

WOODLAND TENDER - General Information

What is the Project?

The Bush Returns – Woodlands Tender is a joint project of the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GBCMA) and the Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and is funded by the Australian Government’s Caring for our Country (CFoC) initiative.

This project aims to protect and improve the habitat quality of Box-Gum Grassy Woodlands, Grey Box Grassy Woodlands and Buloke Woodlands by providing landholders with funding to manage and protect threatened grassy woodland sites.

The targeted woodland communities typically occur on lower hill slopes, gently undulating and plains country with an open and grassy understorey. The overstorey is usually dominated by White Box, Yellow Box, Blakely’s Red Gum, Grey Box or Buloke, however other trees such as River Red Gum, Red Box and White Cypress Pine may also occur.

Are you Eligible to Apply?

Landholders within the Goulburn Broken Catchment with Box Gum Grassy Woodland, Grey Box Grassy Woodland or Buloke Woodland are eligible to apply. Some cleared sites may also be eligible if the site previously supported the target grassy woodlands and a significant amount of native groundcover remains.

Sites must be on private land, either freehold or leasehold. Sites that are currently receiving ongoing public funding for management (e.g. BushTender, BushBroker) are not eligible.



Bush Returns Woodlands Tender - Project Area



Funding Available

Bush Returns – Woodland Tender project recognises that assisting landholders in working towards healthy woodlands requires financial support. Landholders will be able to competitively tender for funding to manage woodlands on their property. A management plan will be prepared for the site and can assist landholders with determining their funding bid.

Funding is paid in 2 instalments over the first two years.

It is expected that successful sites requiring fencing for grazing management will have funding available through the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) Environmental Management Incentives program.

Priorities for Funding

Sites will be scored and ranked against the following criteria:

- Size of the area;
- Habitat quality;
- Landscape context;
- Cultural heritage significance;
- Biodiversity priority;
- Length of management agreement (5 years, 10 years or permanent protection through a covenant); and
- Bid price.

Sites that are larger in area, with few weeds, a native ground-layer or hollow bearing trees are likely to score better than weedy sites or sites with no large old trees. Preference will be given to sites proposing permanent protection or with an existing covenant, and where there is the potential for the site to improve the connectivity of native vegetation across the landscape.

What Types of Activities will be Funded?

A range of management activities will be eligible for funding, provided they improve the habitat quality of the site. Activities may include grazing management, weed control, pest animal control and enhancement planting. A five or ten year management plan will be developed by the field officer and will include the preferred extent and timing of specific management actions for each year of the plan.

The Process

1. Expression of Interest

Register your interest by completing an Expression of Interest form. Expression of Interest forms and information packs are available from the DSE Benalla office or by contacting Dave Smith on (03) 5761 1514 or dave.smith@dse.vic.gov.au.

2. Site Assessment

Following receipt of your Expression of Interest, a Bush Returns field officer will arrange a free, no obligation property visit. During the visit, the field officer will assess the significance and quality of your woodland site and discuss management options with you. From this discussion you will gain a better understanding of the components that will make up your funding bid and can begin to cost out your bid (e.g. weed control, rabbit control, forgone income from grazing reduction).

3. Development of draft Management Plan

Following the site visit, your field officer will prepare a draft Management Plan based on the attributes of the site, and will include the preferred method, extent and timing of management actions that you are willing to undertake for each year of the plan.

4. Receive and review your draft Management Plan

Your draft Management Plan will be sent to you for review to make changes, if required. If you wish to make any changes you must notify your field officer within seven calendar days of receiving the plan. To assist in this process, and to answer any questions you may have, your field officer will be in contact during the 7 day period.

5. Submission of a Funding Bid

Following the 7 day review period, you will have a further 14 days to submit a bid that indicates the amount of funding you are seeking to undertake the agreed actions in the Management Plan. A Tender Bid Package will accompany your management plan to help you in this process.

6. Bid Assessment

Following the close of the site assessment period, all bids received will be assessed objectively by an evaluation panel and ranked according to project priorities (see 'Priorities for Funding').



7. Management Agreements

Successful and unsuccessful landholders will be notified when the bid assessment process is completed. Successful bidders will then sign a legally binding agreement with the Goulburn Broken CMA based on the agreed management plan.

8. Payments and Reporting

Payment schedules will be set out in each management agreement, with funding paid in two instalments over the first 2 years. If successful, reporting will be a simple process completed annually.

The GBCMA may also inspect sites on an annual basis. Any breach of an agreement may result in the cessation or repayment of annual payments.