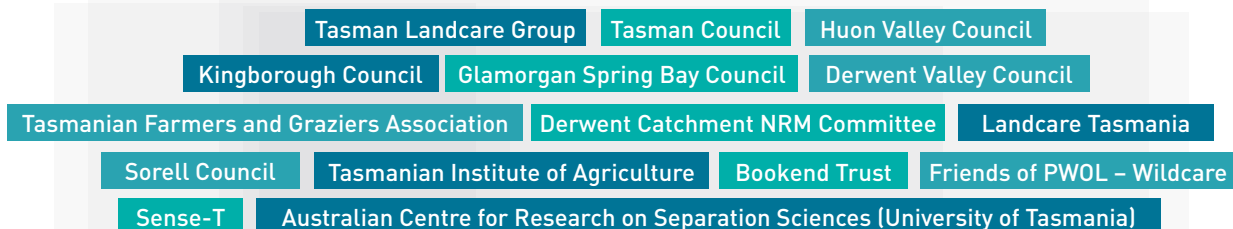
In January 2014, NRM South entered into a partnership with Redlands Estate to develop a sustainable agriculture system that would help ensure the production of high quality barley for whisky production.

The system involved a barley rotation alongside cattle grazing which rotates around the farm each year. The goal is an improvement in soil health, prevention of plant diseases and to increase production on the farm. NRM South is collaborating with agencies from the University of Tasmania and other organisations utilising innovative technologies to assist with the collection of data for improved real-time decision making on the farm.

Partners include Sense-T who is providing digital sensing equipment to collect real time data on soil moisture and weather conditions within the crop. A farm service company who is providing an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle to monitor crop growth across each of the fields, and the Australian Centre for Research on Separation Sciences of the University of Tasmania (ACROSS) who is assessing the quality of the barley, to identify any harmful substances while also identifying the compounds that give Tasmanian whisky its unique flavours.

The system has enabled NRM South to trial a range of sustainable practices on the property to demonstrate real economic and environmental value, while also generating interest from other landholders in the region.

Partners



Sustainable agriculture, the proof is in the produce

More producers are looking at sustainable agriculture as a way of improving quality and yield of their produce for the long term and as a means of creating a marketable point of difference for their product. For southern Tasmania's producers, the proof of sustainable agriculture is in the produce.

NRM South has been running trials with farmers and property managers throughout the region from the Derwent Valley, to the Huon, the east coast and greater Hobart area. The results speak for themselves.

Huon property owner Simon Burgess was keen to explore the options available to improve his farm returns. On his 87 hectare beef and apple farm in the Huon Valley, Simon noticed the loss of grass on the property as native animal numbers increased. This meant less grass for cattle, the need to purchase additional feed and a significant impact on the viability of the farm.

"In 2010 we had no grass to feed the cows and they were in poor health and we had halved our stocking rate of breeding cows. We either had to start making money or stop farming. I felt the weight of this decision on my shoulders, having to decide the future of the farm that has been in my family for four generations.

"On a wet winter's day, I was out in the pouring rain feeding silage to the cows. It was a miserable day and the cows were walking all over the silage and compacting it into the ground. I thought to myself I am wasting my time here."

Simon made a decision to look at what options were available. One thing led to another, and Simon attended some farm workshops put on by the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment and NRM South's Regional

Landcare Facilitator. The first workshop focused on native mammal browsing control, and the second on soil health and pasture management.

Simon then took part in a fencing trial, which protected his native grasses and provided feed throughout the year for cattle. He later took part in a planned grazing trial, which has now become a way of operating the farm.

The cattle now run on 16 main paddocks which are strip-grazed individually with temporary electric fencing, with smaller paddocks of typically 1–2 hectares grazed for around 4–5 days. Each area grazed is allowed to recover for 120–150 days before stock are put back in.

The focus on improving their pastures and soils through planned grazing has resulted in significant productivity gains as well as reduction in costs. The farm now has more grass and the stocking rate has been increased to some 60 breeding cows. Additionally, they have saved money annually by not needing to fertilise the majority of their paddocks through this process.

"We are now achieving the financial outcomes we originally set out to achieve. It's only taken us two or three years to make our money back and for the first time in years we are making money on the cows."

The Burgess' story indicates what's possible by thinking outside the square. This is just one example of how to make sustainable farming work for producers. Some Tasmanian farmers are exploiting the increased marketability of a product that is produced sustainably. Consumers have started to seek food that can demonstrate its journey from paddock to plate.

For some, this marketability is already working. Ultimately the goal is to enable farmers, no matter their size, to produce high-quality and high-value produce now and in the future.



Facilitator Tim Ackroyd with landholder Simon Burgess, participant in the Small Landholders Property Management Program.



Regional Strategy development



The Natural Resource Strategy for Southern Tasmania 2010–2015 (NRM Strategy) was developed in 2010 by NRM South with community input and has been the guiding document for investment, partnership development and activity for the last four years.

The current NRM strategy was built on the successes of the inaugural strategy for the region which was implemented throughout 2005–10.

This year, with funding support from the Australian Government, the foundation of a revised NRM strategy which incorporates climate change adaptation principles has been laid with work to continue throughout the next financial year.

Work this year has centred on planning and consultation with a range of stakeholders associated with the Regional Natural Resource Management Planning for Climate Change Fund, extensive work with NRM North and Cradle Coast NRM, and the commencement of stakeholder and community engagement processes.

Key challenges and opportunities of this project include collaboration with the other Tasmanian NRM regional bodies, incorporation of the latest climate science expertise and biophysical research and the delivery of a strategy which aligns with and represents the southern Tasmanian community's values and needs.

A key goal in the development of the revised NRM strategy is to strike the right balance between the level of technical detail and high-level strategy so that the new one can connect with Australian and Tasmanian Government investment priorities as well as local issues and opportunities which will guide further investment, education and positive NRM outcomes in the region.

A great deal of progress has occurred and we look forward to working with all stakeholders in the coming year to shape a strategy which is representative of the best available science and regional needs.

Highlights

Statewide principles: 'Structural Principles' have been developed and agreed across the three NRM regions of Tasmania to support alignment of NRM Strategies. This unified approach will facilitate greater utility and engagement with the strategies while still providing for regional specialisation and recognition. A policy map has been developed to catalogue the various policies, guidelines, legislation and strategies that impact on NRM which will minimise duplication and maximise opportunities to fill gaps.

Climate experts: NRM South has engaged extensively with scientific professionals from CSIRO, Bureau of Meteorology and the Southern Slopes Climate Change Adaptation Research Partnership (SCARP) around climate change projections, potential impacts and adaptation principles. This work will ensure that the new NRM Strategy is informed by solid evidence and considers the full range of climate, biophysical, social and economic factors.

Stakeholder consultation: This has included working with the other NRM regions, and national and Tasmanian professionals and experts associated with the project. The consultation process is a true two-way exchange of information, knowledge and experience and includes briefing regional stakeholders about the new strategy.

Community consultation: Initial work has focused on developing both statewide and regional approaches to community engagement to ensure the NRM Strategy will direct NRM investment effectively and provide a robust framework for local action. This includes an online engagement platform that will enable input into the developing strategy, and a survey to capture community desires relating to NRM.

Additional planning activities contributing to the development of the strategy have included:

- CSIRO climate change projections workshop
- NRM Knowledge Conference
- AdaptNRM planners workshop
- SCARP knowledge exchange workshop
- Stream 1 & 2 statewide reference group meeting
- MCAS-S software/program training



Monitoring and Reporting Resource Condition

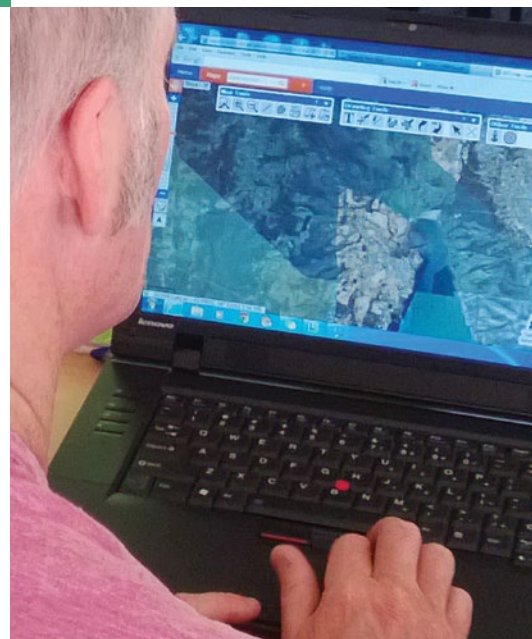
A key component of sound NRM is the effective monitoring and assessment of resource condition and associated measurement of related NRM investment. NRM South's reporting structures, systems and processes are robust and are embedded in everyday project activities enabling timely reporting on our achievements and successes to support ongoing investment in NRM.

In 2013–14, we worked to increase understanding and use of the TASVEG Vegetation Condition Assessment (VCA) methodology as a way to monitor the health of the native vegetation communities in the region. The Vegetation Health Check program was developed to gather data on resource condition in the region and also to help public and private landowners to understand the elements that contribute to healthy vegetation, in order to support evidence-based decision making for land management activities.

Highlights of the Vegetation Health Check program included delivery of accredited and refresher training courses, audit and mapping of 112 NRM South-conducted VCA sites a further 10 VCA assessments with reports provided to landholders, collation of TASVEG VCA community benchmarks data and development of a draft field entry support tool to simplify the conduct of VCAs in the field.

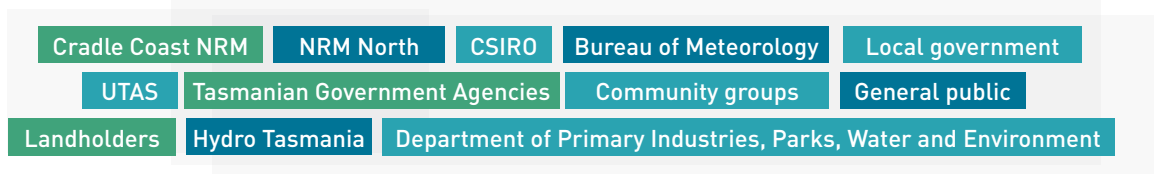
In addition to the Vegetation Health Check program NRM South has continued, in partnership with Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife and Hydro Tasmania, a frog monitoring program in the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. This project falls under our High Value Places program and is just one example of a project-based monitoring program that aims to bring multiple NRM outcomes to the region.

This year, NRM South also provided significant input into the Australia Government's new online Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement Tool (MERIT) and overall MERI processes to help streamline activity and provide greater transparency and accountability for NRM investment. Our systems have been adapted and updated to support this new tool and provide a solid foundation for effective monitoring and reporting of all our work now and into the future.



The Tasmanian Frog Conservation Project is one of the many monitoring activities undertaken this year.

Partners



North Bruny Biodiversity Fund Project

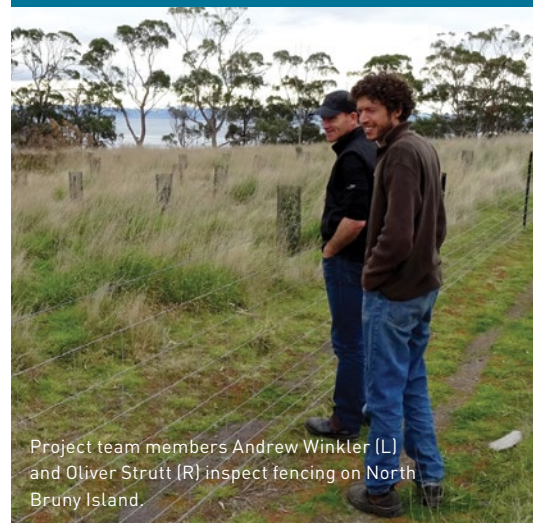


The Connecting and Restoring Threatened Vegetation Communities on North Bruny Island project (North Bruny Biodiversity Fund Project) ran from June 2012, and has focused on connecting and restoring vegetation communities and protecting habitat integral to the survival of endangered birdlife on North Bruny Island, south of Hobart.

Funded by the Australian Government through the Biodiversity Fund, the project was administered by NRM South with guidance from the Understorey Network, Kingborough Council and Conservation Volunteers Australia. The two-year project concluded this year and has achieved great results for the local community, restoration value for its threatened species, benefits to landholders as well as laying the foundation for this work to be built on in the future.

The success of the project was in no small part a result of the community consultation and engagement undertaken in the project planning stages and the coordinated delivery across the whole of North Bruny Island. 47 landholders in total were engaged across 91 sites.

This year three community training workshops took place, focussed on threatened species habitat, problem weeds and best-practice revegetation. Six vegetation condition assessments were completed, weed treatment of Gorse and Boneseed infestations undertaken, 23 new landholders involved and successful revegetation of 30 species involving more than 100 community volunteers. Fencing across 12 sites restricted stock access and enabled the protection of habitat (primarily dry White gum woodland) for the Swift Parrot and Forty-spotted Pardalote. In addition, photo point recording took place at 77 sites laying the foundation for detailed monitoring and evaluation of project outcomes over time.



Project team members Andrew Winkler (L) and Oliver Strutt (R) inspect fencing on North Bruny Island.



The waters of Bruny Island

The table below indicates works undertaken in 2013-14 and for the duration of the project.

	Revegetation (Ha)	Restoration (Ha)	Weed treatment Invasive species(Ha)	Plantings	Fencing (Km)
2013-14	50.2	76.8	321.4*	12,135	10.8
Total including 2012-13 & 2013-14	67.2	251.1	516.1*	13,325	14.0

*Inclusive of 132.7 hectares of follow-up weed treatment in 13-14.

Partners

The Understorey Network

Kingborough Council

Conservation Volunteers Australia

The North Bruny Farmers Group

Tasmanian Land Conservancy

weetaapoonaa Aboriginal Corporation

North Bruny community members



On-ground project activities were overseen by the Understorey Network under the management of a steering committee providing broad representation of local knowledge, ecological expertise and people with a long history of working in the project area.

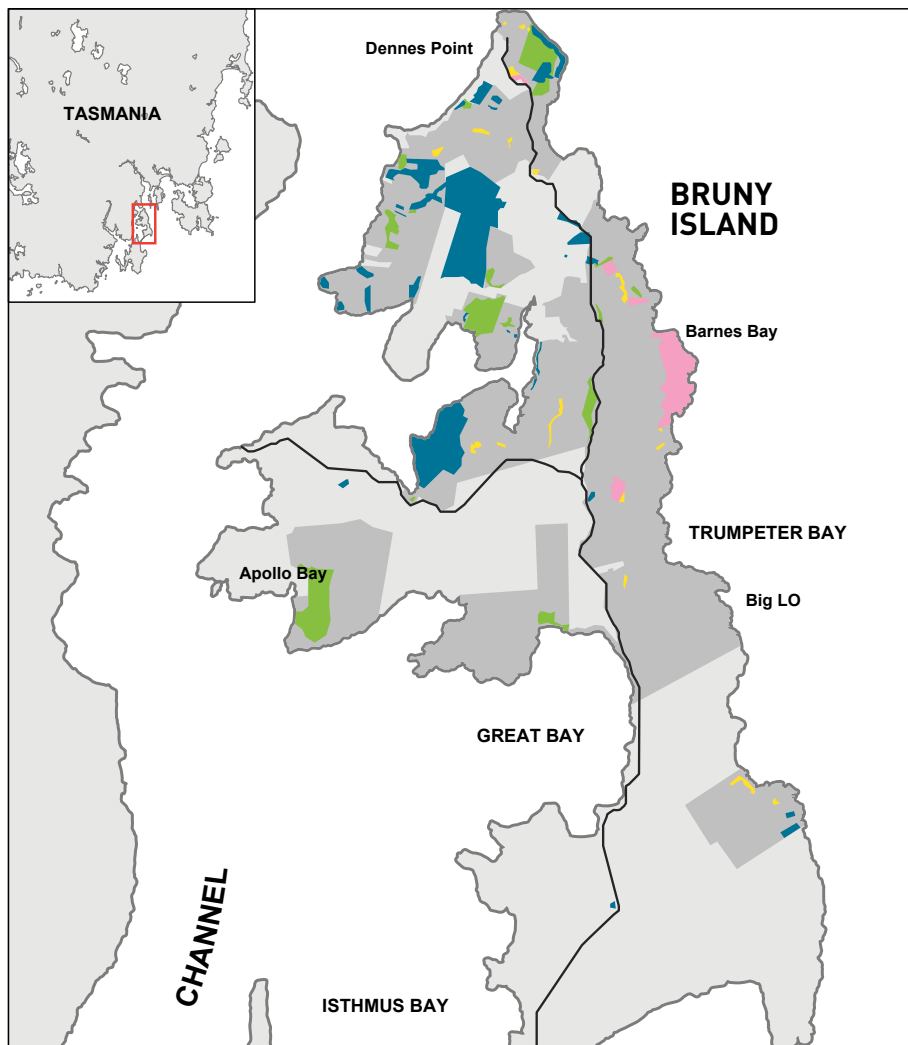
A strength of the project was the engagement and activity of members of the local farming, indigenous and business communities, general public, local and state government authorities as well as schools and environmental and volunteer groups.

North Bruny landholders contributed significant in-kind labour to project activities including fencing and property planning. One landholder in particular greatly improved project delivery by providing access to land for use as a storage location for all project materials, which proved to be a major benefit for transport costs, time and logistical complexity when working on an island dependent on ferry access.

Overall, project activities made a strong positive impact to the Bruny Island and southern Tasmanian regional economy, providing increased work for contractors, suppliers and local businesses. These benefits may reasonably be expected to continue to flow to local communities for some time as landholders engaged have committed to maintaining project works into the future, with the main farming entities contracted through 10-year management agreements with NRM South.

It is also anticipated that future land management cost savings to landholders realised through the project activities will enable some landholders to undertake investment in new initiatives.

Biodiversity Fund Round 1 Project: Connecting and Restoring Threatened Vegetation Communities & Habitat



2013-2014 On-ground Work (315.7Ha of work on 4742.11Ha properties)

- Theme 1 - Revegetation (50.2Ha)
- Theme 2 - Restoration (76.8Ha)
- Theme 3 - Weed Treatment (188.7Ha)
- Work related land parcels (4742.11Ha)
- 2012-2013 On-ground Work (386Ha)

Business Management



Delivery of effective NRM outcomes relies on the combination of skilled and passionate people to deliver the work, and the business structures to support this delivery. NRM South recognises the value of efficient management to ensure delivery of great outcomes. As a key conduit for NRM investment within the region, we require skilled people and efficient systems to enable programs, projects and grants to reach their intended targets and to deliver against priorities.

NRM South has this year recognised the need to adapt how we work as we wind down the Caring for our Country program and transition to the National Landcare Programme. We are proud to have brought together and established a team this year with the skills, expertise, commitment and capability to benefit our region.

Management structure to support staff

Within the organisation, our goal is to grow leaders for now and the future. Our philosophy is to ensure our people are adequately trained and supported and, where possible, share those opportunities with other organisations and individuals in the community. Development activities in 2013–14 have included the Tasmanian Leaders Program, technical training in the Multi-Criteria Analysis Shell for Spatial Decision Support (MCAS-S), Vegetation Condition Assessment and more. In addition, as part of ensuring a safe and healthy workforce NRM South has also continued to strengthen and further integrate Workplace Health and Safety initiatives and training into our day-to-day work.

In 2013–14, a new Leadership Team was established to work alongside Operations and Finance and in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer and Board. This team was central to the planning and delivery of work during this year and has provided stability as well as creating the space for innovation in a year filled with change.

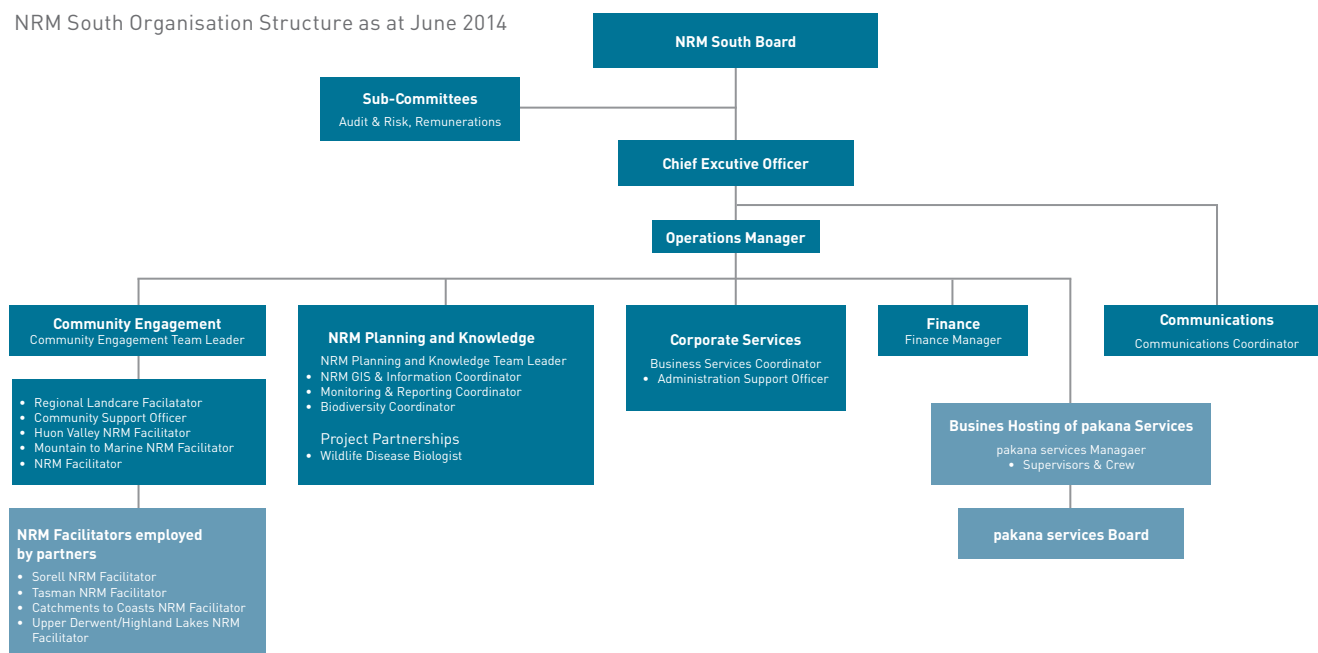
Staff changes during 2013–14 have included a new Chief Executive Officer, Donald Coventry, who commenced in January 2014, four new members of the Leadership Team and a number of new or returning staff.

Internal systems

NRM South has invested significant time in the continuous improvement of our systems during 2013–14, including refining our own monitoring and reporting systems to better meet the needs of our community. There has also been significant consultation with the Australian Government individually and through participation on a national Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) working group and a reference group for online reporting to better meet project reporting needs and communicate achievements.

We have also seen the transition to a new Sharepoint system which provides the foundation for better internal management and improves access for NRM South's Facilitator Network. In alignment with the Sharepoint development has been an audit of the current NRM South website and plans for a new site, as well the implementation of social media systems to improve accessibility of NRM information and knowledge.

NRM South Organisation Structure as at June 2014



Board and Governance

NRM South is a not-for-profit, member-based Incorporated Association. The Board was declared a Regional Committee under the Natural Resource Management Act 2002 and includes a representative of the Tasmanian Government.

Max Kitchell has chaired the Board since September 2010, supported by Howel Williams as Deputy Chair. Max has also played a leading role in NRM governance, as Chair of the Tasmanian NRM Chairs group, and more recently as Chair of NRM Regions Australia.

NRM South has two sub-committees: a Remuneration committee chaired by Max Kitchell and an Audit and Risk Committee, chaired by independent Chair, Tracy Matthews.



Left: NRM South Board (L to R): Howel Williams, Ruth Hall, Christine Crawford, Graeme Bradfield, Heather Chong, Melanie Kelly and Max Kitchell. (Missing: Greg Lehman, Angus MacNeil)

MAX KITCHELL – Chair

Max Kitchell brings over 20 years experience in senior management roles within the Tasmanian, Victorian and Australian Governments. He was formerly Director of the National Oceans Office, First Assistant Secretary of the Natural Heritage Division of the Department of Environment and Heritage, General Manager of the Resource Management and Conservation Division of the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, and Director of the Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service. Max has represented Australia as head of delegation to three United Nations conventions – Biodiversity, Desertification and Oceans. He is currently a member of the Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Council, the Tasmanian Legal Profession Disciplinary Tribunal, and is Chair of NRM Regions Australia and the National Blue Fin Tuna Management Committee.

Dr HOWEL WILLIAMS – Deputy Chair

Dr Howel Williams brings experience as a senior practitioner in the public policy aspects of natural resource management to the committee. Currently Director (Policy and Projects) in the Resource Management and Conservation Division of DPIPW, Howel is involved in a range of projects aimed at sustainable management and conservation including the Save the Tasmanian Devil Program. He has worked extensively in Australia and overseas in natural resource management. He has managed marine research institutes in Tasmania and South Australia, and has a strong background in policy relevant research. Howel has been Chair of several state and national committees advising on natural resource management and a Board member of a Cooperative Research Centre. Howel is the Tasmanian Government representative on the Board.

HEATHER CHONG

Heather is an apricot grower from the Coal River Valley and an Alderman on Clarence City Council. Because Clarence has over 190 kilometres of coastline, Heather has a strong interest in NRM, particularly around our shoreline and wetland areas. Heather is a Chartered Accountant, holds an MBA and is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She brings a range of governance and accounting experience and expertise to the NRM South Board.

Dr CHRISTINE CRAWFORD

Dr Christine Crawford has extensive experience at a state, national and international level in research and management of natural resources, especially estuarine, coastal and marine environments. She has represented Tasmania on national committees and presented at numerous international conferences on the Tasmanian marine environment, especially related to aquaculture and estuarine health. Christine is currently a part-time consultant and part-time Senior Research Fellow at the University of Tasmania. She has been a member of the Tasmanian Scientific Advisory Committee (Threatened Species), is on the Editorial Advisory Board of the international journal Aquaculture, a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Chair of the External Policy and Advisory Panel for Aquafish Cooperative Research (a USAID-funded program), and a member of NRM South's Audit and Risk Committee. Christine has a strong interest in governance, science communication and community engagement.

RUTH HALL

Ruth Hall brings an agricultural perspective to the NRM South Board. For the last five years she has worked as a private consultant on farm business management, land capability and agricultural reports, and irrigation development. Prior to this she worked in various NRM positions with local government and Greening Australia. She has an agricultural science degree from the University of Tasmania and is currently studying an MBA in agricultural innovation. Ruth and her husband, Brett, own a sheep and beef farming operation located in the Southern Midlands and the Central Highlands. Ruth is passionate about the integration of NRM values and sustainable, profitable agriculture.

MELANIE KELLY

Melanie Kelly is the Natural Resource Manager for the Glamorgan Spring Bay Council. She has a professional background in forestry with many years of experience in NRM, working both for and with community and local government. For 10 years Melanie worked as a private consultant in the NRM field both in Victoria and Tasmania. She has a strong interest in the development of novel collaborative NRM partnerships, particular those involving local government as key NRM managers and leaders in community development.

GREG LEHMAN

Greg Lehman has worked in the area of Aboriginal heritage management, training, cultural interpretation and education for over 25 years. During that time, Greg has undertaken a range of major projects for the Tasmanian and Australian Governments relating to the Register of the National Estate, National Heritage List, Aboriginal management and interpretation strategies for the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, Aboriginal heritage protection legislation, cultural fire management and ranger training in Aboriginal heritage management. He is currently a Visiting Research Fellow at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies. Greg is also a member of the Board of the National Gallery of Australia's Indigenous Advisory Council and Chair of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery's Indigenous Advisory Council.

ANGUS MacNEIL

Angus MacNeil has been employed as Business Administration Manager for the Forest Practices Authority (FPA) for the last seven years, and is also Executive Officer for the Board of the FPA. He brings a wide range of natural resource management experience from the aquaculture and forestry sectors, including 20 years working in research and senior management roles in the salmon farming industry in Scotland and Tasmania. Prior to working for the FPA he spent four years as Business Manager for Forestry Tasmania's Division of Research and Development. Angus has an honours degree in marine biology, brings governance, business and systems expertise to the Board, and is also a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

GRAEME BRADFIELD

Graeme Bradfield is a solicitor, practising in Hobart since 1983 and in private practice since 1990. He also owns and is directly involved in several agricultural businesses including Musselroe Beef in north-east Tasmania, Grove Blueberries in Huonville and Brador Investments (commercial property rental) and also in the refinery of shark liver oil. He has a keen interest in sustainable agricultural enterprises and the use of modern technology, together with scientific data to ensure that agricultural practices are carried out in a positive way for the environment. He is currently trying to scale back his legal practice so that he can dedicate more time to his business pursuits and, in line with this, he has a keen interest in the development in NRM South and the positive development of the Tasmanian environment.

Corporate members

BirdLife Tasmania
Clarence City Council
Coal River Products Association
Conservation Volunteers Australia
Derwent Catchment NRM Committee
DPIPWE
Forestry Tasmania
Foreshore Association Inc
Friends of Peter Murrell Reserves
GHD
Glamorgan Spring Bay Council
Greening Australia
Hobart City Council
Howden Landcare Group
Huon Valley Council
Hydro Tasmania
Kingborough Landcare Advisory Group
Landcare Tasmania
Midlands Tree Committee Inc
Mortimer Coastcare Group
Private Forests Tasmania
Regnans Enviro Contracting Pty Ltd
SFM Environmental Solutions
Southern Beaches Landcare/Coastcare
Southern Coastcare Association of Tasmania (SCAT)
Southern Midlands Council
Sustainable Living Tasmania
Tasman Council
Tasman Landcare Group
Tasmanian Conservation Trust
Tasmanian Seafood Industry Council
Taroona Environment Network
Timber Communities Australia
Wild Ecology

Individual Members

Heather Chong
Graham Flower
Michael Eastman
Susan Dahlberg
Corey Peterson
Dr Christine Mucha
Alistair Kay
Tammy Price
Jane Vaughan
Sue Chapple
Dagga France
Sarah Lackey



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GENERAL INFORMATION

Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc.

Principal address – 313 Macquarie Street, Hobart

Registered office – 313 Macquarie Street, Hobart

Principal Activity – Governance, organisational framework for administration and implementation of the Southern Natural Resource Strategy, as required under the Natural Resources Management Act 2002 for Southern Tasmania.

Number of full time employees – 14

Name of Auditor – BDO Audit (TAS)

BOARD MEMBERS

Throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

- Max Kitchell (Chair)
- Howel Williams (Deputy Chair)
- Christine Crawford
- Graeme Bradfield
- Melanie Kelly
- Greg Lehman
- Angus MacNeil
- Heather Chong
- Ruth Hall

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

	2014	2013	2012
	\$	\$	\$
Operating Profit	130,572	124,947	77,591
Professional Income	3,290,384	3,582,403	2,772,143
Cash at Bank	2,788,484	2,572,608	3,066,709
Trade Debtors	123,272	2,741	7,590
Current Assets	3,012,270	2,663,777	3,134,760
Non-Current Assets	135,058	120,534	159,496
Bank Overdraft	-	-	-
Trade Creditors	362,603	220,093	178,203
Current Liabilities	509,423	346,331	272,885
Non Current Liabilities	12,080	12,080	12,000

Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc.
Income Statement
For the Year ended 30 June 2014

	Note	2014 \$	2013 \$
Revenue	2	3,388,393	3,715,457
Employee Benefits Expense		1,356,651	1,302,335
Depreciation and Amortisation		58,395	63,964
Other Expenses		1,842,775	2,224,211
Profit from Operations		130,572	124,947
Reserves			
Increase/(Decrease) in Committed Projects Reserve	10	69,352	(708,419)
Total Movement in Equity of the Association		199,924	(583,472)

Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc.
Balance Sheet
For the Year ended 30 June 2014

	Note	2014 \$	2013 \$
Equity			
Committed Project Reserve		1,374,205	1,304,853
Retained Profits		1,251,620	1,121,047
Total Equity		2,625,825	2,425,900
Represented by :			
Current Assets			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	3	2,788,834	2,572,958
Trade and Other Receivables	5	189,589	69,381
Prepayments	6	33,847	21,438
		3,012,270	2,663,777
Non-Current Assets			
Property Plant & Equipment	7	135,058	120,534
Total Assets		3,147,328	2,784,311
Current Liabilities			
Trade and Other Payables	8	450,571	277,313
Provisions	9	58,852	69,018
		509,423	346,331
Non Current Liabilities			
Provisions	9	12,080	12,080
Total Liabilities		521,503	358,411
Net Assets		2,625,825	2,425,900

Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc.
Profit and Loss Statement
For the Year ended 30 June 2014

	Note	2014 \$	2013 \$
Income			
Funding and Member Receipts		3,290,384	3,582,403
Interest Received		98,009	133,054
		3,388,393	3,715,457
Expenditure			
Accountancy Fees		2,981	2,580
Advertising		5,233	4,081
Annual Leave – Provision		(10,166)	1,597
Auditor's Remuneration	11	11,100	18,200
Bank Charges		1,049	865
Board Expenses		25,904	43,389
Computer Expenses		9,685	12,606
Cleaning Expenses		8,065	7,322
Consultancy Fees		53,766	19,790
Depreciation		55,553	63,032
Fringe Benefits Tax		953	2,984
Hosting Agreements		-	-
Insurance		15,114	17,103
Legal Costs		4,741	432
Long Service Leave – Provision		-	-
Meeting Expenses		16,134	12,678
Motor Vehicle Expenses		16,297	17,211
Other Office Running Costs		22,343	31,835
Postage		1,761	1,773
Membership, Subscriptions & Fees		2,124	3,789
Rent & Occupancy Expenses		78,423	76,069
Staff Employment Costs		12,728	1,648
Service Provider & Project Expense		1,898,123	2,334,001
Staff Training		11,214	34,717
Superannuation – SGC		78,875	70,695
Telephone & Internet		14,629	13,665
Travelling Expenses		17,078	12,625
Salaries & Wages		904,114	785,823
		3,257,821	3,590,510
Operating Profit		130,572	124,947

Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc.
Statement of Cash Flow
For the Year ended 30 June 2014

	Note	2014 \$	2013 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts from Grants/Members		3,359,736	2,825,425
Payment to Suppliers		(1,909,658)	(2,222,581)
Payments to employees		(1,366,816)	(1,302,334)
GST refunded/(remitted)		107,524	98,528
Interest received		98,009	131,862
Net Cash provided by operating activities	4	288,795	(469,100)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Acquisition of plant & equipment		(72,919)	(25,001)
Reimbursement of plant & equipment		-	-
Net cash used in investing activities		(72,919)	(25,001)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		215,876	(494,101)
Cash at beginning of financial year		2,572,958	3,067,059
Cash at end of financial year	3	2,788,834	2,572,958

Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc.
Statement of Recognised Income and Expense
For the Year ended 30 June 2014

	Retained Earnings	Committed Projects Reserve	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2012	996,100	2,013,271	3,009,371
Surplus/(Deficit)	124,947	(708,419)	(583,472)
Balance at 30 June 2013	1,121,047	1,304,853	2,425,900
Surplus/(Deficit)	130,572	69,352	199,924
Revaluation Increment	-	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2014	1,251,619	1,374,205	2,625,825

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial report is a special purpose financial report that has been prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act (Tasmania).

The financial report covers Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc. as an individual entity. Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc. is an association incorporated in Tasmania under the Associations Incorporation Act.

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the association in the preparation of the financial report. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

Reporting Basis and Conventions

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs modified by the revaluation of selected non-current assets, and financial assets and financial liabilities for which the fair value basis of accounting has been applied.

Accounting Policies

a. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

b. Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related on-costs. Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. Superannuation contributions are made by the association to various complying superannuation funds and are charged as expenses when incurred.

c. Property, Plant and Equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Plant and Equipment

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses. The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by the Board to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the assets' employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have been discounted to their present values in determining recoverable amounts.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets including building and capitalised lease assets, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over their useful lives commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

Motor Vehicles	20%
Leasehold Improvements	2.5%
Plant and Equipment	10-40%
Office Equipment	10-50%
Furniture & Fittings	10-40%
Website Development	40%
Project Related Assets	20-40%

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each balance sheet date.

An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains or losses are included in the income statement. When revalued assets are sold, amounts included in the revaluation reserve relating to that asset are transferred to retained earnings.

d. Revenue

A significant proportion of the NRM South programs are supported by grants received from both the Federal and State Government. Grants are initially recognised as forming part of the Committed Projects Reserve and revenue is recognised as services are performed and conditions fulfilled. The unutilised amount of grants received is disclosed as the Committed Projects Reserve.

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

e. Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the balance sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

Cash Flows are presented in the cash flow statement on a gross basis, except for the GST component of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

f. Comparative Figures

When required by Accounting Standards, or changes in accounting policies, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

g. Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments

The Board evaluate estimates and judgements incorporated into the financial report based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the association.

Key Estimates – Impairment

The Board assesses impairment at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the group that may lead to impairment of assets. Where an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined. Value-in-use calculations performed in assessing recoverable amounts incorporate a number of key estimates.

Estimation of useful lives of assets

The incorporated association determines the estimated useful lives and related depreciation and amortisation charges for its property, plant and equipment and finite life intangible assets. The useful lives could change significantly as a result of technical innovations or some other event. The depreciation and amortisation charge will increase where the useful lives are less than previously estimated lives, or technically obsolete on non-strategic assets that have been abandoned or sold will be written off or written down.

h. Taxation

The association is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax and the Goods and Services tax (GST).

Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc.
Information Sheet
For the Year ended 30 June 2014

	2014 \$	2013 \$
2. Revenue		
Operating Revenue		
Funding and Member receipts	3,290,384	3,582,403
	3,290,384	3,582,403
Non-Operating Revenue		
Interest Received	98,009	133,054
Other Revenue	-	-
	98,009	133,054
	3,388,393	3,715,457
3. Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash on Hand	350	350
Cash at Bank – CBA Cheque Account	229,231	17,719
Cash at Bank – CBA Business Online Saver	304,635	278,012
Deposit – CBA Cash Deposit Account	2,254,618	2,276,877
Deposit – Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation	-	-
	2,788,834	2,572,958
Reconciliation of Cash		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	2,788,834	2,572,958
	2,788,834	2,572,958
4. Cash Flow Information		
Reconciliation of Cash Flow from Operations with Net Surplus		
Net Surplus for the period	199,924	(583,472)
Adjustment for Non-Cash Components in Profit :		
Depreciation	58,395	63,964
Other Non Cash Items	-	-
Changes in Assets and Liabilities		
(Increase)/Decrease in Trade and Other Receivables	(132,616)	(23,119)
Increase/(Decrease) in Trade and other Payables	173,258	70,447
Increase/(Decrease) in Provisions	(10,166)	3,080
Net cash provided by operating activities	288,795	(469,100)

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
5. Trade and Other Receivables		
Current		
Trade Debtors	123,272	2,741
Other Debtors	9,981	1,586
Provision for GST	56,336	65,054
	189,589	69,381
Total Trade and Other Receivables	189,589	69,381

6. Other		
Current		
Prepayments	33,847	21,438
	33,847	21,438

7. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Plant and Equipment	13,575	13,575
Less Accumulated Depreciation	10,710	10,007
	2,865	3,568
Office Equipment	172,083	151,127
Less Accumulated Depreciation	138,367	120,492
	33,716	30,635
Furniture and Fittings	33,943	32,282
Less Accumulated Depreciation	20,058	17,502
	13,885	14,780
Website Development	50,490	50,490
Less Accumulated Depreciation	50,123	45,077
	367	5,413
Leasehold Improvements	8,078	8,078
Less Accumulated Depreciation	1,085	883
	6,993	7,195

	2014 \$	2013 \$
Project Related Assets	105,218	105,218
Less Accumulated Depreciation	94,380	81,562
	10,838	23,656
Motor Vehicles	109,028	64,183
Less Accumulated Depreciation	47,226	30,873
	61,802	33,310
pakana services	8,369	2912
Less Accumulated Depreciation	3,777	935
	4,592	1,977
Total Property, Plant & Equipment	135,058	120,534

8. Trade and Other Payables

Current

PAYG Withholding Payable	31,663	23,940
Paid Parental Leave Liability	-	4,327
Trade Creditors	362,603	220,093
Other Creditors	56,305	28,953
Total Trade and Other Payables	450,571	277,313

9. Provisions

Current

Provision for Annual Leave	58,852	69,018
	58,852	69,018

Non Current Liabilities

Provision for Long Service Leave	12,000	12,000
pakana services – Members Guarantee Contribution	80	80
	12,080	12,080

	2014 \$	2013 \$
10. Reserves		
Committed Projects Reserve	1,374,205	1,304,853
	1,374,205	1,304,853

Movements during the year in Committed Project Reserve

The movement in the Reserve includes Grant Funds received in advance for projects.

11. Auditors Remuneration

In 2013/14 BDO Audit (Tas) were the Auditors of Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc.

Audit & review of financial reports and grant acquittal's – for 11/12 year	-	15,200
Audit & review of financial reports and grant acquittal's – for 12/13 year	11,100	3,000
	11,100	18,200

12. Operating Lease Commitments

Being for rent of office		
Payable – minimum lease payments		
Not later than 12 months	72,832	28,659
Between 12 months and 5 years	30,347	-
Greater than 5 years	-	-
	103,179	28,659

The original property lease was a lease with a five year term, with rent payable monthly in advance. The lease states that the rent be increased each year from the rent review date of 1st December in accordance with the Consumer Price Index.

An option exists to renew the lease at the end of the five year term for an additional term of two years. The additional two year term will finish on 30th November 2015.

13. Association Details

The principal place of business is:

Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc.
313 Macquarie Street, Hobart.

Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc.
Statement by Members of the Board
For the Year ended 30 June 2014

The Board has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Board the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 13

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc. as at 30 June 2014 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Southern Regional Natural Management Association Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:



Chair: **Max Kitchell**



Deputy Chair: **Howel Williams**

26.8.14

Dated

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the members of Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc.

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc, which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2014, the income statement, profit and loss statement with appropriation statement, statement of cash flows and statement of recognised income and expense for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and statement by members of the board.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Committee of the association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report, and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act 1964 (Tasmania) and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The Committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the Committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.



Opinion

In our opinion the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc as at 30 June 2014, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act 1964 (Tasmania).

Basis of Accounting

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Southern Regional Natural Resource Management Association Inc to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act 1964 (Tasmania). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

BDO Tas

BDO Audit (TAS)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'CJ Stephens', written over a horizontal line.

CRAIG J STEPHENS

Partner

Signed at Hobart, dated this 29th day of August 2014



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Acknowledgements

NRM South acknowledges the efforts of its staff, Board, partners, stakeholders and the community in undertaking the activities and initiatives highlighted in this report, and its investors including the Australian and Tasmanian Governments.

Design: Futago for annual report design with thanks to Nat Jeanneret for case study work.

Images: Thanks to the following people for the generous use of their fantastic photos of our region.

Louise Gadsby, Napelle Crane, Lyndel Wilson, Magali Wright, Eric Woehler, Sandy Leighton, John Sampson, Annie Philips, Steve Joyce, Diane Bricknell and community members who provided great photos of their work.

