

NSW Environmental Trust
ANNUAL REPORT
2015–16

Cover photographs:

1. Magnificent buttress roots in the Cedar Brush Nature Reserve. Image courtesy of S Braithwaite/OEH.
2. Ground-nesting *Lasioglossum* native bee. Image courtesy of Dr Megan Halcroft, Bees Business.
3. Squirrel glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*). Image courtesy of Alex Bonazzi/OEH.
4. Background image: Coastal *Banksia integrifolia* and gum nuts. Image courtesy of Rosie Nicolai/OEH.

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Contents



▪ About the NSW Environmental Trust	1
▪ Highlights of 2015–16	2
Trust Programs and Achievements	5
Land Acquisition	6
Environmental Management and Restoration	7
▪ Restoration and Rehabilitation Grants	10
▪ Community Bush Regeneration Grants	13
▪ Saving our Species (SoS) Partnership Grants	15
▪ Bush Connect	17
▪ Major Restoration and Rehabilitation Projects	18
▪ Contaminated Land Management Program	21
▪ Pollution Clean-up Programs	22
Environmental Education	24
▪ Environmental Education Grants	25
▪ Eco Schools Grants	28
Environmental Research	32
▪ Environmental Research Grants	33
Lead Environmental Community Groups Program	35
Waste Less, Recycle More Initiative	36
Other Waste and Environment Programs	45
Dissemination Program	48
BioBanking Trust Fund and Offset Programs	49
Finance	51
Appendices	69
Administration of the Trust	70
▪ Internal Audit and Risk Management Attestation Statement for the 2015–2016 Financial Year for the Environmental Trust	73
Membership of the NSW Environmental Trust	75
▪ Membership of Trust Subcommittees	76
▪ Membership of Trust Technical Review Committees	78
Contact Information	81



The Honourable Mark Speakman MP
Minister for the Environment
52 Martin Place
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Minister

I have pleasure in presenting to you the 2015–16 Annual Report for the NSW Environmental Trust. The report has been prepared in accordance with the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* and the *Annual Reports (Statutory Bodies) Act 1984* for your presentation to the NSW Parliament.

In 2015–16, the Trust provided more than \$67 million for the delivery of environmental projects by a broad range of community groups, research facilities, Aboriginal organisations, schools and government agencies across the State.

Almost \$21 million was awarded through the Restoration and Rehabilitation, Saving our Species, Environmental Education, Environmental Research, Eco Schools, Lead Environmental Community Groups and Bush Connect contestable programs.

In its third year, the Waste Less, Recycle More initiative awarded more than \$31 million in grants to help communities access better recycling facilities, encourage innovation in managing priority problem wastes, expand and enhance resource recovery facilities and divert organics from landfill.

The Trust has invested in two New Government Priority programs. The first of these awarded over \$100,000 to consolidate existing knowledge, identify knowledge gaps and form recommendations as part of a systematic research review concerning bell miner associated dieback. In addition, the Trust awarded \$2.5 million to permanently protect the new 11,800-hectare Murrah Flora Reserves. The project, which will see commercial timber harvesting cease in Murrah, Mumbulla, Tanja and the southern part of Bermagui state forests, will protect native plants, Aboriginal cultural heritage, and habitat for the last remaining koala population on the NSW far south coast.

A new Data-deficient Species Research Grants program was introduced in this, the second year of the broader Saving our Species (SoS) Partnership Grants program. The Trust's investment of \$204,733 will assist co-contributing organisations to implement 30 Priority Research Actions for 20 data-deficient species, and help develop effective threatened species management through quality scientific research.

Yours sincerely

Terry Bailey
Secretary, NSW Environmental Trust
October 2016

About the NSW Environmental Trust



Functions of the Trust

The NSW Environmental Trust (the Trust) was established by the NSW Government as an independent statutory body to support projects that enhance the environment of New South Wales. Established under the *Environmental Trust Act 1998*, the Trust funds and administers grants across a diverse range of programs, including contestable grants, major projects, and various NSW Government initiatives. The Trust is administered by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH).

The Trust is chaired by the NSW Minister for the Environment. Members of the Trust are the Chief Executive of OEH and representatives from local government, the Nature Conservation Council of NSW and NSW Treasury. The Trust generally meets four times annually. Further information on administration of the Trust and its membership is provided in the appendices of this report.

The objectives of the Trust are to:

1. encourage and support restoration and rehabilitation projects in both the public and private sectors that will, or are likely to, prevent or reduce pollution, the waste stream or environmental degradation, of any kind, within any part of New South Wales
2. promote research in both the public and private sectors into environmental problems of any kind and, in particular, to encourage and support:
 - research into and development of local solutions to environmental problems
 - discovery of new methods of operation for NSW industries that are less harmful to the environment
 - research into general environmental problems
 - assessment of environmental degradation

3. promote environmental education and, in particular, to encourage the development of educational programs in both the public and private sectors that will increase public awareness of environmental issues of any kind
4. fund the acquisition of land for national parks and other categories of dedicated and reserved land for the national parks estate
5. fund the declaration of areas for marine parks and related purposes
6. promote waste avoidance, resource recovery and waste management (including funding enforcement and regulation, and local government programs)
7. fund environmental community groups
8. fund the purchase of water entitlements for the purposes of increasing environmental flows for the State's rivers, and restoring or rehabilitating major wetlands.

The Trust's staff are employed within the grants section of the Regional Operations Group of OEH. For issues of compliance (such as disability inclusion action plans, workforce diversity, multicultural policies and services, work health and safety etc.) refer to the OEH Annual Report for 2015–16.

Highlights of 2015–16



In 2015–16, the Trust spent more than \$67 million on the delivery of environmental projects. Projects were delivered by community groups, research facilities, Aboriginal organisations, schools, and State and local government agencies.

Acquiring and managing land for conservation

In 2015–16 the Land Acquisition Program supported \$5.03 million worth of strategic high conservation value land purchases.

Twelve properties, covering more than 3472 hectares, were acquired through a voluntary acquisition process, including 2348 hectares acquired for their contribution to the protection of culturally important landscapes and places. Other acquisitions have increased species connectivity and improved the effectiveness or efficiency of conservation management.

Eight new biobank sites had investments within the BioBanking Trust Fund in the 2015–16 financial year, bringing the total number of sites managed to 44 and resulting in investments of more than \$50 million. The Trust will be the BioBanking Trust Fund Manager until July 2017.

Major projects and programs

Major projects provide the Trust with the opportunity to strategically invest in addressing large-scale and highly complex issues. The Trust made decisions about a number of new major programs and projects in 2015–16:

- The Trust approved \$105,000 in funding for a systematic review of research on bell miner associated dieback. This New Government Priority grant will consolidate existing knowledge, identify knowledge gaps and result in recommendations for a strategic approach to the issue in New South Wales.
- The Trust approved over \$2.5 million for a New Government Priority project that protects native plants, Aboriginal cultural heritage, and important habitat for the last remaining koala population on the NSW far south coast. Commercial timber harvesting will cease in Murrah, Mumbulla, Tanja and the southern part of Bermagui state forests (now known as the Murrah Flora Reserves) and the area will be permanently protected as an 11,800-hectare flora reserve, managed by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). The project will fund access to alternative timber supply sources in order to maintain supply under current contracts.
- The Trust approved two new grants for enhancing the natural values of the state's roadside reserves and travelling stock routes (TSRs). This network of linear reserves contains valuable remnant vegetation and many threatened species. Local Land Services (LLS) was awarded a grant of \$4.75 million to assess the conservation significance of all TSRs, and to put in

place management systems that retain and enhance conservation values. Local Government NSW will receive more than \$2 million to partner with councils to develop a framework that integrates roadside reserve management into operational plans. Councils will be eligible to apply for grants to trial the framework locally.

Protecting threatened species

This was the second year of the \$10-million Saving our Species (SoS) Partnership Grants program, which included the establishment of the new Data-deficient Species Research Grants program. The Trust awarded more than \$3.7 million for four projects targeting 12 landscape-managed species, which attracted consortium contributions of more than \$5.3 million. Under the new research program for data-deficient species, the Trust funded two projects for \$204,733, with co-contributions of \$256,550. This will help implement 30 Priority Research Actions for 20 data-deficient species. It will also inform the development of effective management actions through quality scientific research to secure target threatened species in the wild.

Supporting ecological restoration

2015–16 was the first year of the Bush Connect contestable program, valued at \$8 million over six years. The program funds community-driven, consortium-based projects along the Great Eastern Ranges (GER) corridor, with an emphasis on direct, on-ground activities. It supports 10-year long projects, which are jointly funded by the Trust and project applicants during the first six years. The applicant then provides cash or in-kind contributions, or both, to deliver the final four years.

This year, the Trust approved 16 projects valued at more than \$7.5 million with co-contributions to the value of more than \$25.6 million. Works will include revegetation, fencing, artificial habitat installation and assisted natural regeneration, and will build landholder and local community capacity.

Education and capacity building

The Lead Environmental Community Groups (LECG) program attracted 24 applications requesting approximately \$3.5 million in funding, demonstrating strong interest from the non-government organisation (NGO) sector. The program supports new or existing programs that develop or widen the community's knowledge, skills and participation in protecting the environment. This year, the Trust awarded 15 grants worth more than \$1.2 million. Funded projects were approved until 2016–17.

Promoting waste avoidance and sustainability

The Waste Less, Recycle More (WLRM) grants, which commenced in 2013–14, are continuing. In collaboration with the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), the Trust

delivered workshops and webinars to assist organisations wishing to apply for WLRM grants, or to assist successful grantees with monitoring and evaluation. Achievements as at December 2015 include delivery of 38 extra kerbside organics collection programs, funding for facilities to process almost 2 million tonnes more waste and the creation of 741 new jobs. This year, the Trust approved a range of contestable grants worth more than \$31 million across a variety of programs:

- Under the Community Recycling Centres Program, 10 grants worth approximately \$1.7 million were awarded.
- The Local Government Organics Collection Systems Program saw seven projects worth approximately \$3.5 million awarded.
- In this round of the Organics Infrastructure (Large and Small) Program, 23 grants were awarded, worth more than \$12.7 million.
- The Love Food Hate Waste Program saw 10 projects worth more than \$324,000 awarded.
- Through the Resource Recovery Facility Expansion and Enhancement Program, 8 grants were awarded to the value of more than \$3.9 million.
- In its first round, the Innovation in Priority Problem Wastes Management Program saw 18 projects awarded worth approximately \$6.3 million.
- Under the Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvement Program, 26 grants worth nearly \$3 million were awarded.

Contestable programs

In 2015–16, 204 contestable grants from the Restoration and Rehabilitation, Saving our Species, Environmental Education, Environmental Research, Eco Schools, Lead Environmental Community Groups and Bush Connect programs were awarded, to a value of nearly \$21 million.

Trust Programs and Achievements



Land Acquisition

The NSW Environmental Trust funds the acquisition of land for national parks and other categories of dedicated and reserved land for the national parks estate through section 7(d) of the *Environmental Trust Act 1998*.

In 2015–16, the Land Acquisition program supported \$5.03 million worth of strategic high conservation value land purchases administered by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). Twelve properties covering more than 3472 hectares were acquired through a voluntary acquisition process. These acquisitions focused on important conservation themes, including:

- effective and efficient management of parks
- connectivity conservation
- culturally important landscapes and places.

Effective and efficient management of parks

NPWS has a program through which it incrementally acquires land within or on the perimeter of some parks to improve their conservation management effectiveness or efficiency.

This year, NPWS purchased six properties totalling 514 hectares to achieve this objective. These lands are largely naturally vegetated, provide habitat and secure legal or practical access to the park.

This allows a more holistic approach to pest and weed management and provides clearer park boundaries which fosters better relations with neighbours.



Aboriginal Art in a sandstone cave in Yengo National Park, to which 203.15 hectares were added through the Land Acquisition Program

Acquisitions included land for addition to Bundjalung National Park (0.55 hectares), Eusdale Nature Reserve (17.87 hectares), Nattai National Park (203.40 hectares), Tallaganda National Park (89.03 hectares) and Yengo National Park (203.15 hectares across two properties).

Connectivity conservation

Connectivity conservation aims to connect habitats or protect, maintain or restore existing connections in the landscape. This helps species and communities move between habitats and allows them to progressively adjust their ranges in response to threats such as climate change, drought and fire. In 2015–16, two properties totalling more than 610 hectares were acquired.

This included around 518 hectares south-east of Tamworth, which are an addition to Ben Halls Gap Nature Reserve. The land varies in altitude which means that a greater diversity of habitat can be protected within the park.

On the Liverpool Range located north-west of Scone, around 92 hectares of warm temperate rainforest was acquired to help link Towarri National Park with Cedar Brush Nature Reserve. This helps protect habitat for several threatened species including the koala, glossy black-cockatoo, powerful owl and parma wallaby.

Culturally important landscapes and places

This year four properties totalling more than 2348 hectares were acquired for their contribution to the protection of important places. Land was acquired for addition to Blue Mountains National Park (more than 42 hectares across two properties), Culgoa National Park (1382 hectares) and Macquarie Marshes Nature Reserve (more than 924 hectares). One of these acquisitions is summarised below.

Culgoa National Park lies in north-west New South Wales, 27 kilometres north of Weilmoringle. Some 1382 hectares of land adjacent to the national park was acquired because of its significant cultural benefit for the Aboriginal communities of Weilmoringle, Goodooga, Brewarrina, Bourke and the traditional custodians, the Murrwarri People. The land surrounds the former Aboriginal reserve of Dennawan. It contains significant archaeological and historical evidence of when the property functioned as a pastoral labour camp servicing surrounding properties. This land will provide opportunities for Aboriginal people to celebrate, practice and renew their culture through improved access to, and participation in caring for their Country.

Environmental Management and Restoration

This suite of programs funds relevant community and government projects in order to enhance and restore the environment and reduce pollution and environmental degradation.

Each year the contestable Restoration and Rehabilitation grants streams offer a total of \$2 million in funding to community groups, \$2 million in funding to government organisations and up to \$500,000 in funding to Aboriginal organisations (Protecting our Places). In 2015–16, the Protecting our Places (POP) program underwent an independent evaluation, with the program placed on hold for this year. The evaluation recommendations will be considered in the implementation of the next round of the program.

Other environmental management and restoration initiatives include Saving our Species (SoS) Partnership grants, large-scale Community Bush Regeneration grants, Bush Connect grants, Restoration and Rehabilitation grants for State Heritage Register listed properties and Major Restoration and Rehabilitation projects.

The Trust is continuing its leadership in delivery of environmental grants programs by investing in a range of ecological restoration programs with 10-year time frames for completion or minimal continued intervention, with approximately 80% of resources needed within the first six years.

Achievements

Here are some of the notable outcomes that have been achieved this year:

- Improvement of conservation outcomes across more than five hectares of north coast wetlands through fencing, retention of water on 35 hectares of wetlands and off-stream watering to protect more than 17 hectares of riparian corridor. The release of the *Salvinia* Weevil biocontrol and local landholder engagement also protected key riparian areas, improved biodiversity values and water quality and provided opportunities for sustainable wet-pasture grazing regimes.
- Successful tackling of African lovegrass on high-priority conservation lands on the Cumberland Plain by trialling fire and herbicide combination treatments, with wide dissemination to relevant stakeholders.
- Reduction of the density and severity of environmental weeds at 23 sites across suburban Byron Bay, covering 40 hectares. Community awareness about the threats posed by dumping garden waste in urban bushland was increased.
- Restoration of an area supporting an endangered population of the vulnerable squirrel glider in Wagga Wagga, while also enhancing community access, raising awareness and encouraging support for biodiversity conservation.

Restoration and Rehabilitation Program outcomes

With almost 90% now complete, grants projects awarded in 2011 (and completing in this financial year) have planted over 171,036 native plants across a total of 78 hectares. Efforts to combat invasive weeds, including lantana, African olive and salvinia, have helped to regenerate 1655 hectares. The projects have been supported by 2539 volunteers who have contributed 122,854 hours of their time and 182 stakeholders who have improved their agricultural land management practices. The weeping myall, fine-leaved tuckeroo, eastern freshwater cod, purple spotted gudgeon, squirrel glider, yellow-bellied glider, sooty owl, superb parrot and koala are some of the species benefiting from these projects.

Progress reports received from the 2012 funding show that 148,903 native trees, shrubs and grasses have been planted across almost 780 hectares. Regeneration is now reported on almost 1650 hectares following weeding and other restoration activities such as clean-up and waste removal. Almost 2700 volunteers have given 57,928 hours and 202 stakeholders have adopted improved land management practices.

The glossy black-cockatoo, Major Mitchell's cockatoo, speckled warbler, koala and common blossom-bat are among the species expected to benefit from projects funded in 2013. So far more than 700 hectares of the combined project area is showing signs of regeneration, and 68 hectares have been planted with more than 39,400 native plants. Improved land management practices have already been adopted by 176 stakeholders, and more than 1133 volunteers have contributed almost 25,000 hours.

Table 1

Restoration and Rehabilitation grant outcomes 2011–2013

Project measures	2011 Projected*	2011 Actual	2012 Projected*	2012 Actual	2013 Projected*	2013 Actual
Area of vegetation corridors (hectares)	173	149	124	196	147	114
Area of vegetation connected due to establishment of the corridor (hectares)	324	259	2,955	1,560	648	1,068
Organisations or stakeholders adopting improved land management practices	81	182	239	202	386	176
Area regenerated (hectares)	1,376	1,655	1,705	1,649	1,413	721
Area revegetated (hectares)	72	78	852	779	182	68
Number of new plantings	140,069	171,036	179,910	148,903	123,633	39,497
Number of volunteers	1,404	2,539	1,623	2,698	1,131	1,133
Number of volunteer hours	72,146	122,854	55,921	57,928	35,923	24,848
Percentage of projects completed	89%		34%		18%	

* Some projections may vary from those previously published due to projects withdrawing, reserve projects being funded and/or variations resulting from adaptive management during project life cycles. Restoration and Rehabilitation grants run for up to three years.

Outcomes for projects funded in 2014 will be reported in subsequent annual reports.

■ CASE STUDY

Go with the Flow

The NSW Department of Primary Industries (Fisheries) (DPI Fisheries) Go with the Flow project has rehabilitated 300 hectares of previously drained wetlands in northern New South Wales and is continuing to inspire the active participation of neighbouring landholders in ongoing wetland restoration actions.

Most coastal freshwater wetlands on the Richmond River floodplain were drained for agriculture over the past century and suffer poor water quality from acid sulfate soils, which can lead to fish kills downstream.

Through a NSW Environmental Trust grant, DPI Fisheries worked with four landholders to install simple structures to raise water levels in historically drained wetlands near Coraki in northern New South Wales. They conducted detailed site assessments and negotiated a permit for dredging and reclamation on one site identified as key fish habitat. They engaged relevant stakeholders from the beginning, including neighbouring landholders and the local council.

New water control structures were installed which allow landholders to regulate water levels. Landholders were trained to use these structures to retain water on their swamp country during dry seasons and release excess surface water during very wet periods.

These landholders, who can now control the amount of fresh water in their privately-owned wetlands, have reported major improvements in growth of nutritious wet pastures for livestock, and more frequent sightings of waterbirds. Around 300 hectares of wetlands now have higher surface water levels; this also improves natural wetland conditions and water quality for the catchment. Reduced volumes of acidic discharge now enter the estuary from all four farms thanks to the project. There has been a 25% increase in enquiries from farmers about maintaining water in wetlands to improve on-farm productivity and biodiversity values.

DPI Fisheries did encounter some setbacks, including technical issues relating to soil acidity measurement and wet



A new water control structure during the installation process. Landholders now use these structures to regulate water levels

weather delays at some sites. Maintaining communication with contractors was vital, so they were ready to install the works as soon as it became dry enough to do so. Longer project timeframes would have offered more flexibility.

DPI Fisheries delivered the project in partnership with WetlandCare Australia and North Coast LLS, and also received funding from Catchment Action NSW and the Australian Government.

'The NSW Environmental Trust funding was the catalyst for this exciting, collaborative project', Simon Walsh, Fisheries Manager, DPI Fisheries said. 'Not only has it resulted in great on-ground outcomes for the landholders involved, but North Coast LLS and WetlandCare are continuing to partner with us to deliver similar environmental restoration works on other properties, which is a terrific outcome for regional river health.'

Restoration and Rehabilitation Grants

The Restoration and Rehabilitation Program offers grants of up to \$100,000 to community organisations (total of \$2 million) and government agencies (total of \$2 million) for projects that enhance and restore the environment. However, due to high demand and many strong applications, the Trust has again allocated additional funding for Restoration and Rehabilitation projects this year.

This was the second and final year the Trust awarded grants under its Restoration and Rehabilitation heritage grants stream. This stream focuses on sites listed on the NSW State Heritage Register and aims to build the capacity of land managers to maintain and restore natural heritage values on their properties.

In 2015–16, the Trust received 146 applications for the government and community Restoration and Rehabilitation grants, requesting a total of \$11,866,913. This includes 10 applications for the heritage funding stream, requesting \$858,767.

The Trust approved funding for 24 community projects to the value of \$2,299,529 (Table 2) and 26 projects in the government stream, totalling \$2,426,586 (Table 3). The Trust approved six grants for the heritage stream, with a total funding amount of \$532,996 (Table 4).

Table 2

Restoration and Rehabilitation community grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Armidale Urban Rivercare Group	Centennial Avenue rehabilitation of Dumaresq Creek	Armidale Dumaresq ^A	\$83,700
Australian River Restoration Centre	Rivers of carbon – Breadalbane biodiversity linkages	Goulburn– Mulwaree	\$99,950
Big Scrub Rainforest Landcare Group Inc.	Saving critically endangered lowland subtropical rainforest	Ballina	\$100,000
Coffs Harbour Regional Landcare Inc.	Green Bluff to South Moonee: restoring key habitat and connectivity	Coffs Harbour	\$77,330
Conservation Volunteers Australia	Restoring coastal EECs and threatened species habitat at Glenrock	Newcastle ^A	\$99,330
EnviTE Inc.	Restoration of Fleay's barred frog habitat in Nightcap National Park	Lismore	\$100,000
EnviTE Inc.	Restoring the natural values of the Yuraygir coastline	Clarence Valley	\$100,000
Friends of the Koala Incorporated	Enhancing Lismore wildlife refuges and corridors for threatened species	Lismore	\$99,200
Greening Australia Capital Region	Glossy black-cockatoo connections	Palerang ^A	\$96,730
Holbrook Landcare Group	Habitat restoration for the southern pygmy perch	Greater Hume	\$98,771
Hovells Creek Landcare Group Inc.	Habitat restoration at the grassy box gum – K2W flyways interface	Boorowa ^A	\$89,990
Macleay Landcare Network Inc.	Protecting and connecting coastal habitat corridors at Mount Yarrahapinni	Kempsey	\$99,848
Manning Landcare Inc.	Browns Creek restoration – Phase 2	Greater Taree ^A	\$99,595
Murrumbidgee Landcare Association Incorporated	Caring for paddock sentinels	Wagga Wagga	\$99,490
National Parks Association of NSW Inc.	Bringing the buzz back to the Cumberland Plain Woodland	Various	\$98,965
Nimbin Rocks Cooperative Landcare Group	Restoring high conservation value habitat in the Nimbin Rocks area	Lismore	\$100,000
Northern Rivers Fire and Biodiversity Consortium	Protecting and restoring Toonumbar from bell miner associated dieback	Kyogle	\$99,800

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Southern New England Landcare Ltd	Closing the gap: functional habitat for threatened New England fauna	Armidale Dumaresq [^]	\$99,998
Sydney Institute of Marine Science (SIMS)	Large-scale restoration of underwater forests in Sydney	Various	\$94,947
The Mulloon Institute Limited	Restoration of Mulloon Catchment to protect its ecosystems	Goulburn–Mulwaree	\$100,000
Tilba District Landcare	Saving our warty zieria: Zieria tuberculata protection project	Eurobodalla	\$98,854
Tweed Landcare	Filling biodiversity gaps connecting Tweed Coast to Border Ranges – Stage 2	Tweed	\$100,000
WetlandCare Australia Pty Ltd	Restoring threatened species habitat at Belmont Wetlands State Park	Lake Macquarie	\$99,608
Wolli Creek Preservation Society NSW Inc.	Paperbark Creek: restoration of a neglected catchment – Phase 3	Canterbury [^]	\$63,423
		Total	\$2,299,529

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–16 financial year and may now operate under a different name.
LGA: local government area

Table 3

Restoration and Rehabilitation State and local government grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Bellingen Shire Council	Newry Island foreshore rehabilitation S 1 – Kalang River estuary	Bellingen	\$100,000
Byron Shire Council	Bangalow Weir remediation works	Byron	\$100,000
Campbelltown City Council	Protecting, restoring and enhancing threatened species habitat for the green and golden bell frog	Campbelltown	\$83,600
Canterbury City Council	Reconnecting and restoring Wolli Creek riparian corridor – Stages 1 and 2	Canterbury [^]	\$99,050
Coffs Harbour City Council	Maintaining diversity on Coffs Coast themed coastal headlands	Coffs Harbour	\$100,000
Cooma-Monaro Shire Council	Improve water quality and habitat value within Cooma waterways	Cooma Monaro	\$99,806
Gloucester Shire Council	Eradicating African olive towards regional/state containment lines	Gloucester [^]	\$92,425
Great Lakes Council	Wetland and foreshore restoration – Lower Wallamba River	Great Lakes [^]	\$91,349
Greater Taree City Council	Manning Valley lowland rainforest restoration project	Taree [^]	\$77,770
Hurstville City Council	Restoring riverwood wetlands	Hurstville [^]	\$81,800
Hunter Councils Inc.	Improving condition and resilience of Lower Hunter dry rainforest	Cessnock	\$99,618
Inverell Shire Council	Improving the condition of the Border Rivers EECs through containing the spread of harrisia cactus	Inverell	\$69,517
Lismore City Council	Koala habitat restoration in the north-west of Lismore LGA	Lismore	\$100,000
Murray Local Land Services	Building the resilience and capacity of native seed production areas	Various	\$96,150

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Muswellbrook Shire Council	'Club to club' Muscle Creek restoration	Muswellbrook	\$100,000
New England Weeds Authority	Tackling Mexican water lily in the Oxley Wild Rivers Catchment – northern NSW	Armidale Dumaresq [^]	\$53,470
Northern Tablelands Local Land Services	Protecting biodiversity on travelling stock reserves (TSRs) in the NTLLS region	Various	\$99,600
NSW Department of Primary Industries	Bringing back the snags to the Coldstream River on the Clarence	Clarence Valley	\$99,804
Office of Environment and Heritage	Habitat enhancement and restoration of endangered woodland in Dananbilla	Young [^]	\$96,350
Office of Environment and Heritage	Restoring Big Island seabird nesting habitat for burrowing birds	Wollongong [^]	\$100,000
Riverina Local Land Services	Protection and connectivity for endangered Wagga squirrel gliders	Wagga Wagga	\$90,562
Shoalhaven City Council	Heritage estates erosion control on public land	Shoalhaven	\$100,000
South East Local Land Services	Cutting the coral: core improvements for the Minnamurra River	Kiama	\$98,930
Tweed Shire Council	Rous River riparian restoration	Tweed Shire	\$100,000
Tweed Shire Council	Investing in the future of Pottsville's koalas	Tweed Shire	\$99,285
Wyong Shire Council	Mount Alison reserve rehabilitation and management	Wyong [^]	\$97,500
		Total	\$2,426,586

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–6 financial year and may now operate under a different name.

Table 4

Restoration and Rehabilitation heritage grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Centennial Parklands Foundation	Saving an endangered ecological community – eastern suburbs banksia scrub	Randwick [^]	\$88,550
Duffys Forest Residents Association Inc.	Rehabilitation of a heritage-listed icon at the Home of Skippy	Warringah [^]	\$98,062
Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council	Restoring traditional Aboriginal yamfields along the Bundian Way	Bega Valley	\$100,000
Hungry Point Trust	Restoration of Hungry Point (Cronulla) Port Hacking remnant littoral rainforest	Sutherland	\$64,520
Hunters Hill Municipal Council	Habitat restoration along the lower Parramatta River estuary	Hunters Hill [^]	\$98,964
Maitland City Council	Weed control and revegetation around a historical lake in Maitland	Maitland [^]	\$82,900
		Total	\$532,996

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–6 financial year and may now operate under a different name.

Community Bush Regeneration Grants

Now in its fourth year, the \$10 million Community Bush Regeneration Program assists community groups to work together to strategically tackle restoration projects at a regional scale. It comprises the Community Bush Regeneration Program large-project stream administered by the Trust, and the Private Land Conservation Program for which the Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife is funded.

The Community Bush Regeneration Program large-project stream provides funding over six years, allowing community groups to achieve enduring environmental outcomes over a longer time frame than is possible under the Restoration and Rehabilitation Program, where funding is awarded for a maximum of three years.

Community Bush Regeneration Program

The objectives of the Community Bush Regeneration Program large-project stream are to:

- regenerate degraded natural areas, including bushland, riverbanks, degraded waterways and rare and endangered ecosystems
- improve the health and resilience of important ecosystems and habitats of rare and endangered plants and animals
- improve ecological connectivity within and between natural areas
- improve the capacity of local community groups to protect, restore and enhance the environment by strengthening those organisations whose primary purpose is to undertake environmental works in their local area.

All 34 projects funded in 2011–12 are now four years into their six-year life span. Weeding activities have continued, with grantee efforts seeing a total of 3732 hectares of degraded bushland starting to naturally recover. Where a viable native seedbank was not present, more than 98,720 grass, shrub and tree tubestock have been planted to restore native habitat so far. Collectively these activities have now helped to establish 61,769 hectares of connected vegetation across terrestrial, riparian and wetland vegetation communities.

Since the projects funded by this program began, more than 4538 volunteers have given over 196,344 hours of their time. Funding has also enabled grantees to so far employ 352 professional contractors, who have provided over 102,192 hours toward bush regeneration – related activities. More than 3714 primary, secondary and tertiary students have been involved in the program, contributing a total 11,600 hours.

Some program achievements are highlighted in the Port Macquarie Landcare Group project case study below.

Private Land Conservation Grants program

The Trust has funded the Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife (FNPW) to enhance its existing Private Land Conservation Grants (PLCG) program. This conservation program is designed to support landholders with voluntary conservation agreements to restore and maintain conservation values. The program is now in its fifth year.

In 2015–16, FNPW received 135 applications from landholders, seeking \$893,973 to improve and protect the biodiversity of their land. This is a significant increase from last year, when 75 applications requesting \$584,526 were made. This increase was partly due to the introduction of a new grant category for landholders under the Land for Wildlife and Wildlife Land Trust programs to apply for funds to undertake on-ground conservation activities.

In 2015–16, FNPW awarded funds to 63 projects totalling more than \$362,645, including:

- funding of more than \$252,571 to grantees with in-perpetuity conservation protection agreements on their land
- more than \$89,719 to grantees with less binding conservation agreements
- \$20,355 for funding for training, education and field days in land conservation for eight grantees.

FNPW is highly efficient in delivering the PLCG program, reaching many stakeholders who are protecting and restoring the environment and in turn achieving important on-ground conservation outcomes. The Trust has previously established a funding model that enables it to allocate additional funds of up to \$500,000 to the program in any year, if funds are available. This also allows the Trust to target the additional funds to specific environmental priorities. In 2015–16, the Trust awarded \$500,000 to FNPW (Table 5), which will be incorporated into the 2017 round of funding.

Table 5

Community Bush Regeneration: Private Land Conservation grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife	Community Bush Regeneration Private Land Conservation Supplementary Funding 2015–16	Various	\$500,000
Total			\$500,000

■ CASE STUDY

Port Macquarie’s Yarrabee and Wrights Creek rehabilitation

A stone’s throw from popular swimming beaches, Yarrabee and Wrights Creeks drain a significant portion of the eastern urban area of Port Macquarie, before merging with Kooloonbung Creek and the Hastings River in the heart of town. The two creeks support 56 hectares of riparian vegetation which buffers the waterways from the impacts of the local urban environment. These riparian corridors contain three endangered ecological communities, providing habitat for more than 12 species of endangered plants and animals. Over time, the vegetation corridors have experienced significant weed incursions, primarily from garden ‘escapees’ as well as several common north coast weed species including camphor laurel.

For the past four years, Port Macquarie Landcare Group has been working in partnership with Port Macquarie City Council to regenerate these corridors with the help of the Trust’s Community Bush Regeneration Program. To date 218 volunteers have contributed 24,579 hours toward weed control, planting and educational events. Bush regenerators continue to provide professional on-ground support including weed removal and volunteer training.

The group has been working strategically from the upper catchments and moving gradually downstream, which has reduced the weed seeds at their upstream starting points. The riparian corridor is displaying excellent natural regeneration in most areas, supplemented by planting where help is needed. The project is well on the way to achieving long-term lasting environmental outcomes.



Over four years the Port Macquarie Landcare Group has transformed many formerly weedy areas, including this roadside site, which is now a regenerating native bushland corridor

‘This year was the most interesting year to date as we were able to see all the hard work of the previous three years start to really pay off. The shorter time frame projects would not have allowed this project to succeed as it has. The process that we have used is proving most successful (Ralph Woodford method) and we recommend it to any large-scale projects where rainforest restoration is involved. This project was also instrumental in having local council instigate a systematic removal of camphor laurel across the LGA. They have put aside \$40,000 each year for this purpose. A great spin-off result for this project and for the environment.’

Estelle Gough – President Port Macquarie Landcare Group Inc

Saving our Species (SoS) Partnership Grants

The Saving our Species (SoS) Partnership Grants program funds coordinated, multiple stakeholder partnerships between government, non-government, community organisations and industry to protect and conserve threatened plant and animal species in the wild within New South Wales. This \$10-million program offers funding over two major rounds, and in 2015–16 the Trust established a small research program for data-deficient species. All funded projects align with the objectives of the NSW Government's SoS program.

The two major rounds support a number of 10-year projects of between \$300,000 and \$1 million and provide technical support for grantees. The Trust and applicant fund up to 80% of the total project cost in the first six years, with the remaining 20% committed solely by the applicant over the following four years.

Round 2 this year focused on landscape-managed species. In September 2015, the Trust received 25 expressions of interest (EOIs), seeking \$21,127,700 of funding with consortium co-contributions totalling \$33,049,875. Nine applicants were then invited to develop full business plans, with the Trust awarding seed funding of up to \$15,000 for seven of the consortium applications, totalling \$93,000 (Table 6).

The Trust received nine high-quality business plans, requesting \$8,126,071 with consortium co-contributions of \$15,387,404 to address a diverse range of threatened species.

The Trust approved four projects requesting \$3,717,688 (Table 7) with consortium contributions of \$5,369,022. Under these approved projects 12 landscape-managed species will be targeted.

To be implemented over three years, the new Data-deficient Species Research Grants program seeks to increase knowledge on distribution, ecology and threats for data-deficient species in New South Wales. It will also inform the development of effective management actions through quality scientific research to secure target threatened species in the wild.

The Trust received four applications seeking \$623,380, with co-contributions totalling \$799,950. The Trust approved two projects requesting funding of \$204,733, (Table 8) with co-contributions of \$256,550. These projects aim to implement 30 Priority Research Actions for 20 data-deficient species.

Table 6

Saving our Species Partnership business plan seed funding awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Total
Australian National University	Saving our swift parrots and threatened woodland species	Various	\$15,000
Central Tablelands Local Land Services	Swamped by threats: conserving threatened species of upland swamps	Various	\$15,000
Federation University	Securing viable populations of 17 threatened species in scotia mallee	Various	\$13,000
Jaliigirr Biodiversity Alliance Inc.	Jaliigirr securing a future for hollow-dependent fauna	Various	\$15,000
Northern Tablelands Local Land Services	Turtles forever: securing the NSW population of Bell's turtle	Various	\$15,000
NSW Department of Primary Industries	Securing threatened bats via monitoring and citizen scientists	Various	\$10,000
South East Local Land Services	Save our scarlet robin	Various	\$10,000
		Total	\$93,000

Table 7

Saving our Species Partnership grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Total
Australian National University	Saving our swift parrots and threatened woodland species	Wyong [^] and Wagga Wagga	\$1,000,000
Central Tablelands Local Land Services	Swamped by threats: conserving threatened species of upland swamps	Lithgow and Blue Mountains	\$742,500
Northern Tablelands Local Land Services	Turtles forever: securing the NSW population of Bell's turtle	Uralla	\$985,191
South East Local Land Services	Save our scarlet robin	Various	\$989,997
		Total	\$3,717,688

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–16 financial year and may now operate under a different name.

Table 8

Saving our Species Data-deficient Species grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Total
Australian Museum	Resolving data deficiency in three threatened frog species	Various	\$104,683
University of Wollongong	Filling the gaps: ecological investigation of 17 data deficient plant species in NSW	Statewide	\$100,050
		Total	\$204,733

Expected Round 2 outcomes

Round 2 of the program will target 12 landscape-managed species and up to 25 co-occurring species from other SoS management streams.

The program will fund:

- Improving the long-term viability of the nationally endangered swift parrot population in New South Wales. This will include identifying priority sites, empowering established community networks and land managers to implement habitat rehabilitation and restoration works at these sites, and securing their long-term management, monitoring and protection.
- Maintaining viable populations of the giant dragonfly and the Blue Mountains water skink by improving habitat quality at priority sites within the Blue Mountains. This will be achieved through pest animal management, definition of appropriate fire regimes, community engagement and education, weed control, swamp rehydration and water quality improvements.
- Securing the entire population of Bell's turtle restricted to four sites within upland streams in the Namoi, Gwydir and Border Rivers catchments. This will include incentive funding to encourage land managers to protect and restore streamside habitats, eliminate trampling and erosion caused by livestock, and manage and suppress feral predators, especially during the turtle egg-laying season.
- Reducing threats affecting the scarlet robin and seven other associated target woodland species. This will include increasing landholder awareness and taking action to protect, rehabilitate and enhance suitable woodland foraging and breeding habitat, and actively managing land within four discrete areas across the southern tablelands and the Monaro.

Bush Connect

Commencing in 2015–16, the Bush Connect contestable grants program will provide up to \$8 million over six years to fund connectivity conservation projects within the Great Eastern Ranges (GER) corridor. It builds on the previous achievements of the Community Bush Regeneration Program and GER Initiative through 10-year long projects. The Trust and project applicants jointly fund 80% of the project during the first six years, while the remaining four years are resourced through cash or in-kind contributions, or both, solely from the grantee.

Bush Connect projects are focused on achieving on-ground ecological outcomes through practical activities including revegetation, fencing, artificial habitat installation and assisted natural regeneration. Landholder and local community capacity is increased throughout the 10-year period to help implement and maintain these actions. The Trust received 32 applications seeking \$15,258,613 of funding, with consortium co-contributions totalling \$40,901,764.

In November 2015, the Trust approved 16 projects for \$7,578,262 (Table 9) with co-contributions to the value of \$25,685,337.

Table 9
Bush Connect grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Total
Australian River Restoration Centre	Rivers of carbon – Goulburn district river linkages	Goulburn–Mulwaree	\$492,950
Berry Landcare Inc.	Berry bush links	Shoalhaven	\$500,000
Border Ranges Alliance	Border Ranges climate corridor consolidation – Roseberry/Loadstone	Kyogle	\$500,000
Community Environment Network Inc.	Coastal Open Space Scheme connections and rehabilitation project	Gosford [^]	\$453,414
Far South Coast Landcare Association	Bega Valley corridors, from coast to escarpment: filling in the gaps	Bega Valley	\$500,000
Goonengerry Landcare Group Incorporated	Restoration and linkage of Wilsons and Coopers creeks	Byron	\$499,204
Greening Australia Capital Region	Monaro tree comeback	Cooma–Monaro [^]	\$499,460
Greening Australia (NSW) Ltd	Wall 2 Wollondilly – the Wingecarribee River connection	Wingecarribee	\$486,739
Holbrook Landcare Group	Slopes to summit (S2S) bush connect	Greater Hume	\$499,875
Jaliigirr Biodiversity Alliance Inc.	Jaliigirr landscape connections in the Great Eastern Ranges	Bellingen	\$497,200
Jiggi Catchment Landcare Inc.	Landcare expanding high conservation value GER habitats and corridors	Lismore	\$471,912
Kanangra-Boyd to Wyangala Link Partnership	Restoring the ‘glideways’ of the Kanangra-Boyd to Wyangala link	Upper Lachlan	\$499,396
Macleay Landcare Network Inc.	Yarrahapinni to Killiekrankie Biodiversity Alliance (Y2K)	Kempsey	\$492,120
National Parks Association of NSW Inc.	Thickening the thin green line of the Illawarra Escarpment	Various	\$500,000
Tharawal Local Aboriginal Land Council	O'Hares Creek catchment: habitat creation, enhancement and monitoring	Campbelltown	\$258,142
Yass Area Network of Landcare Groups Inc.	Yass habitat linkages	Yass Valley	\$427,850
Total			\$7,578,262

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–16 financial year and may now operate under a different name.

Major Restoration and Rehabilitation Projects

The Trust is currently funding a range of major projects that fall outside the contestable grants program but which are consistent with Restoration and Rehabilitation Program objectives. In 2015–16, a number of existing projects have continued to progress and five new projects were awarded funding. They relate to linear reserves, protection of koalas in Murrumbidgee, bell miner associated dieback and biocontrol research for weed management (Table 10).

Bell miner associated dieback

In December 2015, the Trust approved \$105,000 in funding for a New Government Priority grant entitled bell miner associated dieback (BMAD).

BMAD is associated with sap feeding insects, psyllids, and the native bell miner bird. It causes eucalypt trees to become defoliated, ultimately leading to the death of the tree. The lack of foliage and fruit results in an inability to seed and severely compromises the regeneration of forests.

BMAD is spreading through sclerophyll forests across all tenures throughout eastern Australia including state forests, national parks, Crown and private land. The scope of the problem is currently unclear but could be impacting many tens of thousands of hectares of forest. The causal factors of BMAD are complex and much is unknown. While there has been some work undertaken to understand BMAD, there is no coordinated cross-tenure management of the issue.

This project will undertake a systematic research review to consolidate existing knowledge and to identify gaps in scientific knowledge on the scale, causes, effects and priority interventions for BMAD. The review will result in recommendations which will enable implementation of prioritised options and actions beyond this project. This will drive a strategic, whole-of-government, cross-tenure approach to managing BMAD in New South Wales.



Bell miner bird

Biocontrol research for weed management

This year, the Trust awarded up to \$1 million to the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) as part of a consortia for the Biocontrol Research for Weed Management project. Biocontrol uses the natural enemies of an invasive plant to control it, and is often a more appropriate control method than herbicide use or manual removal. This project will identify, research and approve targeted biocontrol agents for use in environmental weed control. Stage 1 of the project will develop and apply a robust prioritisation framework in order to select target environmental weeds for biocontrol research. Stage 2 will include research on the selected weeds to determine suitable biocontrol agents and seek approval to release these for weed control purposes.

Building a sustainable connectivity approach for the Great Eastern Ranges

This is the second year of a Trust grant to OEHL to develop a new model for the Great Eastern Ranges (GER) Initiative. This project is developing a model for the initiative to become self-sustaining and underpinned by robust governance, a clear strategic direction, an effective delivery model and sustainable financial partnerships.

Some achievements this year include a strategic evaluation of the GER Initiative, which found that it has provided a strong evidence base which should be tailored to support regional partnerships and monitor outcomes. The evaluation found strong consensus for the initiative to transition to a different entity with an independent governing board supported by a central executive. A members' charter for regional partnerships and robust monitoring, evaluation and reporting processes would enhance the new model.

The project has included an investor analysis to identify potential sources of finance in the short and long terms and assess what governance structures need to be in place. Investors have been identified and analysis is continuing.

Linear reserves

In 2015–16 the Trust approved two new grants worth more than \$6.8 million for enhancing the natural values of the State's roadside reserves and travelling stock routes (TSRs). This network of linear reserves contains valuable remnant vegetation. It is home to many threatened species, and provides important corridors for wildlife to move around the landscape.

Local Land Services (LLS) was awarded a grant of \$4.75 million to assess the conservation significance of all TSRs, and to put in place management systems that retain and enhance natural values, particularly in areas identified as having high conservation values. Local Government NSW will receive more than \$2 million to partner with councils to develop a framework that integrates roadside reserve management into operational plans. Councils will be eligible to apply for grants to trial the framework locally.

Protection of koalas in Murrumbidgee, Murrumbidgee and Tanja

The Trust approved over \$2.5 million for a project that will protect important habitat for the last remaining koala population on the NSW far south coast, as well as protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage on 11,800 hectares of state forest. Commercial timber harvesting will cease in Murrumbidgee, Murrumbidgee and Tanja and the southern part of Bermagui state forests and the area will be permanently protected as a flora reserve.

Forestry Corporation of NSW has allocated ongoing funding to OEH for management of the flora reserve area in perpetuity. Flora Reserves afford similar protections to national parks and can only be revoked by an Act of Parliament.

The project will fund access to alternative sustainable timber supply sources to maintain supply under current contracts.

Weed eradication on Lord Howe Island

This is the first year of an additional two-year grant for the eradication of weeds on Lord Howe Island. This grant will trial innovative methods for weed surveillance, detection and control, including unmanned automated vehicles, aero robots and herbicide ballistic technology™, which uses paintball guns to apply herbicide to hard-to-reach weed populations. An independent review of the program by eradication experts will also be undertaken to consolidate and improve program success, as well as search and control of target weeds. This grant is part of a wider 30-year program, which is now in its 11th year.

In 2015–16 the following key outcomes have been achieved:

- search and control effort across 251 hectares of priority weed management blocks in accessible terrain
- preparation for the release of crofton rust, a biological control for crofton weed
- investigation into unmanned automated vehicles and herbicide ballistic technology to improve detection and control of emerging and outlier weeds
- analysis of the past 10-year dataset to develop preliminary modelling of the future abundance of weeds, management effort and time frame for eradication
- a 10-year celebratory event attended by 80 people to acknowledge the community and investors in the project
- a showcase of the project's 10-year outcomes at the Island Arcs Symposium held at Norfolk Island.

Rodent eradication on Lord Howe Island

This project aims to remove two of the most significant introduced pests on Lord Howe Island. Ship rats have been on Lord Howe Island for nearly 100 years and house mice for over 150 years. Both species have a major impact on the island's species and ecosystems. Rats on Lord Howe Island are recognised as a key threatening process under both NSW and Commonwealth legislation.

The Lord Howe Island Board is delivering the project with advice from a steering committee, including a Trust representative, and a scientific and technical advisory group consisting of national and international experts in a range of fields including eradications and wildlife management.

After consultation with the island's 350 residents, Stage 2 is underway which involves the required planning and approvals process for the program. Implementation of the eradication program will not take place until all the required approvals have been obtained and a separate independent human health risk assessment has been completed. The NSW Office of the Chief Scientist and Engineer (OCSE) has agreed to oversee the independent human health risk assessment.

Work in 2015–16 involved establishing a community working group which has met monthly during the year, and discussions have taken place with all leaseholders regarding how the rodent eradication would be carried out on their individual properties. Island residents have also participated in a community clean-up to remove rodent-harboured rubbish.

The Board adopted the Lord Howe Island Biosecurity Strategy 2015 and the agreed strategies and priority actions will be implemented before or at the same time as rodent eradication.

Classification and mapping of regional-scale native vegetation in New South Wales

This project is improving the classification of plant community types across New South Wales by comprehensively mapping vegetation on a regional scale. This will deliver consistent, robust and evidence-based information about the types and extent of native vegetation across New South Wales. This will provide government and the community with baseline information and the capability to continuously improve mapping as new information becomes available.

This year, the Trust awarded a two year project extension to enable maps to be completed to a higher standard using better technology. To date, 80% of the State has complete coverage or is in the final stages of preparation and public exhibition, including the Namoi, Border Rivers-Gwydir, Central West, Lachlan, Riverina, Murray and Western NSW regions. This information is available through the OEH Vegetation Information System.

In 2016–17 the focus will be on mapping and classification for the Central Tablelands, Wingecarribee and the Upper Hunter regions. Coastal NSW mapping will be completed in 2017.

Building resilience to climate change

Local councils have an important role to play in climate change adaptation, however, they can face financial and technical constraints which limit their capacity to implement climate adaptation projects or risk treatments.

Building Resilience to Climate Change is a contestable grants program worth over \$1 million, administered and supported in a devolved grants arrangement by Local Government NSW. The Trust has previously awarded \$500,000 for the project, with OEH also contributing more than \$500,000.

This program provides individual grants of up to \$80,000 to councils to address climate change risks and vulnerabilities. It encourages collaborations between local government, non-government and industry through regional or sectoral alliances to further disseminate outcomes and build adaptive capacity.

The first round of grants opened in August 2014 and focused on addressing extreme heat or adaptation of priority infrastructure. Six grants across 21 local government areas

were awarded. Five of these grants are complete and case studies are available from the Building Resilience to Climate Change page on the Local Government NSW website.

Round 2 of the grants program focuses on projects that build the resilience of the supply and/or quality of water or adapt priority infrastructure. There were 33 applications requesting a total of \$2.2 million. Eight successful applicants received a total of \$457,830.

This program has fostered broad collaboration involving over 60 councils and seven NSW Government agencies in adaptation projects across the State. It is a well-recognised adaptation resource, as assessed in a recent Climate Change Adaptation Survey of NSW local government needs, and has been extended for a third round in 2016. The third round will be funded through the NSW Climate Change Fund.

Snowy River Rehabilitation Stage 2

In 2015–16 this project has achieved significant outcomes, including control of willows and blackberry weeds on 60 kilometres of the Snowy River and five kilometres of tributaries.

More than 3.5 hectares have been protected from grazing for five years thanks to a new voluntary landholder agreement. This includes revegetation on 0.75 hectares of streambank, as well as 0.75 hectares located inside the river channel.

Community engagement and action has been encouraging, with 44 students attending two weed management training events. In addition a small group of Dalgety residents has come together to form the Snowy River Alliance and is campaigning for flows and environmental values to be restored to the river.

An additional \$60,000 worth of works on the Mowambah tributary was funded by Catchment Action NSW which directly complemented the rehabilitation and restoration works.

Table 10

Major Restoration and Rehabilitation projects awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
CSIRO Biosecurity Flagship	Biocontrol research for weeds management	Statewide	\$1,000,000
Forestry Corporation of NSW	Protection of koalas in Murrumbidgee	Various	\$2,503,546
Local Government NSW	Linear reserves – roadside reserves	Statewide	\$2,083,376
Local Land Services	Linear reserves – TSRs	Statewide	\$4,750,000
Office of Environment and Heritage	Bell miner associated dieback	Statewide	\$105,000
		Total	\$10,441,922

Contaminated Land Management Program



Contaminated sites can pose a major risk to human health and the environment. Without effective management, they can be a source of ongoing pollution of aquifers and waterways, degrade habitats, limit use of natural resources and prevent the development of land. The Contaminated Land Management Program provides financial assistance for the remediation of significant contamination legacies.

This \$6-million Trust funded program is administered by the EPA and comprises a number of subprograms providing financial assistance, capacity building and education. The achievements of these are outlined below.

Innocent Owners Scheme

The Innocent Owners Scheme provides financial assistance to landowners who have found themselves legally responsible for significant contamination, where they are not the polluter and cannot afford to pay for remediation of the site.

This year there were no requests for this funding.

Council Gasworks Program

The operation of former gas manufacturing plants throughout New South Wales has left a legacy of contamination in soil and groundwater and sometimes on adjoining sites. This program provides assistance to regional councils that have responsibilities in relation to investigating and remediating former gasworks facilities to mitigate the damage from serious contamination.

This year, three grants were awarded worth \$336,507.

Derelict Underground Petroleum Storage Systems Program

Leaking underground tanks are the largest source of contaminated land in New South Wales, particularly in regional areas. Many smaller regional council areas have an inherited liability with derelict underground petroleum storage systems in their road reserves. This program is designed to identify if regional councils have inherited derelict underground petroleum storage systems within council road reserves, and to provide a funding mechanism to investigate and remediate or manage derelict tanks. The EPA is continuing work to identify a long-term funding mechanism for this outside the Trust.

This year four grants were funded, totalling \$974,390.

Regional Capacity Building Program

This program assists regional councils to improve their capacity to manage or apply appropriate planning considerations to contaminated lands by employing specialist technical staff to provide region-specific assistance. This will result in improved environmental outcomes, including more appropriate management of contaminated land in rural and regional areas.

There were four regional capacity building officers employed during 2015–16, who have provided assistance to more than 50 councils.

Regional Acceleration Program

A number of legacy contamination sites have the potential to cause significant environmental harm if they are not adequately identified and managed. This program is helping rural and regional landowners obtain the necessary geotechnical and environmental information to make an appropriate submission for a regulatory assessment of the potential environmental or public health risks.

Three officers have been engaged through the program and are undertaking research and assessments for relevant parties so the appropriate information is included to allow the sites to be assessed by regulatory staff.

Preventative and Education Program

This broad program facilitates a variety of small-scale projects and educational campaigns that identify and prevent future contaminated land or improve community and local government awareness.

Feedback from other Contaminated Land Management subprograms has highlighted the need for an educational tool aimed at small, regional, independent service stations to promote best practice operations. Through this program, a guide for managing operational underground petroleum storage systems is under development and will provide an accessible resource to prevent and minimise the risk of fuel leaks and spills associated with service station operation in regional areas.

Pollution Clean-up Programs

The Trust's pollution clean-up programs provide funds for councils and other land managers to manage pollution incidents where the polluter cannot be identified, or where there is uncertainty about the prospect of the responsible party paying clean-up costs. Nominated EPA officers have the power to approve spending of Trust funds under these programs.

Emergency Pollution Clean-up Program

The Emergency Pollution Clean-up Program provides up to \$500,000 each year for the removal, dispersal or mitigation of emergency pollution events.

Six payments were made in 2015–16 to address emergency pollution incidents, with a total value of \$38,266.75 (Table 11).

Illegally Dumped Asbestos Clean-up Program

Funded through the Waste Levy, the Illegally Dumped Asbestos Clean-up Program provides up to \$500,000 each year for the removal and management of illegally dumped asbestos and orphan waste.

Funds may be used for clean-up actions, including sampling, analysis and identification of waste; assessment of risk to human health or the environment; and removal, storage and disposal of the waste.

Grants worth \$301,325.95 were made for 30 incidents of illegally dumped asbestos and other orphan waste (Table 12).

Guidelines for the Illegally Dumped Asbestos Clean-up Program and Emergency Pollution Clean-up Program are available on the Trust's website.

Table 11

Emergency Pollution Clean-up payments awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Incident	Date of incident	Amount
Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO)	Orphan waste (radioactive) – ANSTO Lucas Heights	May 16	\$5,365.00
Blacktown City Council	Orphan waste – oil spill in Bungarabee Creek Reserve, Arndell Park	Jun 16	\$1,071.20
Holroyd City Council	Orphan waste – Prospect Creek, Gipps Road	Feb 15	\$2,835.60
Liverpool City Council	Orphan waste – Tyson Road, Bringelly	Mar 13	\$1,344.95
Shoalhaven City Council	Orphan waste – Wason Street, Ulladulla Harbour	Unknown	\$300.00
Tamworth Regional Council	Leak from underground fuel storage tank	Feb 16	\$27,350.00
		Total	\$38,266.75

Table 12

Illegally Dumped Asbestos Clean-up grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Incident	Date of incident	Amount
Bankstown City Council	Beechwood Place, Bass Hill	Jul 15	\$3,750.00
Blacktown City Council	Reservoir Road, Prospect	Apr 15	\$11,450.00
Blacktown City Council	Park Road, Marsden Park	Nov 12	\$11,560.00
Blacktown City Council	Otago Street, Riverstone	Mar 15	\$3,500.00
Blacktown City Council	Honeman Close, Huntingwood	Oct 15	\$7,285.00
Blacktown City Council	Park Road, Marsden Park	Jun 15	\$3,950.00
Department of Industry	Hunter Economic Zone, Leggetts Drive, Kurri Kurri	Sept 15	\$12,710.00
Department of Industry	Princes Highway, Maddens Plains	Aug 15	\$9,585.45
Department of Industry	Yerriyong Road, Yerriyong	Jul 15	\$2,586.36
Department of Industry	Hawkmount Road, Dora Creek	Jul 15	\$2,736.36
Forestry Corporation of NSW	Glenmore Road, Blenheim State Forest	Unknown	\$3,942.00
Forestry Corporation of NSW	Sunny Corner State Forest	Unknown	\$2,170.00
Forestry Corporation of NSW	Newnes State Forest	Unknown	\$2,557.00
Hawkesbury City Council	Corner of Commercial Road and Old Stock Route Road, Vineyard	May 15	\$3,539.56
Hawkesbury City Council	Corner of Stannix Park Road and Hadden Ridge Road, Wilberforce	Oct 15	\$7,540.00
Hawkesbury City Council	Corner Kurmond Road and Terrace Road, Freemans Reach	Oct 15	\$2,405.00
Hawkesbury City Council	Packer Road, Blaxlands Ridge	Sept 15	\$7,785.00
Lake Macquarie City Council	Wilton Road, Awaba	May 15	\$2,800.00
Lake Macquarie City Council	Wilton Road, Awaba	May 15	\$2,400.00
Liverpool City Council	Newbridge Road, Chipping Norton	June 13	\$5,940.00
NSW Aboriginal Land Council	Wangi Road, Rathmines	Sep 15	\$3,600.00
NSW Aboriginal Land Council	Wangi Road, Rathmines	Apr 15	\$5,900.00
Office of Environment and Heritage	Princes Highway, Royal National Park	Jul 15	\$9,500.00
Office of Environment and Heritage	Goolawah National Park	Sep 14	\$2,250.00
Office of Environment and Heritage	Morton and Conjola national parks	Nov 15	\$3,550.00
Office of Environment and Heritage	Werakata National Park	Dec 15	\$5,709.09
Office of Environment and Heritage	Boulder Bay Road, Fingal Bay	Oct 14	\$5,414.55
Wingecarribee Shire Council	Wilson Drive, Balmoral Village	Jul 15	\$8,804.28
Wingecarribee Shire Council	Hanging Rock Road, Sutton Forest	Oct 14	\$5,509.00
Wollondilly Shire Council	Bobs Range Road, Orangeville	Feb 15	\$140,897.30
		Total	\$301,325.95

Environmental Education

The Environmental Education Program aims to address specific environmental problems through education, behaviour change and environmental learning. It provides competitive grants to community organisations and government agencies for a range of projects that increase the community's environmental knowledge and skills, enhance commitment to protecting the environment, and promote sustainable behaviour.

Achievements

This year 18 environmental education projects were concluded. Some notable achievements are highlighted below:

- Collecting meaningful and important data in the field of coral health through an outstanding citizen science approach. Significantly more volunteers than expected were engaged and greatly assisted in the effort to protect the natural ecosystems of the Solitary Islands Marine Park.
- Engaging more than double the projected number of childcare centres in Shellharbour Local Government Area and providing them with skills and knowledge to increase the sustainability of their facilities to meet the National Quality Standard 3.3. Involving 21 childcare centres, including nine in lower socio-economic areas, the project achieved a high participation rate in an often difficult-to-reach audience, achieving lasting changes in some centres. The grantee also produced a sustainability resource kit in response to enquiries from other local government areas and is now recognised as a local leader in childcare sector sustainability requirements.

Environmental Education outcomes

All of the projects funded in 2011 are now complete. They have delivered 676 training events, field days and awareness raising activities. Over 2600 primary, secondary and tertiary students have participated, well exceeding initial expectations. The program from this funding year has fostered partnerships with 277 community and government organisations. It has also been supported by the efforts of 651 volunteers.

All 15 grant-funded projects awarded in 2012 are now complete, having produced 288 publications and educational products and delivering 400 awareness raising and training events. More than 5000 students took part in educational activities and projects were supported by 840 volunteers.

Just over half of projects funded through the 2013 round are now complete. To date they have involved 3190 students, more than 1000 volunteers and have generated 126 different educational products and publications.

Table 13

Environmental Education outcomes in 2011–13

Project measures	2011 Projected*	2011 Actual	2012 Projected*	2012 Actual	2013 Projected*	2013 Actual
Number of training and awareness raising events	596	676	237	400	1,065	809
Number of publications and educational products	636	673	255	288	221	126
Number of volunteers	300	651	601	840	393	1,005
Number of students (primary, secondary, tertiary)	1,462	2,652	8,030	5,048	5,849	3,190
Number of student hours	4,596	17,776	28,250	19,091	68,352	39,525
Number of partnerships with community or government	224	277	72	97	153	169
Percentage of projects completed	100%		100%		53%	

* Some projections may vary from those previously published due to projects withdrawing, reserve projects being funded or variations resulting from adaptive management during project life cycles. Environmental Education grants run for up to three years.

Outcomes for projects funded in 2014 will be reported in subsequent annual reports.

Environmental Education Grants

The Environmental Education Program funds projects that:

- change behaviours and address specific environmental problems
- develop and promote education projects that improve the environment.

The Trust offers a total of \$1 million in competitive environmental education grants, with \$500,000 available to community organisations and \$500,000 to government entities.

The Trust received 107 EOIs for the community stream of the Environmental Education Program, with the government stream receiving 69 EOIs. Fifteen community and 14 government organisations were invited to submit full applications.

Based on these applications, the Trust awarded eight community grants totalling \$614,181 (Table 14) and eight government grants totalling \$469,963. One government grant was then declined, bringing the total to seven grants with a value of \$398,313 (Table 15).

The Trust anticipates that grants funded in 2015–16 will result in grantees preparing more than 230 educational products which will reach more than 150,000 people. Based on current projections, almost 6000 people will be reached through 330 training and awareness raising events.

Table 14

Environmental Education community grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Australian Association of Bush Regenerators	Ecological restoration case studies: online videos for learners	Statewide	\$79,110
Australian Association for Environmental Education NSW Chapter Inc.	Equipping regional sustainability education networks for creating change	Statewide	\$99,500
Bellinger Landcare Inc.	Bellinger River freshwater habitat education and action program	Bellingen	\$75,000
BirdLife Australia	Coexisting on the coast: saving our beach-nesting birds	Statewide	\$99,950
Coonamble Neighbourhood Centre Inc.	Coonamble power savers program	Coonamble	\$99,618
Kosciuszko to Coast (K2C)	Yass Gorge – being a good neighbour to the bush	Yass Valley	\$44,900
Port Macquarie Community Gardens Inc.	Sustainability made easy at The Lost Plot	Port Macquarie – Hastings	\$16,560
WetlandCare Australia Pty Ltd	Belmont Wetlands State Park community engagement program	Lake Macquarie	\$99,543
		Total	\$614,181

Table 15

Environmental Education State and local government grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Cobar Shire Council	Regional water quality education program	Cobar	\$48,000
NSW Department of Primary Industries	Fish-friendly marine infrastructure	Statewide	\$69,950
Office of Environment and Heritage, NPWS	Bush Trackers: guides created by kids for kids	Various	\$99,330
Port Stephens Council	Kick-starting the capacity to tackle (emergent) African olive in Port Stephens	Port Stephens [^]	\$55,000
Rockdale City Council	Wild things	Rockdale [^]	\$34,450
Sutherland Shire Council	Protecting Our Planet Kit	Sutherland	\$41,583
Tweed Shire Council	Tweed–Byron native species planting guide	Tweed	\$50,000
		Total	\$398,313

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–16 financial year and may now operate under a different name.

■ CASE STUDY

Bee Aware of your native bees

Native bees, particularly solitary bees, are an important but little understood Australian pollinator. Through the Bee Aware of Your Native Bees education project, Western Sydney University (WSU) Office of Sustainability partnered with Project Manager Dr Megan Halcroft, from Bees Business, who engaged more than 5000 people and increased bee habitat on five sites across Lithgow, the Blue Mountains and Sydney.

Dr Halcroft met with volunteers across the five sites, held community presentations and collaborated with the bee taxonomist at the Australian Museum to produce *The Bee Hotel ID Guide*. Following this the participants installed artificial nesting substrate, or bee ‘hotels’ to provide additional habitat at the sites. For each of the five sites, Dr Halcroft prepared a native bee ‘capture kit’, training 96 participants to capture, chill, photograph and identify native bees.



A female *Homalictus* bee collects pollen from a rock rose

The project achieved excellent reach across the community, reaching youth, culturally and linguistically diverse people and seniors through the training sessions. Between two and six bee species and one and eight insect species were identified at each site. Volunteers were encouraged to monitor bee species.

The university community television station TVS also produced a short film, now available on YouTube, which aired on national community TV networks. ABC radio and print media covered the project, and the *Bee aware of your native bees* Facebook group has attracted more than 3700 members, with an observable increase in the knowledge of those posting comments and images.

‘Participants have reported that they notice native bees more, and have adopted bee-friendly gardening practices such as providing plants that flower at different times or building bee hotels’, Dr Halcroft said. ‘It’s especially heartening when people tell me, “I used to spray or squash any insects I saw, but now I watch them and sometimes even rescue them from danger.” This project has helped to spread the word of the importance of bees and other beneficial insects.’

WSU Office of Sustainability later delivered the Regional Bee Symposium at the Hawkesbury campus. Oversubscribed by 70%, the symposium provided a valuable platform for the 53 attending organisations to network. Based on requests from attendees for more hands-on activities, the university applied for a variation to use unspent funds to run Pollinator Week, which attracted 759 people to 23 place-based events. Pollinator Week will occur again in later 2016.

Although most online survey respondents agreed to be involved in ongoing monitoring, there were insufficient volunteers to collect data, limiting the citizen science element somewhat. However, bee activity was observed at all sites, the educational outcomes have exceeded expectations and a community dialogue is ongoing across the State.

Major education project

Treated timber initiative

This \$330,000 major education project is enabling consumers to make better product choices and encouraging safe and environmentally responsible management and disposal of treated timber products.

The project aims to reduce potential hazards associated with the use and disposal of treated timber products, particularly copper chrome arsenate (CCA) treated timber. CCA contains arsenic, a cancer causing chemical that presents a potential human health and ecological hazard, especially when ingested or inhaled via sawdust or during a fire. CCA can also cause environmental harm if it leaches into soil from treated timber or is not disposed of appropriately.

The project has so far produced a range of targeted educational material around the key messages of *choose the right product for the job* and *work safely and dispose of treated timber waste responsibly*. These materials include:

- an online learning module for retail employees and consumers
- a short video about choosing and working safely with treated timber
- a print and electronic poster and brochure.

2016–17 will be the final year of the project and will focus on a digital marketing campaign as well as focusing on industry-level issues such as improved labelling.



The treated timber initiative is educating consumers on how to reduce potential hazards associated with the use and disposal of treated timber products

Eco Schools Grants

The Eco Schools Program aims to provide environmental learning opportunities for students, teachers and the school community. Eco Schools projects provide hands-on curriculum-based environmental education focusing on strong student participation.

Following on from the review of the Food Gardens in Schools and Eco Schools programs in 2014, this year the Trust offered up to 80 grants of \$3500 each over two years. This includes 25 grants for projects catering for students with special needs. Applications for the new combined Eco Schools Program opened in March 2015, and were announced in 2015–16.

In line with the increased focus on building school capacity to deliver environmental education, the Trust has produced new resources to help schools to integrate their projects into the curriculum. These include web-based tools showing schools how to link their projects with key learning areas from kindergarten to year 11. The Trust also worked with seven schools to produce movie clips about their projects, demonstrating how their project integrated environmental education in their school curriculum. These movies are available on the Eco Schools website.

Achievements

In 2015–16, 46 Eco Schools grants and 52 Food Gardens in Schools grants were completed. These achieved a diverse range of environmental outcomes, including:

- Eight schools have undertaken Aboriginal cultural projects focusing on the environment, including the establishment of new bush tucker gardens.
- Eight schools have undertaken sustainability projects to improve their school's impacts on the environment through waste management practices and recycling systems, water and energy conservation.

- Food Gardens projects saw 52 schools establishing fruit and vegetable gardens, herbs, aquaponics systems or chicken coops.
- Tregeagle Public School and Goolmangar Public School conducted koala habitat projects. Tregeagle Public School worked with the Tregeagle Landcare Group to propagate koala food trees for planting in the school grounds and in neighbouring properties. Students learnt skills such as seed collection, seed sowing, maintenance and tree planting. Goolmangar Public School worked with Friends of the Koala Inc., Dorrroughby Environmental Education Centre and five other local schools to learn about the significance of local koala populations as well as the threats they face. Students participated in direct actions including propagating and planting koala habitat trees, developing resource materials to increase community awareness of koalas and improving the extent of koala habitat in Lismore. They also made a movie about their project.

Grants awarded in 2015–16

In 2015–16, 78 Eco Schools grants totalling \$273,000, were approved (Table 16), including 25 projects catering for students with special needs. These are expected to involve more than 9000 primary school students and over 1600 high school students, who together will spend around 87,500 hours learning about a range of environmental issues. Approximately 10,000 food and non-food plants will be established, and almost 600 volunteers from the schools and local communities are expected to participate. This year will include the delivery of 300 units of study.

Table 16

Eco Schools grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Abbotsford Public School	Places and spaces	Canada Bay ^A	\$3,500
Arranounbai School	Learning through nature	Warringah ^A	\$3,500
Aspect Central Coast School	Autism-supportive vegetable and herb sensory garden	Gosford ^A	\$3,500
Attunga Public School	Let it grow – let us grow	Tamworth	\$3,500
Ballina High School	Aquaponics for sustainable hospitality	Ballina	\$3,500
Barrack Heights Public School	Permaculture garden	Shellharbour ^A	\$3,500
Belair Public School	Belair Public School sustainable environmental learning garden	Newcastle ^A	\$3,500
Bexhill Public School	Bexhill bush tucker project	Lismore	\$3,500

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Bexley North Public School	Oasis garden	Rockdale [^]	\$3,500
Camden High School	The sustainability hub	Camden	\$3,500
Canley Heights Public School	Canley Heights outdoor area project	Fairfield	\$3,500
Canowindra Public School	Outdoor learning area	Cabonne [^]	\$3,500
Canterbury Vale School	Canterbury Vale School sustainable food garden	Canterbury [^]	\$3,500
Cape Byron Rudolf Steiner School	Growing our future: from seed to belly	Byron	\$3,500
Captains Flat Public School	Captains Flat garden club project	Palerang [^]	\$3,500
Carroll College	Carroll College paddock to plate (P2P)	Eurobodalla	\$3,500
Chatswood Public School	Sustainability in the city	Willoughby [^]	\$3,500
Cheltenham Girls High School	Greening the STEM	Hornsby [^]	\$3,500
Cook School	Reconnecting with disengaged youth through environmental learning opportunities	Sutherland	\$3,500
Corindi Public School	Our Gumbaynggirr garden	Coffs Harbour	\$3,500
Corpus Christi Catholic High School	Corpus Christi kitchen garden	Shellharbour [^]	\$3,500
Dapto High School	Local Indigenous bush foods and medicine garden	Shellharbour [^]	\$3,500
Dungay Public School	Bee alive, save the hive	Tweed	\$3,500
Dungog Primary School	School organic permaculture garden	Dungog [^]	\$3,500
Earlwood Public School	The recycle collective	Canterbury [^]	\$3,500
Five Islands Secondary College	Worm farm seats for team green sustainability crew @ FISC	Wollongong [^]	\$3,500
Girraween Public School	Girraween – a place of flowers	Holroyd [^]	\$3,500
Glossodia Public School	Catchment awareness in Glossodia	Hawkesbury	\$3,500
Gordon East Public School	Gordon East Public School sustainable garden project – Gordon green thumbs	Ku-Ring-Gai [^]	\$3,500
Great Lakes College – Forster Campus	Outdoor learning area	Great Lakes [^]	\$3,500
Greenwich Public School	Bringing back the birds and the bees	Lane Cove [^]	\$3,500
GyMEA Bay Public School	ITunesU course: investigating local history and future pressures of natural and built environments	Sutherland	\$3,500
Heathcote High School	Outdoor learning area	Sutherland	\$3,500
Hill End Public School	Hill End Public School community seed saving network	Bathurst [^]	\$3,500
Hunters Hill Public School	Gardening for sustainability	Hunters Hill [^]	\$3,500
Illawarra Sports High School	Illawarra Sports High School – plastic waste warriors	Wollongong [^]	\$3,500
Kangaroo Valley Public School	FIG sustainable community garden for the children of Kangaroo Valley Public School	Shoalhaven	\$3,500
Karonga School	Food forest	Hornsby [^]	\$3,500
Kempsey High School	Kempsey Agricultural Students Association waste reduction project	Kempsey	\$3,500
Leura Public School	Live well at Leura kitchen garden project	Blue Mountains	\$3,500

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Lomandra School	Sustainable living through food technology garden	Campbelltown	\$3,500
Macquarie Fields Public School	Macquarie Fields Public School Indigenous garden	Campbelltown	\$3,500
Main Arm Upper Public School	Feather glider habitat monitoring and conservation	Byron	\$3,500
Marrickville West Primary School	Produce garden and composting at Marrickville West	Marrickville^	\$3,500
Mascot Public School	Our sensory oasis	Botany^	\$3,500
Merrylands Public School	Inclusive garden project	Holroyd^	\$3,500
Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College	Urban native garden	North Sydney^	\$3,500
Mount Riverview Public School	Installing WaterSave smart meter and irrigation system	Blue Mountains	\$3,500
Mudgee High School	Aquaponics at Mudgee High School	Mid-Western Region	\$3,500
Murwillumbah High School	Sustainable food production and conservation of resources	Tweed	\$3,500
Muswellbrook High School	Focus centre food garden	Muswellbrook	\$3,500
Nana Glen Public School	Learning through growing	Coffs Harbour	\$3,500
Narranga Public School	Narranga Public School living classroom project	Coffs Harbour	\$3,500
Northern Beaches Secondary College	Sustainability – reduce, re-use and recycle	Warringah^	\$3,500
Nemingha Public School	Our garden is our favourite teacher	Tamworth	\$3,500
Nimbin Central School	Nimbin Central School eco management project	Lismore	\$3,500
Northlakes High School	Support unit garden	Wyong^	\$3,500
Ourimbah Public School	Connecting with our rainforest	Wyong^	\$3,500
Penrith Valley Learning Centre	Living classroom	Penrith	\$3,500
Pittwater High School	Pittwater High School marshland management: riparian restoration, litter and flood prevention	Pittwater^	\$3,500
Rainbow Ridge School for Steiner Education	Rainbow Ridge wildlife-friendly food garden	Kyogle	\$3,500
St Ives Park Public School	St Ives Park Public School eco garden	Ku-ring-gai^	\$3,500
St Mary's Primary School Young	How does my garden grow? Understanding the food process from patch to plate	Young^	\$3,500
St Mary's Primary School Grafton	Dig for plenty garden	Clarence Valley	\$3,500
St Paul the Apostle Primary School	Design it! Then make it!	Parramatta^	\$3,500
Surveyors Creek Public School	Surveyors sensory garden	Penrith	\$3,500
The Pocket Public School	Schoolyard habitat project	Byron	\$3,500
Thornton Public School	Thornton Public School Triassic learning track	Maitland	\$3,500
Warrah Special School	Warrah School farming initiative	Hornsby^	\$3,500
Warrimoo Public School	Warrimoo Public School sustainable vegetable garden	Blue Mountains	\$3,500
Werrington County Public School	Friendship garden	Penrith	\$3,500
Wewak Street School	Raised garden beds and improvement of existing garden beds	Albury	\$3,500
Wilkins Public School	Walanga 'naminina': urban kids caring for land	Marrickville^	\$3,500

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Wisemans Ferry Public School	Hands-on learning garden for happy and healthy children and communities	The Hills [^]	\$3,500
Wongarbon Public School	Chookyard and raised beds for vegetable and herb gardens	Dubbo [^]	\$3,500
Yass High School	Integrated learning	Yass Valley	\$3,500
Yenda Public School	Yenda's kitchen garden	Griffith	\$3,500
Young Public School	Superb recycling: An outdoor learning area and sensory garden using recycled materials	Young [^]	\$3,500
Total			\$273,000

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–16 financial year and may now operate under a different name.

■ CASE STUDY

Small bird haven

When the school community at Pennant Hills Public School learned that small birds in their neighbourhood had a problem, they realised that they were in a great position to do something about it. The tall trees and large grass areas in the playground were providing ideal conditions for birds such as noisy miners and pied currawongs, which were driving away smaller bird species which require more small shrubs for shelter. With an Eco Schools grant from the Trust and expert help from Hornsby Council, the school created a sanctuary for small birds that provides connectivity with local bushland and a safe place for small birds to nest, feed, and take shelter from predators.

Creating their small bird haven provided students with a great opportunity to learn about the native birds in their neighbourhood. Importantly, they learned that large birds are attracted to schoolyard environments due to open bins and

food scraps being left around. Students observed large birds such as pied currawongs eating scraps, which made them become more vigilant about putting food scraps in the bin.

The project was connected to a range of curriculum-based activities, and students learned the principles of environmental monitoring. Students counted the number of different birds before and after the creation of their small bird haven, and prepared graphs to demonstrate how their work made a difference in bird numbers over time.

This was a successful project in which the school not only addressed a problem in its community, it also turned it into an opportunity for student learning and participation. See the Environmental Trust's website for a movie that Pennant Hills Public School made about their project.

Environmental Research

The Environmental Research Program provides around \$1 million each year to support research projects that help address environmental issues in New South Wales. The program aims to:

- generate new information that will help solve environmental problems
- discover innovative methods and technologies that will reduce environmental impacts of business and industry
- support assessments of environmental degradation
- increase general awareness of environmental issues.

Achievements

This year 14 research projects were concluded. Southern Cross University completed a project which undertook research into the multigenerational impact of climate change on marine life. The project specifically looked at the ability of key NSW invertebrates to cope with and adapt to increases in ocean temperature and associated increases in acidity due to increased carbon dioxide. The research found that both warming and acidification have impacts on invertebrates, crustaceans and sea urchins. Moderate warming of 3 degrees Celsius reduced survivorship and decreased growth, while more extreme warming of 6 degrees Celsius and above killed the crustaceans tested. For sea urchins acidification had strong negative effects on growth, reproductive potential, and other fitness traits. However, moderate warming may mitigate some negative effects of acidification for some tropical species of sea urchins in New South Wales.

The University of Wollongong undertook a research project to evaluate the effectiveness in using the diffuse gradients in thin film (DGT) technique to measure metal concentrations

within the sediment surface layer. Traditional testing methods may not always accurately assess the bioavailability of metals, with results frequently showing incorrect conclusions, including no impact when an impact does in fact exist. This project showed that using DGT was useful for predicting metal toxicity to benthic invertebrates. The project has also shown the potential for DGT measurements to be used with tiered environmental guidelines for estimating the effect of site-specific parameters on metal toxicity.

Environmental Research outcomes

All 2011 Environmental Research grants are now complete. These grants produced 28 innovative technologies, new methods or approaches to previously known work, and 202 presentations at scientific or technical conferences and other events have been delivered. A total of 55 educational resources and scientific journal articles have been produced or published.

Progress reports from the 2012 Environmental Research Program show that findings have been presented at 51 scientific or technical conferences and other events. Funded projects have developed 23 innovative technologies, new methods or approaches to previously known work, exceeding the projected output of 21. Similarly, the grants have exceeded their projections for educational resources and scientific journal articles finalised, delivering 44 rather than the anticipated 26 resources and articles.

Half of the grants funded in the 2013 Environmental Research Program are now complete. So far they have generated eight innovative technologies or new approaches to previously known work and 41 publications or other educational resources. Findings have been presented at 27 scientific or technical conferences and other events.

Table 17

Environmental Research outcomes in 2011–13

Project measures	2011 Projected*	2011 Actual	2012 Projected*	2012 Actual	2013 Projected*	2013 Actual
New technologies or methods developed	28	28	21	23	12	8
Number of partnerships established	31	32	22	26	30	20
Conferences or events where research is presented	179	202	39	51	45	27
Publications and educational resources	45	55	26	44	41	41
Percentage of projects completed	100%		88%		50%	

* Some projections may vary from those previously published due to projects withdrawing, reserve projects being funded or variations resulting from adaptive management during project life cycles. Environmental Research grants run for up to three years.

Outcomes for projects funded in 2014 will be reported in subsequent annual reports.

Environmental Research Grants

The Environmental Research Program is one of the most competitive grant programs funded by the Trust and offers \$1 million in funding. Grants of up to \$150,000 are awarded through a competitive two-stage application process for projects of up to three years.

This year a total of 176 expressions of interest (EOIs), were received, requesting an upper value of more than \$24 million. From this, 33 applicants were invited to make full applications.

Thirty-two full applications requesting a total of more than \$4.36 million were received and peer reviewed by relevant scientific experts. This year the Trust has funded a total of \$1,559,111 (Table 18) for 11 research projects across the following program priorities:

- land and seascape management
- water-dependent ecosystems
- soil health
- mechanisms for social engagement
- emerging priority.

The prioritisation framework developed for the program by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) has provided a higher degree of focus for applicants this year, resulting in more targeted applications. The additional *emerging priority* theme enables applicants to propose research they consider to be high-priority, but that does not fit the themes of the current round.

Environmental Research Program grantees funded in the 2015–16 year are expecting to develop at least 15 innovative technologies or new methods or approaches to previously known work. They also anticipate presenting the findings of their research at some 107 technical or scientific conferences or other events, and to publish at least 64 related articles in journals and other scientific publications.

Table 18

Environmental Research grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Australian National Botanic Gardens	Seed biology, cytology and production of threatened pomaderris	Statewide	\$143,777
CSIRO – Land and Water Flagship	Estimating coastal values using multi-criteria and valuation methods	Statewide	\$150,000
Macquarie University	The ecological benefits of blackwater	Balranald	\$146,112
Macquarie University	Developing a new cross-cultural environmental monitoring tool	Statewide	\$146,653
University of Canberra	Are populations of key threatened NSW fishes native or introduced?	Statewide	\$84,300
University of Canberra	DNA-based identification for routine aquatic bioassessment	Statewide	\$149,911
University of New South Wales	Delivering a beach erosion forecasting system	Statewide	\$141,486
University of New South Wales	Predicting swamp community persistence after underground mining	Statewide	\$149,133
University of Sydney	Increasing landholder collaboration for landscape-scale conservation	Statewide	\$149,435
University of Technology Sydney	Cleaning contaminated environments using effective social engagement	Statewide	\$148,559
Western Sydney University	Rapid on-site identification of hazardous organics at fire scenes	Statewide	\$149,745
		Total	\$1,559,111

Major research project

Psyllid-induced dieback of grey box on the Cumberland Plain

Thousands of hectares of the critically endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland in Western Sydney have experienced defoliation, canopy dieback and tree mortality due to a native lace lerp species, or psyllid (*Cardiaspina* sp.). In 2013, the Trust funded Western Sydney University (WSU) to research the psyllid through an unsolicited proposal to the value of \$400,000.

The project is continuing to reveal important information on the relationship between different populations of psyllid and the genetic diversity of the trees affected by the outbreak. The characterisation of grey box (*Eucalyptus moluccana*) suggests it is frequently cross pollinating with genetically similar eucalypts to create hybrid types.

However, the analyses have also revealed that grey box in the Sydney region has unique genotypes that are not shared with grey box outside the Sydney region. This genetic isolation may make the Sydney grey box particularly susceptible to attack. WSU is now conducting testing to determine whether there is a link between genetic diversity of the species and susceptibility to psyllid attack.

WSU is also sampling genotypes of very old and very young trees to determine any contrasting genetics which could influence their susceptibility to psyllid attack. In addition, the team is testing the genetic diversity of grey box specimens from New South Wales and Queensland, including psyllid host preference and their capacity to recover from natural psyllid attack.

Research has shown that four parasite species that feed on the grey box psyllid did not suppress psyllid numbers, but that summer heat waves and the availability of foliage have had an impact. Summer heat events in 2013 diminished psyllid numbers in the original core outbreak area, which has now shown signs of recovery. However, there are still high enough populations of psyllids in the south-west region of the Cumberland Plain Woodland to cause ongoing defoliation, and these populations may act as a continuing source for future outbreaks.



Psyllid infestation

Another psyllid is causing significant defoliation of forest red gum (*E. tereticornis*) in the Hawkesbury area, with research currently underway on whether the two outbreaks are linked. WSU is determining the genotype of the psyllid species, which at this stage appears closely related to other species from South Australia and inland New South Wales. There are concerns that these three species could potentially interbreed and pose an even greater threat.

Lead Environmental Community Groups Program

The Lead Environmental Community Groups (LECG) program offers funding to environmentally focused NGOs operating for the benefit of the environment of New South Wales. Applicants must be significantly involved with the community and their funded activities must directly contribute to the government's environmental objectives.

The program is aimed at assisting eligible lead environmental community organisations to build the capacity of the NSW community in protecting and conserving our environment. The program supports new or existing programs that develop or widen the community's knowledge of, skills in, and participation in protecting the environment and undertaking sustainable behaviour.

The LECG program is divided into two funding streams to better address the different needs of large and small

organisations. Stream 1 offers funding of \$20,000 to \$80,000 per year for larger NGOs, while Stream 2 targets smaller groups seeking less than \$20,000 per year.

The 2015–16 round of the program offered a total funding pool of \$1.8 million that also covered the funding allocations for 2016–17 and 2017–18. Applications closed in March 2016, with 24 applications received, demonstrating strong interest from the NGO sector. A total of \$3,508,862 in funding was requested.

The Trust awarded 15 grants with a total value of \$1,224,900 (Table 19). The Trust wanted further consideration on the eligibility requirements of the program. It decided to fund recommended projects for only two years rather than three and to call for another round of applications in 2017, after the program guidelines had been amended.

Table 19

Lead Environmental Community Groups grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Amount
Australian Association for Environmental Education (NSW)	\$16,000
Australian Network for Plant Conservation Inc.	\$44,000
Australian Seabird Rescue Inc.	\$37,400
BirdLife Australia	\$132,000
Bushwalking NSW Inc.	\$33,000
Conservation Volunteers Australia	\$70,000
EDO NSW	\$80,000
Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife	\$80,000
Keep Australia Beautiful Council (NSW)	\$120,000
Landcare NSW Inc.	\$144,000
National Parks Association of NSW Inc.	\$127,000
Nature Conservation Council of NSW	\$141,000
Total Environment Centre Inc.	\$80,000
WetlandCare Australia Pty Ltd	\$40,000
WIRES (NSW Wildlife Information Rescue and Education Service Inc.)	\$80,500
	Total
	\$1,224,900

Waste Less, Recycle More Initiative

Waste Less, Recycle More provides a range of support packages to help communities and businesses reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. The Trust and the EPA deliver the program in collaboration to ensure applicants are compliant with NSW waste legislation and regulations.

The Trust manages the contestable grants component of Waste Less, Recycle More, and grants are delivered from funds sourced through the Waste and Environment Levy Envelope (WELE). In 2015–16, the contestable grants allocation was reduced to \$154.4 million over four years, as \$1.1 million of WELE funds was reallocated from waste and recycling programs to the Flying-fox Netting Subsidy Program.

A range of grant programs was offered in 2015–16, and a business case advisory service was made available through the EPA, at no cost to applicants. The service provided infrastructure applicants with professional advice and support to help them prepare their business case, a key component of the application which highlights the feasibility of the proposal.

All applications for processing infrastructure projects with a total value over \$1 million require a cost-benefit analysis in line with NSW Treasury guidelines. An independent review of this economic analysis is then conducted to confirm a positive net public benefit prior to allocation of funds.

Waste Less, Recycle More grant funds

Improved Systems for Household Problem Wastes (\$11.77 million over four years)

This fund supports the construction of community recycling centres that will facilitate the appropriate disposal of household 'problem' wastes including paints, motor oils, cooking oils, household batteries, car batteries, fluorescent lighting, gas cylinders, fire extinguishers and smoke detectors. These wastes can present a significant management issue for the environment and from a handling or human health perspective. Equally as important, the community will be making their own homes safer and cleaner.

Grant program:

- Community Recycling Centres.

Organics Infrastructure (\$60.75 million over four years)

This fund supports programs that encourage and support waste avoidance, re-use and recycling of food and garden organics.

Grant programs:

- Local Government Organics Collection Systems
- Organics Infrastructure (Large and Small)
- Love Food Hate Waste.



Trust and EPA staff host an induction day for new grantees to provide one-on-one support and networking opportunities

Waste and Recycling Infrastructure (\$53.75 million over four years)

This fund stimulates investment to increase the processing capacity of recycling facilities in waste levy paying areas.

Priority waste materials for recovery are set by the EPA and include paper, cardboard, timber, plastics, glass, metals and tyres from commercial and industrial and municipal waste streams.

Grant programs:

- Resource Recovery Facility Expansion and Enhancement (for existing facilities)
- Major Resource Recovery Infrastructure (for new infrastructure).

Recycling Innovation (\$11.7 million over four years)

This fund provides support for improving infrastructure, research and development and increasing recovery of residual waste from recyclers.

Grant programs:

- Innovation in Shredder Flocculation Management
- Innovation in Priority Problem Wastes Management.

Business Recycling (\$9.45 million over four years)

This fund provides rebates to small and medium enterprises to fund small-scale recycling infrastructure and equipment to help improve source separation of recyclables, reduce waste and increase recycling in the workplace. The fund is administered by the EPA.

Grant programs:

- Bin Trim Rebates.

Supporting Local Communities (\$7 million over four years)

This fund provides financial support to regional and rural local councils for landfill consolidation and closure, and environmental improvements to small landfills serving rural communities.

Grant program:

- Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements.

Waste Less, Recycle More grants awarded in 2015–16

Community Recycling Centres Program

This program supports the development of community recycling centres (CRCs) across the State through:

- enhancing or upgrading an existing CRC
- constructing a new CRC
- developing and trialling innovative solutions where a fixed solution is not viable.

This year the program attracted 18 applications, requesting a total of approximately \$3.5 million.

The Trust approved 10 grants totalling approximately \$1.7 million (Table 20). Forty-one CRCs are operating across New South Wales and this year collected more than 585 tonnes of hazardous household wastes.



Residents can easily and safely drop off hazardous household chemicals for recycling at no charge at the Deniliquin Community Recycling Centre

Table 20

Community Recycling Centre grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Cessnock City Council	Cessnock Community Recycling Centre	Cessnock	\$200,000
Cooma–Monaro Shire Council	Cooma Community Recycling Centre	Cooma– Monaro [^]	\$139,000
Eurobodalla Shire Council	Surf Beach Community Recycling Centre	Eurobodalla	\$237,424
Fairfield City Council	Fairfield City Council –Community Recycling Drop-off Centre	Fairfield	\$196,495
Gosford City Council	Gosford City Council – Community Recycling Centre	Gosford [^]	\$164,901
Orange City Council	Orange Community Recycling Centre	Orange [^]	\$190,756
Queanbeyan City Council	Queanbeyan Waste Minimisation Centre – Community Recycling Facility	Queanbeyan [^]	\$116,670
Snowy River Shire Council	Snowy River Community Recycling Centre (Drop-off)	Snowy River [^]	\$139,300
Sutherland Shire Council	Sutherland Shire Community Recycling Centre	Sutherland	\$223,164
Wentworth Shire Council	Buronga Landfill – Community Recycling Centre	Wentworth	\$100,000
Total			\$1,707,710

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–16 financial year and may now operate under a different name. The LGA identified relates to the principal project site.

Local Government Organics Collection Systems Program

This program provides funds to help councils implement new, or enhance existing, household kerbside collection services for garden, food or combined food and garden waste.

In 2015–16, the Trust received eight applications seeking approximately \$4.15 million. Seven projects were funded to a total of approximately \$3.5 million (Table 21). Grant recipients estimate that around 34,000 tonnes of food and garden organics will be diverted from landfill as a collective result of the projects funded this year. Furthermore, more than 76,800 households are expected to receive a new or enhanced kerbside organics bin collections service as a result of this round of the grant program.

Table 21

Local Government Organics Collection Systems grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Dubbo City Council	Organics collection system	Dubbo [^]	\$884,122
Kempsey Shire Council	Weekly food and garden service with fortnightly residual waste	Kempsey	\$187,500
Mid-Western Regional Council	Organics collection system	Dubbo [^]	\$570,467
Murray River Council	Introduction of food organics and garden organics (FOGO) collection system for Murray Shire Council	Murray [^]	\$252,198
Narromine Shire Council	Organics collection system	Narromine	\$213,527
Shellharbour City Council	Shellharbour residential food and garden organics collection	Shellharbour [^]	\$370,866
Wagga Wagga City Council	Wagga Wagga organics collection system	Wagga Wagga	\$1,035,626
Total			\$3,514,306

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–16 financial year and may now operate under a different name. The LGA identified relates to the principal project site.

Organics Infrastructure (Large and Small) Program

This program encourages the re-use or separation and recycling of organics from households and businesses through four streams:

- Stream 1: food and garden organics processing
- Stream 2: business organics recycling
- Stream 3: food donation
- Stream 4: home composting.

In 2015–16, the Trust received 49 applications requesting approximately \$27.65 million, of which 24 were awarded. One declined, resulting in 23 projects with a combined value of more than \$12.7 million (Table 22).

Projects awarded to date under this program will increase the capacity to process more than 350,000 tonnes per year of organic wastes. Additionally, over 100 educational products are being developed for a wide range of audiences.

Table 22

Organics Infrastructure (Large and Small) grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Stream 1			
Australian Native Landscapes Pty Ltd	Tea Gardens FOGO processing	Great Lakes ^A	\$1,300,000
Bettergrow Pty Limited	Integrated organics resource recovery and composting facilities	Bathurst ^A	\$4,500,000
Carbon Mate Pty Ltd	CMOR – Expansion and relocation of composting operations	Wagga Wagga	\$987,500
Murray Shire Council	MSC organics processing facility	Murray ^A	\$225,000
North-West Recycling Centre	North-West recycling centre green-waste only expansion project	Hawkesbury	\$457,500
Pulpmaster Australia Pty Ltd	Pulpmaster's organic waste producing green fuel for industry	Fairfield	\$1,448,587
SOILCO Pty Limited	Enhance organics processing infrastructure at Soilco's Wogamia facility	Shoalhaven	\$483,722
Tamworth Regional Council	Tamworth Regional Council organics recycling facility (ORF)	Tamworth	\$1,350,000
Weston Aluminium Pty Ltd	Weston organics processing facility	Lake Macquarie	\$490,000
Stream 2			
Crescent Head Country Club	Crescent Head Country Club food for fairways	Kempsey	\$42,286
HealthShare NSW	Project 98	Pittwater ^A	\$26,800
Mercy Services	Mercy organic resource reuse	Singleton	\$47,000
Southern Cross Care (NSW & ACT)	SCC holistic waste management	The Hills ^A	\$100,803
Stix Catering Pty Ltd	Stix farm project	Marrickville ^A	\$91,500
University of Technology Sydney	On-site processing of organics at the University of Technology Sydney	Sydney City	\$201,900
Stream 3			
Addison Road Centre for Arts, Culture, Community and Environment Ltd	Tucker and land justice food pantry	Marrickville ^A	\$93,634
ALL Sustainable Futures Inc.	Best start school food project	Kiama	\$98,350
Illawarra Pilot Joint Organisation	Illawarra food recovery and distribution hub	Wollongong ^A	\$396,663
Jesuit Social Services	Ignite food outreach	Blacktown	\$149,091
OzHarvest	Sydney north-west and schools food rescue expansion	Ryde ^A	\$110,728

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Providential Homes Inc.	Food for the homeless community outreach	Blacktown	\$65,700
Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation	Tharawal food rescue/food pantry pilot implementation plan	Campbelltown	\$18,262
Stream 4			
Eurobodalla Shire Council	Eurobodalla compost revolution and worm farm workshops	Eurobodalla	\$21,475
		Total	\$12,706,501

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–16 financial year and may now operate under a different name. The LGA identified relates to the principal project site.

Love Food Hate Waste (Food Waste Avoidance Education) Program

This program supports local councils, council groups, NGOs and community groups to deliver food waste avoidance education and awareness projects.

In 2015–16, 22 applications were received requesting approximately \$970,800. Ten projects were approved, with funding totalling \$324,310 (Table 23). Grant recipients in this round estimate that they will engage with 34 participating organisations to deliver education materials and resources such as workshops, cooking demonstrations and food recipes that will directly engage with over 12,290 businesses and households.



Wollondilly Shire Council is spreading the Love Food Hate Waste message through community events

Table 23

Love Food Hate Waste grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Campbelltown City Council	Macarthur food project	Campbelltown	\$27,400
Cowra Information & Neighbourhood Centre Inc.	Cook smart, waste less, save MORE!	Cowra	\$5,000
Hunter Councils Inc.	Love food on campus	Upper Hunter	\$60,516
Lake Macquarie City Council	Healthy lunch boxes program	Lake Macquarie	\$21,953
North East Waste	Love Food Hate Waste challenge Phase 2	Kyogle	\$34,110
Sustainable North West	Sustainable North West 2016 series of events	Tamworth	\$19,500
Total Environment Centre Inc.	Tackling food waste at farmers markets and festivals	Sydney City	\$69,794
Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre	Nutritious oddities and other food facts	Blue Mountains	\$23,287
Wollondilly Shire Council	Food wise in Wollondilly and Wingecarribee	Wollondilly	\$24,330
Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (WSROC)	Shop. Cook. Save.	Blacktown	\$38,420
		Total	\$324,310

The LGA identified relates to the principal project site.

Resource Recovery Facility Expansion and Enhancement Program

This program enables:

- recovery of additional recyclables from business and household waste
- re-use, recycling and reprocessing of additional recyclables, including plastics, tyres, timber, paper, cardboard and consumer packaging
- processing and stabilisation of residual waste.

In 2015–16, 20 applications were received requesting over \$13 million. Nine projects were approved, one of which declined, leaving eight projects valued at more than \$3.9 million (Table 24).

When complete, this infrastructure is expected to divert almost 97,000 tonnes of glass, plastics, metals, paper, cardboard, wood and other materials from landfill per annum.



New machinery at the Global Renewables Eastern Creek facility extracts and cleans metals from mixed household waste, creating a high-value product for recycling and re-use

Table 24

Resource Recovery Facility Expansion and Enhancement grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Australian Native Landscapes Pty Ltd	Expanded and enhanced wood waste processing – Tea Gardens	Great Lakes [^]	\$500,000
Cessnock City Council	Cessnock waste and re-use centre small vehicle receival centre	Cessnock	\$375,000
Direct Group Industries Pty Ltd	Expansion of Ingleburn wood re-use and recycling facility	Campbelltown	\$433,960
Grasshopper Environmental Services Pty Ltd	Arndell Park commercial and industrial materials recycling facility	Blacktown	\$356,877
Lismore City Council	Lismore materials recycling facility recovery enhancement/expansion project	Lismore	\$447,674
NSW Glass Recyclers Pty Ltd	Bottle and commercial plate glass reprocessing at Tuncurry materials recycling facility	Great Lakes [^]	\$580,614
Veolia Environmental Services (Australia) Pty Ltd	Horsley Park wood processing for energy recovery	Fairfield	\$1,000,000
Wyong Shire Council	Buttonderry waste management facility tip-face recycling initiative	Wyong [^]	\$253,000
		Total	\$3,947,125

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–16 financial year and may now operate under a different name. The LGA identified relates to the principal project site.

Innovation in Priority Problem Wastes Management Program

Wastes targeted through this program are not captured under other Waste Less, Recycle More programs, do not have existing mature markets or are contaminating waste streams that could otherwise be recovered if they were removed. The program consists of two streams:

- Stream 1: infrastructure projects
- Stream 2: research and development projects.

The first round received 33 applications worth approximately \$14 million. A total of 20 grants worth nearly \$6.9 million

were awarded. Two declined, resulting in 18 projects with a combined value of approximately \$6.3 million (Table 25).

Stream 1 projects will develop infrastructure to recover re-usable materials from items such as mattresses, concrete, tyres, oyster baskets and synthetic grass. Stream 2 researches and develops solutions for batteries, copper chrome arsenate (CCA) treated timber, quarantine waste, rubber, metal and plastic waste.

When completed these infrastructure projects are anticipated to divert more than 260,000 tonnes per annum from landfill.

Table 25

Innovation in Priority Problem Wastes Management grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Stream 1			
Australian Recycled Rubber	Australian recycled rubber facility	Campbelltown	\$759,215
Bulk Recovery Solutions Pty Ltd	Wet concrete washing plant – above-ground mining	Campbelltown	\$660,000
GL & JC Pilgrim	Plastic oyster basket recycling project	Murray [^]	\$100,000
Great Lakes Community Resources Inc.	Soft landings – growing end-of-life mattress recycling for NSW	Wollongong [^]	\$750,000
Innoveq (Australia) Pty Ltd	Mobile mattress deconstruction and resource recycling unit	Wollongong [^]	\$385,000
IS Recycling Pty Ltd	Don't Bin it, Just Bring it	Campbelltown	\$384,750
Macleay Options Inc.	Mattress recycling in the Macleay region	Kempsey	\$106,000
Materials Recovery Management (Aust) Pty Ltd	Wash glass sand project	Gosford [^]	\$958,383
Plastic Forests Pty Ltd	Yennora resource recovery and recycling facility	Fairfield	\$800,000
Synthetic Grass & Rubber Surfaces Aust Pty Ltd	On-site recycling of outdoor synthetic surfaces	Statewide	\$128,000
TIC (Mattress) Recycling Pty Ltd	Automated and advanced end-of-life mattress recycling for NSW	Bankstown [^]	\$794,766
Stream 2			
ABRI	New business models for battery recycling	Statewide	\$70,000
CRC CARE	Clean up toxic metals from CCA-treated timber	Newcastle	\$90,227
Qantas Airways Limited	Qantas project Mascot	Wyong [^]	\$100,000
University of Wollongong	Performance of rubber-based energy absorbing layer (REAL) for railroad stability	Wollongong [^]	\$75,000
University of New South Wales	Transforming waste into value-added materials	Randwick [^]	\$25,000
Vinyl Council of Australia	Advertising banner reprocessing and design project	Randwick [^]	\$68,833
Vinyl Council of Australia	Vinyl commercial flooring – recycling and reprocessing trials	Randwick [^]	\$59,500
Total			\$6,314,674

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–16 financial year and may now operate under a different name. The LGA identified relates to the principal project site.

Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvement Program

This program funds consolidation, closure and environmental improvements to rural and regional landfills. Projects may also establish transfer stations in the location of the closed landfill. The program consists of two streams:

- Stream 1: landfill consolidation and closure
- Stream 2: environmental improvements.

The second and final round received 40 applications worth approximately \$5.8 million. A total of 26 grants worth nearly \$3 million were awarded (Table 26).

Projects funded through Stream 1 will result in the consolidation and full closure of 10 rural and regional landfills. Projects funded under Stream 2 are expected to improve environmental performance at more than 20 landfills and waste management facilities. Five transfer stations will be established across both streams.

To date, grants under this program have reported that over 500 people have participated in community consultation on closure or improvements to their local landfill.

Table 26

Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvement grants awarded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Stream 1			
Blayney Shire Council	Neville landfill closure	Blayney ^A	\$55,175
Boorowa Council	Closure of the Boorowa landfill	Boorowa ^A	\$200,000
Cabonne Council	Cargo landfill closure	Cabonne ^A	\$51,200
Inverell Shire Council	Closure and consolidation of Oakwood rural landfill	Inverell	\$196,800
Inverell Shire Council	Closure and consolidation of Wallangra rural landfill	Inverell	\$188,400
Inverell Shire Council	Landfill consolidation to Yetman rural landfill, Inverell LGA	Inverell	\$164,580
Parkes Shire Council	Peak Hill waste depot landfill closure and waste transfer station	Parkes	\$189,500
Richmond Valley Council	Closure of Coraki landfill	Richmond Valley	\$200,000
Snowy River Shire Council	Landfill Adaminaby – capping and closure	Snowy River ^A	\$121,261
Walcha Council	Woolbrook landfill closure and conversion to waste transfer station	Walcha ^A	\$91,000
Stream 2			
Bogan Shire Council	Nyngan waste management facility environmental improvements	Bogan	\$48,788
Boorowa Council	Waste transfer station establishment at Boorowa	Boorowa ^A	\$200,000
Brewarrina Shire Council	Environmental improvements – Brewarrina Shire Council	Brewarrina	\$107,190
Broken Hill City Council	Environmental improvements for Broken Hill landfill	Broken Hill	\$200,000
Central Darling Shire Council	Central Darling landfill improvement project	Central Darling	\$32,204
Forbes Shire Council	Environmental improvements to Bedgerabong landfill	Forbes	\$68,449
Forbes Shire Council	Environmental improvements to Garema landfill	Forbes	\$16,871
Gloucester Shire Council	Gloucester landfill fencing	Gloucester ^A	\$60,000
Lithgow City Council	Lithgow City landfill improvements	Lithgow	\$64,930
Murrumbidgee Shire Council	Improve waste handling at Coleambally landfill facility	Murrumbidgee ^A	\$80,940
Narromine Shire Council	Narromine Shire Council waste depot environmental improvements	Narromine	\$74,192

Organisation	Title	LGA	Amount
Oberon Council	Oberon waste facility environmental improvements	Oberon [^]	\$42,790
Richmond Valley Council	Establish Coraki transfer station	Richmond Valley	\$200,000
Upper Lachlan Shire Council	Upper Lachlan landfill environmental improvement project	Upper Lachlan	\$200,000
Uralla Shire Council	Uralla landfill environmental improvements 2016	Uralla [^]	\$83,200
Walcha Council	Nowendoc landfill environmental improvement works	Walcha [^]	\$60,360
Total			\$2,997,830

[^] These councils may have been amalgamated in the 2015–16 financial year and may now operate under a different name.
The LGA identified relates to the principal project site.

Other Waste and Environment Programs

The Trust receives funds from the NSW Government's Waste Levy to manage a number of additional waste and environmental programs focusing on sustainability, protecting threatened species and enhancing biodiversity.

This year the Trust continued to fund programs awarded in previous years, including Alternative Waste Treatment, Devil Ark, Grow Sustainable Nature Based Tourism and Reform of Native Forestry Regulation. This was the final year that the Trust oversaw Sustainability Programs, which is to be solely administered by OEH next year.

Alternative Waste Treatment (AWT) – Mixed Waste Organic Output Trials

Now into its fifth year, this project aims to understand the benefits and risks of the land application of mixed waste organic outputs (MWOO) through the delivery of four research subprojects.

Work continued on investigating the impacts of physical contaminants, including glass, rigid and film plastics, in MWOO on the soil environment. During 2015–16, various experiments were conducted including: morphology and distribution of physical contaminants within surface soils one year after MWOO was applied to the soil; earthworm avoidance, rhizobia survival and impacts on tuber vegetables from the application of crushed glass at various rates; degradation of plastics under accelerated aging conditions; and the effects of microplastics in MWOO applied to agricultural soils. Research will continue into 2016–17, with findings reported at project completion.

A large-scale field trial evaluating MWOO as a soil amendment is also continuing. A third cropping season has been completed, with positive agronomic responses found only at high application rates of greater than 60 tonnes per hectare. No toxicity effects were seen in the wheat crop and grain quality was not compromised by metal or other contaminants. Deep core samples of 1 metre depth were taken under selected treatment plots. Analyses of these will be used to assess the impact of treatment materials on subsoil properties and to ascertain if there has been any possible movement of contaminants below the zone of application.

Two further projects which investigated leaching and toxicity from the MWOO and the effect of soil type on its behaviour are complete.

Devil Ark

Devil Ark is a special breeding facility on a remote property in the Barrington Tops that is helping to conserve the endangered Tasmanian Devil through a free-range captive breeding program.

In 2015–16 the project sent its first devils back to Tasmania. Twenty-two animals were released into devil facial tumour disease-free, fenced areas on the Forestier Peninsula. Several

of the females released have since been confirmed to have had young.

Back in Barrington Tops, restoration and rehabilitation works have continued, with hazard reduction burning and ongoing implementation of a successful weed management plan. Eleven out of the 19 females in the facility were confirmed to have pouch young.

Continuing its successful donor funding and promotion program, the grantee has increased its contact base by 54%, social media following by 82% and launched a user-friendly website. The Devils in the Wild tours continue to be popular, and the project has appeared on television programs *Bondi Vet* and *The Living Room*.

Flying-fox Netting Subsidy Program

This program provides subsidies for fruit growers for the installation of netting on commercial orchards across New South Wales. The program aims to eliminate the need for licensed shooting as a crop protection measure for flying-foxes, and eligible growers can obtain up to 50% of the cost of installing netting, up to a maximum of \$20,000 per hectare.

Since the grant commenced the Trust has awarded a total of \$7.1 million to the Rural Assistance Authority who administers the grant. The program was awarded \$5 million in 2011–12, up to \$1 million of provisional funding in 2014 and an additional \$1.1 million was reallocated from the Waste Less, Recycle More contestable grants program in 2015. To provide growers with flexibility to complete works and have their claims for reimbursement processed before the scheduled scheme closing, the Trust approved an extension of the term to expend funds under the program until 30 June 2017 with any new applications to be received by 30 June 2016.

During 2015–16, 28 applications were received for the Flying-fox Netting Subsidy, and \$1.87 million in assistance was approved. During the life of the program 128 applications have been processed with \$6.8 million in assistance approved, resulting in a total of more than 686 hectares of fruit crops netted.

Grow Sustainable Nature Based Tourism

A \$4.8 million grant to deliver this program was awarded to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to encourage sustainable growth in visitor numbers and build a community of support for nature and conservation. The achievements from the grants awarded under this program during 2015–16 are:

NSW National Parks Campaign

This project aims to develop and implement a well-informed and cost-effective multi-year brand campaign aimed at the young adult market. It aims to raise awareness of national

parks experiences and encourage a greater awareness, appreciation and support for nature.

Extensive internal and external consultation was undertaken to ensure the campaign integrates with other NPWS projects and teams.

A broad NPWS consumer research study was undertaken, which directly informed the design of a campaign strategy. Creative concepts were developed and tested with the target market. The campaign was presented to the Department of Premier and Cabinet Peer Review Panel for endorsement.

Commercial Tour Operator Small Grants program

The Commercial Tour Operator Small Grants program, formerly known as the National Landscapes Small Grants program, provides small grants to commercial operators to develop or enhance experiences for visitors to connect, experience and learn about nature and conservation. It focuses on the five 'National Landscapes' in New South Wales, including Australia's Coastal Wilderness (south coast), Australian Alps, Sydney Harbour, Greater Blue Mountains (including the World Heritage property), and Australia's Green Cauldron (including the World Heritage property) (north coast).

The first round of the grant program was announced by the Honourable Mark Speakman MP in February 2016. A total of 49 expressions of interest were received, with 22 proceeding through to the full application stage. Grants will be awarded in late 2016.

There has been a significant amount of positive feedback from operators regarding the program and its benefits.

WilderQuest Learning

WilderQuest Learning builds on the successful WilderQuest program, by providing an online education portal for teachers and students that is linked to the NSW and Australian curriculums. It involves a 10-week teaching program and activities that facilitate experiences that get students into nature and national parks.

The online portal was launched in January 2016. By June Stage 1 and 2 education materials had been completed and made available through the portal.

A WilderQuest excursion package was developed and piloted to expand the online learning material and provide nature-based learning experiences for students. These are available in seven locations across the State, and selected NPWS Discovery staff have been trained to deliver the excursions.

At the end of June, 685 teachers and 3719 students from 531 schools in New South Wales had registered to use WilderQuest Learning online.

Reform of native forestry regulation

This project provides funds to the EPA to deliver major reform of the environmental regulation of native forestry. It informs regulatory framework reforms for state forests in New South Wales.

Sustainability Programs

The Trust has funded Sustainability Programs for more than 10 years, however, 2015–16 was the last year that the Trust oversaw the program, which will be solely administered by OEH next year.



The Honourable Mark Speakman MP, Minister for the Environment, with Sharyn Hunnisett and Theresa Adams from Lismore City Council, and Will and Jessica Brook from Brookfarm at the NSW Government Green Globe Awards

The Trust commenced an independent evaluation of the program in order to support the transition and future governance by OEH.

Sustainability Advantage program

Sustainability Advantage is the NSW Government's flagship sustainability program supporting medium to large businesses to improve their productivity and help the environment. The program celebrated its 10-year anniversary in December 2015.

This year the program launched its new membership model. This has been strongly endorsed by the NSW business community, with 25 new organisations signing up and over 100 existing members continuing to participate. The program generated more than \$360,000 this year. The new fee structure leverages the commitment of its valued partners to achieve greater outcomes for the business sector.

Sustainability Advantage members won nine award categories in the 2015 NSW Green Globe Awards, including the gold trophy for the Premier's Award for Excellence for Brookfarm Pty Ltd, a gourmet macadamia producer in Byron Bay.

Social research: Who Cares about the Environment?

Who Cares about the Environment? ('Who Cares?') is a survey of the environmental attitudes, knowledge and behaviour of the people of New South Wales. Held every three years since 1994, it provides a longitudinal data set that helps government and non-government organisations deliver more effective, efficient and well-targeted sustainability programs and policies.

A Who Cares survey was conducted in 2015 and was informed by the program evaluation held the previous year. It explored community priorities for the NSW Government, community views and knowledge about the condition of the environment and a range of contemporary environmental issues. The survey findings will be disseminated in 2016.

Social Enterprises for Sustainability

This program increases the viability of businesses that generate most of their income from trade and re-invest profit towards an environmental mission.

In 2015–16, the program hosted a Social Enterprise Hackathon event with key sector experts, introduced social enterprise procurement opportunities to businesses and provided five scholarships to attend the School for Social Entrepreneurs' Accelerator program.

The coming year will include delivery of enterprising skill sessions, marketplace events and sustainable procurement masterclasses.

Dissemination Program

Since 2005 this program has extended the success, knowledge and tools produced by successfully completed grant projects across New South Wales. The program builds capacity in environmental protection by extending the lessons learnt and experiences gained by grantees.

Achievements

In 2015–16, two dissemination grants were completed and one new dissemination project was funded valued at \$64,605 (Table 27).

This year the program saw the production of a number of high-quality resources, including guidelines, area-specific plant lists, a redeveloped and improved website and an online learning module.

In addition, the Dissemination Program conducted the Trust Stakeholder Engagement Survey to examine the preferences, motivations, needs and knowledge levels of grant-eligible government, community and non-government groups. This valuable piece of work, which included online surveys and targeted telephone interviews, has improved the Trust's understanding of which current practices are effective and which practices might be implemented or improved to better engage grant-eligible organisations. The survey has identified new avenues to enhance grantee knowledge and investment of Trust funding, as well as ways to enhance existing advertising, reporting and dissemination strategies. The survey results will be considered for implementation from 2016–17.

Completed projects

Following is a description of two dissemination projects completed in 2015–16.

Habitat Stepping Stones

This project furthered the benefit of the original Habitat Stepping Stones project by working with Bankstown, City of Sydney, Pittwater, the Hills Shire and Parramatta councils to engage with their residents about habitat creation. Residents learnt how to make their outdoor space wildlife friendly, and pledged to install plants and other elements to create urban habitat. This project has enhanced awareness and understanding of the importance of urban habitat, resulting in 774 plantings and 1525 pledged habitat elements across the five council areas targeted. A thorough evaluation has provided valuable information on the best ways to engage councils and residents about local habitat creation.

Aged Care: Caring for the Environment

This project built on a successful project by UnitingCare Ageing which reviewed sustainability educational resources offered across the aged-care sector and developed a package of resources to educate and empower key stakeholders and staff on sustainability. This project adapted and rebranded these resources to develop *Making Sustainability Work: A guideline on how to use educational tools for sustainability* which helps NSW aged-care providers to bring about long-term behavioural change at their facilities.

The guidelines were piloted at two aged-care centres, and introduced through presentations to the aged-care sector. An online learning module facilitates use of the guidelines to help management and staff make their facilities more environmentally sustainable. Both are available via the Aged and Community Services NSW and ACT environmental sustainability resources portal.

Table 27

Dissemination Projects funded in 2015–16

Organisation	Title and description	Amount
Greater Sydney Local Land Services	Environmental education strategy for coastal boaters and fishers Members of two culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) language communities engaged in boating and fishing will be trained as aquatic champions, delivering key messages on caring for the aquatic environment to their peers and communities. A complementary, NSW curriculum-linked resource package will be developed and distributed to schools with a high population of the two identified CALD communities.	\$64,605
Total		\$64,605

BioBanking Trust Fund and Offset Programs

The Biodiversity Banking and Offsets Scheme (BioBanking scheme) allows for the negotiation of long-term conservation agreements (biobanking agreements) between landowners and the Minister for the Environment. The BioBanking Trust Fund, managed by the Trust until July 2017, receives funds from each biodiversity credit sale. These are then invested in TCorp Hourglass facilities. Annual management payments are made to biobank site owners from these investments to improve the biodiversity value of their land.

As at 30 June 2016, the Fund held investments for 44 biobank sites, including eight new sites that commenced in 2015–16.

Funds are invested in three investment options (Cash Facility, Medium Term Growth Facility and Long Term Growth Facility). An operating account is also held with Westpac to receive deposits and make payments. As of 30 June 2015, the total funds held within the BioBanking Trust Fund totalled more than \$50.7 million (Table 28). In 2015–16, the fund provided \$3.09 million in payments to property owners for the management of biodiversity on their land.

Table 28

BioBanking Trust Fund 2015–16

Details	Amount
Cash balance at the beginning of the financial year	\$43,879,077
Receipts by the BioBanking Trust Fund (no GST)	\$9,549,495
Return on invested funds	\$549,449
Annual management payments (GST exclusive)	-\$3,095,653
Management fee (OEH)	-\$39,016
Administration fee (NSW Environmental Trust)	-\$90,941
Cash balance invested in the BioBanking Trust Fund	\$50,752,411

Warnervale Town Centre

Warnervale Town Centre in the Wyong local government area will be developed over the coming 10–20 years, involving the offsetting of impacts on a number of plant communities and species, including the vulnerable heath wrinklewort (*Rutidosis heterogama*) and wallum froglet (*Crinia tinnula*). These impacts require biodiversity offsets of up to \$4.4 million, which the Trust has previously awarded.

The biodiversity certification assessment calculated that 2233 ecosystem credits and 2508 species credits would need to be retired, which equates to the conservation of approximately 270 hectares.

An EOI listing the required credits was published on the BioBanking website, and OEH is currently developing a Deed of Agreement with the Nature Conservation Trust of NSW (NCT) to facilitate the purchase and/or conservation of properties if required.

Over the coming year OEH will conduct biodiversity certification desktop assessments, site inspections and more detailed ecological assessments to facilitate purchase of offsets, prepare referencing documentation for lands to be included in the national parks estate and finalise the deed of agreement with NCT.

Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program

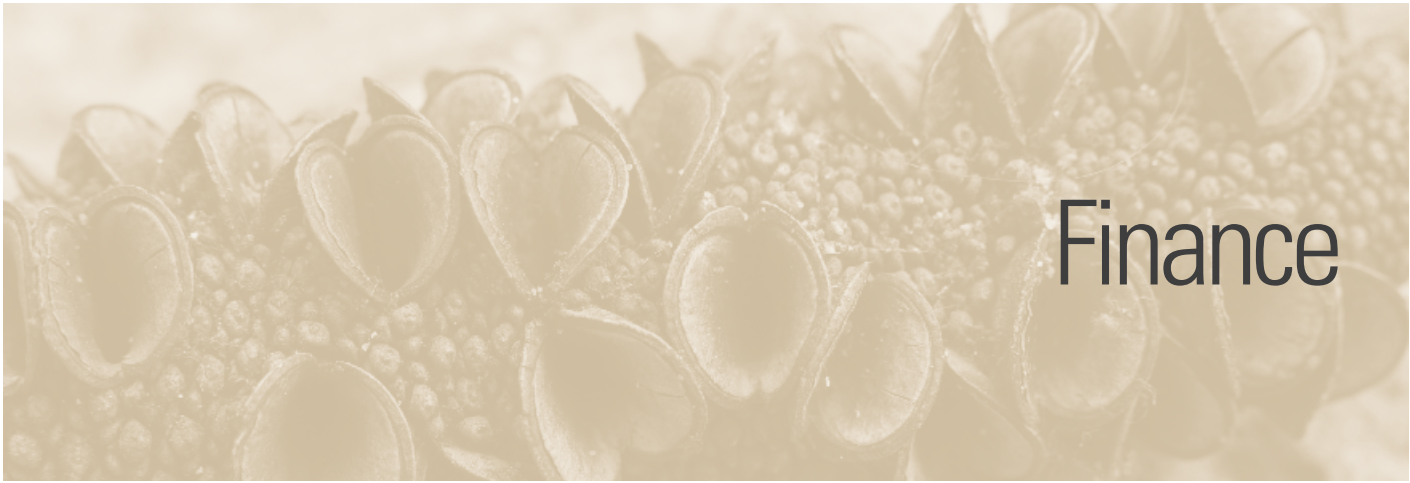
The Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program aims to permanently protect some of the best remaining bushland in western Sydney. Program funds can be used to acquire land from willing landowners for new reserves, to purchase biodiversity credits from existing biobank sites, or to establish new biobank sites with willing landowners and purchase the biodiversity credits created by these. Program funds can only be spent within identified priority areas. To date the program has protected more than 511 hectares of high conservation value land at 12 locations in western Sydney.

During 2015–16, the program protected an additional 40 hectares of threatened vegetation at four biobank sites. Of particular note, the program funded the establishment of a new biobank site at the historic Mater Dei property on the banks of the Nepean River at Cobbitty. The 58-hectare site adjoins an existing 26-hectare biobank site that was protected on the property by the program in 2011–12. Both sites protect critically endangered Cumberland Plain Woodland and endangered River-flat Eucalypt Forest. The program purchased biodiversity credits for 20 hectares of this vegetation in 2015–16 and will purchase the remaining credits in the coming years.

Program funding was also used to purchase biodiversity credits from three existing biobank sites within the program's first preference investment areas, including on the 648-hectare Fernhill Estate at Mulgoa. The historic property adjoins the Blue Mountains National Park and contains two biobank sites. The second biobank site, Fernhill Central West, was established in April 2014 and protects 147 hectares of bushland. In 2015–16 the program purchased credits from this site for 4.7 hectares of critically endangered Shale Sandstone Transition Forest.

The program also completed the final purchase of biodiversity credits from the Glenmore Park biobank site near Penrith, which provides a crucial link between two previously separated portions of the Mulgoa Nature Reserve. The biobank site demonstrates the importance that private land conservation plays in supporting public reserves.

In addition, the program protected 13.5 hectares of threatened vegetation through purchasing credits from the Williamswood biobank site at Mount Hunter. The biobank site covers 104.5 hectares of the 124-hectare property.





INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Environmental Trust

To Members of the New South Wales Parliament

Opinion

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Environmental Trust (the Trust), which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2016, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows and service group statements for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Trust as at 30 June 2016, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards
- are in accordance with section 41B of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* (PF&A Act) and the Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2015.

My opinion should be read in conjunction with the rest of this report.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements* section of my report.

I am independent of the Trust in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of:

- Australian Auditing Standards
- ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 'Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants' (the Code).

I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

The PF&A Act further promotes independence by ensuring the Auditor-General and the Audit Office of New South Wales are not compromised in their roles by:

- providing that only Parliament, and not the executive government, can remove an Auditor-General
- mandating the Auditor-General as auditor of public sector agencies, but precluding the provision of non-audit services.

I believe the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Trustees' Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The Trustees are responsible for preparing financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the PF&A Act and for such internal control as the Trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that give a true and fair view and are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees must assess Trust's ability to continue as a going concern unless Trust will be dissolved by an Act of Parliament or otherwise cease operations. The assessment must include, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting.

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to:

- obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and
- issue an Independent Auditor's Report including my opinion.

Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but does not guarantee an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect material misstatements. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error. Misstatements are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions users take based on the financial statements.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: <http://www.auasb.gov.au/Home.aspx>. The description forms part of my auditor's report.

My opinion does *not* provide assurance:

- that the Trust carried out its activities effectively, efficiently and economically
- about the assumptions used in formulating the budget figures disclosed in the financial statements
- about the security and controls over the electronic publication of the audited financial statements on any website where they may be presented.



Caroline Karakatsanis
Director, Financial Audit Services

21 September 2016
SYDNEY

Environmental Trust

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE TRUST

For the year ended 30 June 2016

Pursuant to Section 41C (1C) of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, and in accordance with a resolution of the Environmental Trust, we state that:

- a) the accompanying financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*, the applicable clauses of the Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2015, Australian Accounting Standards, the Financial Reporting Code for NSW General Government Sector Entities and the Treasurer's Directions;
- b) the statements exhibit a true and fair view of the financial position and transactions of the Trust; and
- c) there are no circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.



Mark Speakman MP
Chair



Terry Bailey
Secretary

ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST**BEGINNING OF AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS****STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME****FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016**

	Notes	Actual 2016 \$'000	Budget 2016 \$'000	Actual 2015 \$'000
Expenses excluding losses				
Operating expenses				
Other operating expenses	2(a)	4,069	3,376	3,732
Grants and subsidies	2(b)	63,146	103,173	81,891
Total Expenses excluding losses		67,215	106,549	85,623
Revenue				
Investment revenue	3(a)	–	–	964
Grants and contributions	3(b)	53,647	93,943	80,964
Other revenue	3(c)	1,373	300	2,717
Total Revenue		55,020	94,243	84,645
Net Result		(12,195)	(12,306)	(978)
Other comprehensive income		–	–	–
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		(12,195)	(12,306)	(978)

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 JUNE 2016

		Actual 2016 \$'000	Budget 2016 \$'000	Actual 2015 \$'000
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Cash and cash equivalents	5	4,234	4,112	16,131
Receivables	6	1,049	1,749	1,548
Total Current Assets		5,283	5,861	17,679
Total Assets		5,283	5,861	17,679
LIABILITIES				
Current Liabilities				
Payables	7	202	844	403
Total Current Liabilities		202	844	403
Net Assets		5,081	5,017	17,276
EQUITY				
Accumulated funds		5,081	5,017	17,276
Total Equity		5,081	5,017	17,276

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Accumulated Funds \$'000	Total \$'000
Balance at 1 July 2015	17,276	17,276
Net result for the year	(12,195)	(12,195)
Total comprehensive income for the year	(12,195)	(12,195)
Balance at 30 June 2016	5,081	5,081
Balance at 1 July 2014	18,254	18,254
Net result for the year	(978)	(978)
Total comprehensive income for the year	(978)	(978)
Balance at 30 June 2015	17,276	17,276

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Actual 2016 \$'000	Budget 2016 \$'000	Actual 2015 \$'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Payments			
Grants and subsidies	(63,145)	(103,173)	(81,891)
Other	(6,472)	(3,735)	(6,294)
Total Payments	(69,617)	(106,908)	(88,185)
Receipts			
Interest received	410	–	885
Grants and Subsidies	53,647	93,943	80,964
Other	3,663	300	3,382
Total Receipts	57,720	94,243	85,231
NET CASHFLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	(11,897)	(12,665)	(2,954)
	12		
NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CASH	(11,897)	(12,665)	(2,954)
Opening cash and cash equivalents	16,131	16,777	19,085
CLOSING CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	4,234	4,112	16,131
	5		

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

SERVICE GROUP STATEMENT – STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Competitive Grants		Major Programs		Total	
	June 2016 \$'000	June 2015 \$'000	June 2016 \$'000	June 2015 \$'000	June 2016 \$'000	June 2015 \$'000
EXPENSES AND INCOME						
Expenses excluding losses						
Operating expenses						
Other Operating expenses	2,034	1,866	2,035	1,866	4,069	3,732
Grants and subsidies	35,914	49,327	27,232	32,564	63,146	81,891
Total Expenses excluding losses	37,948	51,193	29,267	34,430	67,215	85,623
Revenue						
Investment Revenue	–	187	–	777	–	964
Grant from cluster Department*	30,512	47,130	23,135	33,834	53,647	80,964
Other Revenue	986	2,626	387	91	1,373	2,717
Total Revenue	31,498	49,943	23,522	34,702	55,020	84,645
Net result/(loss)	(6,450)	(1,250)	(5,745)	272	(12,195)	(978)
Other Comprehensive Income	–	–	–	–	–	–
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME	(6,450)	(1,250)	(5,745)	272	(12,195)	(978)

* Cluster Department refers to the Department of Planning and Environment.

The names and purpose of each Service Group are summarised in note 4.

ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

SERVICE GROUP STATEMENT – STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 JUNE 2016

	Competitive Grants		Major Programs		Total	
	June 2016 \$'000	June 2015 \$'000	June 2016 \$'000	June 2015 \$'000	June 2016 \$'000	June 2015 \$'000
ASSETS & LIABILITIES						
Current assets						
Cash and cash equivalents	2,409	9,426	1,825	6,705	4,234	16,131
Receivables	1,049	1,376	–	172	1,049	1,548
Total current assets	3,458	10,802	1,825	6,877	5,283	17,679
Non-current assets						
Total non-current assets	–	–	–	–	–	–
TOTAL ASSETS	3,458	10,802	1,825	6,877	5,283	17,679
LIABILITIES						
Current liabilities						
Payables	185	330	17	73	202	403
Total current liabilities	185	330	17	73	202	403
Non-current liabilities						
Total non-current liabilities	–	–	–	–	–	–
TOTAL LIABILITIES	185	330	17	73	202	403
NET ASSETS	3,273	10,472	1,808	6,804	5,081	17,276

The names and purpose of each Service Group are summarised in note 4.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

1. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Reporting Entity

The Environmental Trust (the Trust), is a NSW government entity, as constituted by the *Environmental Trust Act 1998*, and is a reporting entity under the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983*.

The Environmental Trust is a not-for-profit entity (as profit is not its principal objective) with no cash generating units. The reporting entity is consolidated as part of the NSW Total State Sector Accounts.

Since July 2008, the Environmental Trust has been the Fund Manager for the BioBanking Trust Fund pursuant to section 127ZY(1) of the *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (TSC Act). The Environmental Trust's current appointment as BioBanking Trust Fund Manager concludes in July 2017. The BioBanking Trust Fund is an element of the Biodiversity Banking and Offsets Scheme (BioBanking Scheme) established under Section 127A of the TSC Act. This scheme provides a robust framework for private land conservation and offsetting, providing long-term arrangements for biodiversity conservation on private land. Each BioBanking site has a legal agreement between the Minister for the Environment and the BioBanking site land owner(s). The BioBanking Trust Fund holds and invests financial assets to pay for the future management of BioBanking sites.

The operations of the BioBanking Trust Fund are not consolidated with the Environmental Trust's financial statements.

The Environmental Trust's financial statements have been authorised for issue by the Environmental Trust on 19 September 2016.

(b) Basis of Preparation

The Trust's financial statements are general purpose financial statements which have been prepared on an accruals basis and in accordance with:

- applicable Australian Accounting Standards (which include Australian Accounting Interpretations);
- the requirements of the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1983* and *Public Finance and Audit Regulation 2015*; and
- the Financial Reporting Directions published in the Financial Reporting Code for NSW General Government Sector Entities or issued by the Treasurer.

Financial statement items are prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention.

Judgements, key assumptions and estimates made by management are disclosed in the relevant notes to the financial statements.

All amounts are rounded to the nearest one thousand dollars and are expressed in Australian currency.

(c) Statement of compliance

The financial statements and notes comply with Australian Accounting Standards, which include Australian Accounting Interpretations.

(d) Insurance

A range of insurances are carried by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) with the New South Wales Treasury Managed Fund. This coverage extends to the operations of the Trust. Insurance cover is reviewed annually to ensure adequacy.

(e) Accounting for the Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Income, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except that the:

- amount of GST incurred by the Trust as a purchaser, that is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of an asset or as part of an item of expense, and
- receivables and payables are stated with the amount of GST included.

Cash flows are included in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis.

(f) Income recognition

Income is measured at the fair value of the consideration or contribution received or receivable.

Additional comments regarding the accounting policies for the recognition of income are discussed below.

(i) Parliamentary appropriations and contributions

Parliamentary appropriations (received as grants from the principal department in the cluster) and contributions from other bodies (including grants and donations) are generally recognised as income when the Trust obtains control over the assets comprising the appropriations and contributions. Control over appropriations, grants and contributions is normally obtained upon the receipt of cash.

(ii) Investment revenue

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest method as set out in AASB 139 *Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement*. There was no interest revenue earned during the 2015–16 year. Refer note 3(a).

(g) Receivables

Receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market.

These financial assets are recognised initially at fair value, usually based on the transaction cost or face value. Subsequent measurement is at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less an allowance for any impairment of receivables. Any changes are recognised in the net result for the year when impaired, derecognised or through the amortisation process.

Short term receivables with no stated interest rate are measured at the original invoice amount where the effect of discounting is immaterial.

(h) Impairment of financial assets

All financial assets are measured at fair value and are not subject to an annual review for impairment. An allowance for impairment is established when there is objective evidence that the entity will not be able to collect all amounts due.

(i) De-recognition of financial assets and financial liabilities

A financial asset is derecognised when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial assets expire or if the Trust transfers the financial asset:

- where substantially all the risks and rewards have been transferred, or
- where the Trust has not transferred substantially all the risks and rewards, but has not retained control.

Where the Trust has neither transferred nor retained substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership or transferred control, the asset is recognised to the extent of the Trust's continuing involvement in the asset.

A financial liability is derecognised when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expires.

(j) Payables

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Trust and other amounts. Payables are recognised initially at fair value, usually based on the transaction cost or face value. Subsequent measurement is at amortised cost using the effective interest method. Short-term payables with no stated interest are measured at the original invoice amount where the effect of discounting is immaterial.

(k) Equity and reserves

(i) Accumulated Funds

The category 'Accumulated Funds' includes all current and prior period retained funds.

(l) Budgeted amounts

The budgeted amounts are drawn from the original budgeted financial statements presented to Parliament in respect of the reporting period. Subsequent amendments to the original budget (e.g. adjustment for transfer of functions between entities as a result of Administrative Arrangements Orders) are not reflected in the budgeted amounts. Major variances between the original budgeted amounts and the actual amounts disclosed in the primary financial statements are explained in Note 10.

(m) Assistance provided by other organisations

The maintenance of the Trust's accounting records and provision of other administrative services is provided by the Office of Environment and Heritage. The fair value of such services is charged to the Trust. Refer note 2(a).

(n) Comparative Information

Except when an Australian Accounting standard permits or requires otherwise, comparative information is disclosed in respect of the previous period for all amounts reported in the financial statements.

(o) Changes in accounting policy, including new or revised Australian Accounting Standards

The accounting policies applied in 2015–16 are consistent with those of the previous financial year except as a result of the following new or revised Australian Accounting Standards that have been applied for the first time in the year to 30 June 2016:

- AASB 2014-1 (Part D) regarding Regulatory Deferral Accounts
- AASB 2015-3 regarding withdrawal of AASB 1031 Materiality
- AASB 2015-4 regarding amendments to AASB 128 Investments in Associates and Joint Ventures relating to financial reporting requirements for Australian groups with a foreign parent

The impact of the Standards in the period of initial application has not resulted in a material impact on the financial statements.

Issued but not yet effective:

NSW public sector entities are not permitted to early adopt new Australian Accounting Standards, unless Treasury determines otherwise.

The following new Accounting Standards have not been applied and are not yet effective (NSW Treasury mandate TC 16/02):

- AASB 9 and AASB 2014-7 regarding financial instruments
- AASB 14 and AASB 2014-1(Part E) regarding Regulatory Deferral Accounts
- AASB 15 and AASB 2014-5 regarding Revenue from Contracts with Customers
- AASB 1056 Superannuation Entities
- AASB 1057 and AASB 2015-9 Application of Australian Accounting Standards
- AASB 2014-3 regarding accounting for acquisitions of interests in joint operations
- AASB 2014-4 regarding acceptable methods of depreciation and amortisation
- AASB 2014-6 regarding bearer plants
- AASB 2014-9 regarding equity method in separate financial statements
- AASB 2014-10 and AASB 2015-10 regarding sale or contribution of assets between and investor and its associate or joint venture
- AASB 2015-1 regarding annual improvements to Australian Accounting Standards 2012-2014 cycle
- AASB 2015-2 regarding amendments to AASB 101 (disclosure initiative)
- AASB 2015-5 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Investment Entities: Applying the Consolidation Exception
- AASB 2015-6 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Extending Related Party Disclosures to Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities

These standards have been assessed for their possible impact on the financial statements, if any, in the period of their initial application. The assessment concluded that there will be no material financial impact. However additional disclosures are expected as a result of the application of AASB 2015-6 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Extending Related Party Disclosures to Not-for-Profit Public Sector Entities.

2. EXPENSES EXCLUDING LOSSES

(a) Other operating expenses:	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Auditor's remuneration – audit of the financial statements	34	33
Corporate and specialist support from OEH	3,315	2,909
Stores and minor assets	4	4
Hire – plant, facilities and venues	1	4
Advertising, printing and publishing	107	115
Fees for services	586	644
Travel	18	23
Other	4	–
	4,069	3,732

(b) Grants and subsidies:	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Federal Government	340	248
State and Local Governments	41,421	57,944
Other	21,385	23,699
	63,146	81,891

3. REVENUE

(a) Investment revenue	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Interest revenue from financial assets not at fair value through profit or loss	–	354
Interest revenue from Investments	–	610
	–	964

*Under Treasury cash management reforms, made effective at 31 March 2015, Environmental Trust is not able to hold any 'at call' cash deposits with the NSW Treasury Corporation and does not earn any interest on cash balances held with the Westpac Banking Corporation. As a result no interest was earned during the year.

(b) Grants and contributions	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Recurrent funding from the cluster department*	53,647	80,964
	53,647	80,964

*Cluster department refers to the Department of Planning and Environment

(c) Other revenue	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Fund manager fees	118	91
Refunds	1,255	2,626
	1,373	2,717

4. SERVICE GROUPS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST

Competitive Grants and Major Programs

Service Description: Competitive Grants

This service group covers grant funding to community groups, non-government organisations, schools, Aboriginal organisations, industry, research bodies, and state and local government agencies to undertake restoration and rehabilitation, education, research and waste management initiatives.

Major Programs

This service group covers grant funding to government agencies and other groups for programs addressing key environmental initiatives and government priorities.

5. CURRENT ASSETS – CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Cash at bank and on hand	4,234	16,131
	4,234	16,131

6. CURRENT ASSETS – RECEIVABLES

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Debtors	105	3
Accrued Income	178	102
Interest	–	410
GST receivables	766	1,033
	1,049	1,548

No provision for doubtful debts has been made as all amounts are considered to be collectable.

Refer note 13 for details regarding credit risk, liquidity risk and market risk arising from financial instruments.

7. CURRENT LIABILITIES – PAYABLES

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Creditors	6	52
Accrued expenses	196	351
	202	403

8. COMMITMENTS FOR EXPENDITURE

There were no commitments as at 30 June 2016 (2015 – nil).

9. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND CONTINGENT ASSETS

There were no contingent liabilities or contingent assets as at 30 June 2016 (2015 – nil).

10. BUDGET REVIEW

(a) Net result

The actual net deficit of (\$12.2 million) was \$0.1 million lower than the budget of (\$12.3 million). Under expenditure of \$39.3 million was nearly offset by lower than budgeted revenue of \$39.2 million. Expense and revenue variances were due to:

	<u>\$ million</u>
<i>Expenses:</i>	
– Reduction in grant expenses primarily due to reallocation from the 2015–16 financial year to future years through the State Budget process. Delays in project implementation by grantees, variation of timeframes and design of projects by grantees to maximise environmental outcomes or to incorporate new opportunities are some of the reasons for reallocating expenses to future years. Examples of grants programs that were reallocated include ‘waste less and recycle more’, ‘saving our species’ and ‘protecting our places’.	40.0
– Increase in operating expenses primarily due to higher corporate and specialist support fees to OEH towards implementing new grants programs, which include ‘urban habitat renewal’ and ‘integrated volunteer initiative’ and escalation based on consumer price index movement	(0.7)
Total variances in expenses	39.3
<i>Revenue:</i>	
– Higher than budgeted refunds of unspent grants by grantees mainly due to their under expenditure.	1.0
– Reallocation of government funding to future years to correspond with the timing of expenses reallocated through the State Budget process (refer above).	(40.2)
Total variances in revenue	(39.2)
Variance in net result	0.1

(b) Assets and liabilities

There was no material variance between the actual and budgeted net assets.

(c) Cash flows

Total payments and total receipts were below the budget due to reduced program expenditure and revenue (refer above). The net cash reduction of \$11.9 million in 2015–16 is due to the reduction in government funding and use of cash balances to support approved programs, under the Treasury’s cash management reforms.

11. BIOBANKING TRUST FUND – ADMINISTERED ACTIVITY

Eight new site transactions occurred during the period 1 July 2015 and 30 June 2016 bringing the total number of sites managed to 44. Refer to note 1 (a) for further detail on Biobanking Trust Fund.

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Cash balance at the beginning of the financial year	43,878	31,009
Add: receipts by the BioBanking Trust	9,549	12,776
Add: Interest on invested BioBanking Trust funds	549	2,729
Less: annual management payment	(3,133)	(2,586)
Less: fund manager fee to the Environmental Trust	(91)	(50)
Balance invested in the Fund	50,752	43,878

12. RECONCILIATION OF CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES TO NET RESULT

	2016 \$'000	2015 \$'000
Net cash used on operating activities	(11,897)	(2,954)
(Increase)/decrease in creditors	201	2,562
(Decrease)/increase in receivables	(499)	(586)
Net Result	(12,195)	(978)

13. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Environmental Trust's principal financial instruments are outlined below. These financial instruments arise directly from Environmental Trust's operations or are required to finance Environmental Trust's operations. Environmental Trust does not enter into or trade financial instruments, including derivative financial instruments, for speculative purposes.

Environmental Trust's main risks arising from financial instruments are outlined below, together with Environmental Trust's objectives, policies and processes for measuring and managing risk. Further quantitative and qualitative disclosures are included throughout these financial statements.

The Trustee has overall responsibility for the establishment and oversight of risk management and reviews and agrees policies for managing each of these risks. Risk management policies are established to identify and analyse the risks faced by Environmental Trust, to set risk limits and controls and to monitor risks. Compliance with policies is reviewed as part of OEH's audit and review program.

(a) Financial Instrument Categories

Financial Assets	Note	Category	Carrying Amount	Carrying Amount
			2016	2015
			\$'000	\$'000
Class:				
Cash and cash equivalents	5	N/A	4,234	16,131
Receivables (1)	6	Loans and receivables (at amortised cost)	283	515
			4,517	16,646
Financial Liabilities	Note	Category	Carrying Amount	Carrying Amount
			2016	2015
			\$'000	\$'000
Class:				
Payables	7	Financial liabilities (at amortised cost)	202	403
			202	403

Notes

1. Excludes statutory receivables of \$766k (2015:\$1.033m).

(b) Credit Risk

Credit risk arises when there is the possibility that Environmental Trust's debtors will default on their contractual obligations, resulting in a financial loss to Environmental Trust. The maximum exposure to credit risk is generally represented by the carrying amount of the financial assets (net of any allowance for impairment).

Credit risk arises from the financial assets of Environmental Trust, including cash, receivables, and authority deposits. No collateral is held by Environmental Trust. Environmental Trust has not granted any financial guarantees.

Credit risk associated with Environmental Trust's financial assets, other than receivables, is managed through the selection of counterparties and establishment of minimum credit rating standards.

Cash

Cash comprises cash on hand and bank balances within the NSW Treasury Banking System.

Receivables and Trade Debtors

All trade debtors are recognised as amounts receivable at balance date. Collectability of trade debtors is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Procedures as established in the Treasurer's Directions are followed to recover outstanding amounts, including letters of demand. Debts which are known to be uncollectible are written off. An allowance for impairment is raised when there is objective evidence that Environmental Trust will not be able to collect all amounts due. This evidence includes past experience, and current and expected changes in economic conditions and debtor credit ratings. No interest is earned on trade debtors. Sales are made on 30 day terms.

Environmental Trust is not materially exposed to concentrations of credit risk to a single trade debtor or group of debtors. There was no provision required for doubtful debts.

The only financial assets that are past due or impaired are 'sales of goods and services' in the 'receivables' category of the statement of financial position.

	\$'000		\$'000
	Total ^{1,2}	Past due but not impaired ^{1,2}	Considered impaired ^{1,2}
2016			
< 3 Months overdue	40	40	–
3 months – 6 months overdue	55	55	–
> 6 months overdue	–	–	–
2015			
< 3 Months overdue	3	3	–
3 months – 6 months overdue	–	–	–
> 6 months overdue	–	–	–

Notes

- Each column in the table reports 'gross receivables'.
- The ageing analysis excludes statutory receivables, as these are not within the scope of AASB 7 and excludes receivables that are not past due and not impaired. Therefore, the 'total' will not reconcile to the receivables total recognised in the statement of financial position.

(c) Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that Environmental Trust will be unable to meet its payment obligations when they fall due. Environmental Trust continuously manages risk through monitoring future cash flows and maturities planning to ensure adequate holding of high quality liquid assets. The objective is to maintain a balance between continuity of funding and flexibility through the use of overdrafts, loans and other advances

During the current and prior year, there were no defaults of loans payable. No assets have been pledged as collateral. Environmental Trust's exposure to liquidity risk is deemed insignificant based on prior periods' data and current assessment of risk.

The liabilities are recognised for amounts due to be paid in the future for goods or services received, whether or not invoiced. Amounts owing to suppliers (which are unsecured) are settled in accordance with the policy set out in NSW TC 11/12. For small business suppliers, where terms are not specified, payment is made no later than 30 days from date of receipt of a correctly rendered invoice. For other suppliers, if trade terms are not specified, payment is made no later than the end of the month following the month in which an invoice or a statement is received. For small business suppliers, where payment is not made within the specified time period, simple interest must be paid automatically unless an existing contract specifies otherwise. For payments to other suppliers, the Head of an authority (or a person appointed by the Head of an authority) may automatically pay the supplier simple interest. The rate of interest applied during the year was 10.3% (2015: 10.6%).

The table below summarises the maturity profile of the entity's financial liabilities, together with the interest rate exposure.

Maturity analysis and interest rate exposure of financial liabilities

	\$'000					\$'000		
	Interest Rate Exposure					Maturity Dates		
	Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate	Nominal amount 1	Fixed interest rate	Variable interest rate	Non-interest bearing	< 1 year	1-5 years	> 5 years
2016								
<i>Payables:</i>								
Payables:	N/A	202	N/A	N/A	202	202	–	–
2015								
<i>Payables:</i>								
Payables:	N/A	403	N/A	N/A	403	403	–	–

Notes

- The amounts disclosed are the contractual undiscounted cash flows of each class of financial liabilities based on the earliest date on which the entity can be required to pay.

(d) Market Risk

Market risk is the risk that the fair value or future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices. Environmental Trust has no exposure to foreign currency risk and does not enter into commodity contracts.

The effect on profit and equity due to a reasonably possible change in risk variable is outlined in the information below, for interest rate risk and other price risk. A reasonably possible change in risk variable has been determined after taking into account the economic environment in which Environmental Trust operates and the time frame for the assessment (i.e. until the end of the next annual reporting period). The sensitivity analysis is based on risk exposures in existence at the statement of financial position date. The analysis is performed on the same basis as for 2015. The analysis assumes that all other variables remain constant.

Interest Rate Risk

Exposure to interest rate risk arises primarily through Environmental Trust's interest bearing liabilities. This risk is minimised by undertaking mainly fixed rate borrowings, primarily with NSW TCorp. Environmental Trust does not account for any fixed rate financial instruments at fair value through profit or loss or as available-for-sale. Therefore, for these financial instruments, a change in interest rates would not affect profit or loss or equity. A reasonably possible change of +/- 1% is used, consistent with current trends in interest rates. The basis will be reviewed annually and amended where there is a structural change in the level of interest rate volatility. Environmental Trust's exposure to interest rate risk is set out below.

		\$'000		\$'000	
			-1%		+1%
	Carrying Amount	Profit	Equity	Profit	Equity
2016					
Financial Assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	4,234	(42)	(42)	42	42
Receivables	283	(3)	(3)	3	3
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	202	2	2	(2)	(2)
2015					
Financial Assets					
Cash and cash equivalents	16,131	(161)	(161)	161	161
Receivables	515	(5)	(5)	5	5
Financial Liabilities					
Payables	403	4	4	(4)	(4)

(e) Fair value compared to carrying amount

Financial instruments are generally recognised at cost.

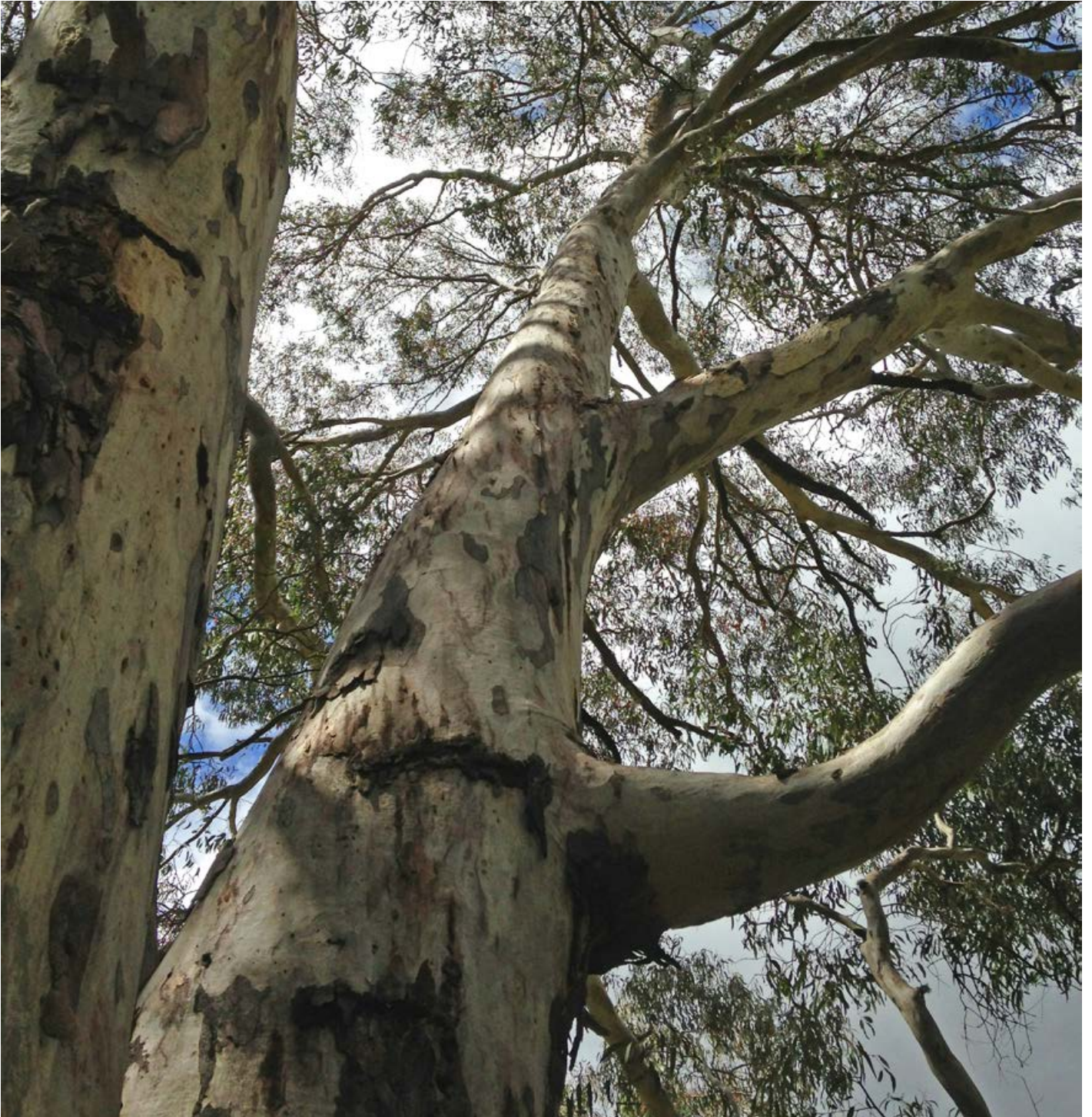
14. EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

There are no known events that would impact on the state of affairs of the Trust or have a material impact on the financial statements.

End of Audited Financial Statements

A microscopic view of plant cells, showing various shapes and structures, overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter. The cells are arranged in a somewhat regular pattern, with some showing distinct nuclei and cell walls.

Appendices



Administration of the Trust

Statement of affairs

Indicators of activity of administering the Trust

	2014–15	2015–16
Total expenditure on environmental initiatives and support	\$85 million	\$67 million
Number of contestable programs and other small grant programs running	23	25
Number of major programs and projects running	20	24
Number of new contestable grant projects approved	357	306
Number of applications / expressions of interest processed	1,061	928
Number of grant payments processed	569	577
Number of pollution clean-up payments and grants	36	36

Under the Environmental Trust Act, grants should be expended within three years, unless otherwise approved by the Trust. In accordance with section 15(5) of the Environmental Trust Act, The Trust is required to report when it has waived this condition for projects which may be delayed due to environmental conditions, complexities of approvals, personal circumstances of grantees and opportunities that may arise from extending a project. The Trust has granted extensions to maximise environmental outcomes for the following grants:

- Armidale Tree Group – Restoring the grassy bit – woodland restoration in New England
- Australian Reptile Park Threatened Species Program – Devil Ark
- EPA Alternative Waste Treatment – Mixed waste organic output trials
- Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife – Community bush regeneration private land conservation grants (small project stream)
- Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife – Community bush regeneration private land conservation grants supplementary grant 2014–15
- Hastings Landcare Inc. – Comboyne corridor conservation and remnant rescue Stage 1
- Hastings Landcare Inc. – Establishment of Hastings–Macleay land for wildlife project
- Hunter–Central Rivers Catchment Management Authority – Flying-fox Hunter River floodplain habitat restoration
- Jerrinja Local Aboriginal Land Council – Protecting and understanding the cultural landscape
- Lord Howe Island Board – Protecting island ecology: eradicating weeds from World Heritage Lord Howe Island
- Lord Howe Island Board – Protecting island ecology: eradicating rodents from World Heritage Lord Howe Island
- Merana Aboriginal Community Association for the Hawkesbury Inc. – Yellomundee Aboriginal Bushcare Group
- Office of Environment and Heritage – Classification and mapping of native vegetation communities in New South Wales
- Office of Environment and Heritage – Green corridors: linking landscapes through local action
- Office of Environment and Heritage – Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program
- Office of Environment and Heritage – Koala movement and use of regenerated bushland
- Orara Valley River Care Groups Management Committee Inc. – Connecting riparian rainforest corridors in the Orara Valley
- Rural Assistance Authority – Flying-fox Netting Subsidy Program
- South East Local Land Services – Snowy River Rehabilitation Project Stage 2: awakening the slumbering giant
- South West Rocks (SWR) Community Dune Care Group – Restore 50 hectares of dune system and do follow-up weed control at SWR
- University of Technology Sydney – The effect of pollution on marine macrophytes in New South Wales
- Wagga Wagga City Council – Narrung Wetlands: creating community assets from degraded lagoons.

Structure and management of the Trust

The Trust is guided by the governance structures outlined in the *Environmental Trust Act 1998*. It is comprised of three parts: Trust members, Trust committees, and Trust staff who are housed within OEH. The Trust funds the costs of administering its grant programs, including staff salaries, while OEH provides all support services for the Trust such as information technology, finance and human resources.

The Grants Unit within the Regional Operations Group of OEH is responsible for day-to-day management of the Trust's programs and activities. The major functions of the unit are:

- researching, designing and implementing new programs for the Trust
- promoting and managing the Trust's grant programs
- developing and managing governance arrangements for programs
- providing technical and other assistance to grantees
- coordinating assessments by the Trust's technical committees
- servicing Trust meetings, technical committees and subcommittees to facilitate good decision-making
- negotiating grants and agreements, project plans and making payments
- monitoring and acquitting funded projects
- disseminating and promoting successful Trust-funded projects
- managing pollution clean-up programs
- reviewing and evaluating the Trust's programs and procedures.

Grants administration

All Trust grants include a number of conditions that must be met, covering matters such as project timetable, payment schedule, progress and final project reports, financial reports, project variations and other administrative requirements. Except where a project is of a short duration or small amount, the Trust pays the grants in instalments in advance or through milestone payments.

The Trust's technical review committee representatives and independent reviewers assess and recommend grant projects and review project progress and final reports. This process keeps the Trust progressively informed about the quality of the work and the outcomes of each project. Where appropriate, a copy of the final report is placed in the OEH Library.

All major programs are overseen by program-specific Trust subcommittees. These subcommittees are comprised of technical experts in the relevant field. They provide input into the development of program business plans, monitor program implementation and progress, and provide ongoing advice to the Trust. Some subcommittees oversee a number of projects.

As an added level of governance for the infrastructure programs of the Waste Less, Recycle More initiative, applicants are required to provide a cost-benefit analysis for their projects, based on NSW Treasury's *NSW Government Guidelines for Economic Appraisal*. These analyses are then reviewed by independent experts who report their findings to the technical review committee to assist with the overall assessment of proposals. A Probity Auditor has also been appointed to review all program documentation and attend all technical review committee meetings as an observer to ensure that the decision-making process is in accord with the highest standards of probity and integrity.

Organisational performance

Trust support staff are employed within OEH and are subject to the administration and organisational performance programs of that office. These include the disability inclusion action plan, workforce diversity, multicultural policies and services program, work health and safety etc. Further information on these policies and other organisational issues can be found in the *Office of Environment and Heritage Annual Report 2015–16*.

Assets

Since it uses the resources of OEH, the Trust does not have any physical assets that require risk management or associated insurance activities.

External reviews

The Trust is subject to a range of independent audits, including annual review of its financial statements by the Audit Office of NSW. The Trust also implements a five-year evaluation plan for each of its competitive grant programs to ensure Trust funding is achieving the best possible results for the environment.

This year, the Protecting Our Places (POP) Program was the focus of an independent evaluation. The POP Program was established in 2002 and funds Aboriginal organisations to deliver projects that protect land that is culturally significant to Aboriginal people, and to support education projects about the environment and its importance in Aboriginal life. The program had been previously evaluated in 2005 and 2009. This year the Trust commissioned an independent evaluation of the program over the period 2009 to 2014. A final evaluation report was submitted to Trust administration in November 2015 and an administrative response was developed to address the issues raised. The Trust is now considering the best design for the future program.

In addition, the Natural Resources Commission was engaged to undertake the mid-term evaluation of the Contaminated Land Management Program, and an independent, external review of Sustainability Programs was commenced in order to support the transition of the programs to OEH.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Trust's monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER) program is aligned with the national monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement framework and enables the Trust to gauge environmental outcomes achieved through the projects it funds. The Trust's MER program is designed to help grantees track their progress against their objectives and to measure and report on the effectiveness of their projects. The intent is to increase the likelihood of project success by providing a framework that integrates clear processes to monitor and evaluate outcomes from the beginning of a project. Since its introduction, the MER system has been continually improved and streamlined for the benefit of both Trust administration and our grantees.

The Trust employs a full-time MER Officer who liaises with grant administrators and grantees to support the development of sound monitoring and evaluation plans which then form the basis of their subsequent project reports. During the past 12 months this has been supplemented through a series of webinars and workshops.

Grantees in the competitive Restoration and Rehabilitation, Community Bush Regeneration, Protecting Our Places, Education, Research and Eco Schools programs report on a number of key performance indicators relating to measurable environmental outcomes. This has now been extended to the waste programs as well as Saving our Species and Bush Connect. The indicators are specific to each program and the Trust uses this information to report progress towards environmental goals on a statewide basis. Some of the measured outcomes that have been achieved to date are included under the relevant program headings in this report.

Risk management and Insurance

The Trust's risk management includes independent grant assessment processes, formal authorisation and payment procedures under explicit delegated authority, written grant agreements and approved business plans with grantees. A clause in grant agreements indemnifies the Trust, and there are processes for tracking the progress and payment of grants, along with a procedures manual and regular audits of procedures.

Further information on risk management policies and guidelines, fraud and corruption control strategies and the internal audit program applicable to the Trust can also be found in the *Office of Environment and Heritage Annual Report 2015–16*.

A range of insurances are carried by the Office of Environment and Heritage with the NSW Treasury Managed Fund. This coverage extends to the operations of the Trust.

Digital information attestation

The NSW Government Digital Information Security Policy requires each department and statutory body to annually attest to the adequacy of its digital information and information systems security.

The information systems used by the Trust and all digital information held by the Trust is managed by OEH. For a copy of the Digital Information Attestation Statement, refer to the *Office of Environment and Heritage Annual Report 2015–16*.

Internal Audit and Risk Management Attestation Statement for the 2015–2016 Financial Year for the Environmental Trust



I, the Secretary of the Environmental Trust, am of the opinion that the Environmental Trust has internal audit and risk management processes in operation that are, excluding the exceptions or transitional arrangements described below, compliant with the eight (8) core requirements set out in the *Internal Audit and Risk Management Policy for the NSW Public Sector*, specifically:

Core Requirements	Compliant, non-compliant, or in transition
Risk Management Framework	
1.1 The agency head is ultimately responsible and accountable for risk management in the agency	Compliant
1.2 A risk management framework that is appropriate to the agency has been established and maintained and the framework is consistent with AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009	Compliant
Internal Audit Function	
2.1 An internal audit function has been established and maintained	Non-compliant
2.2 The operation of the internal audit function is consistent with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing	Compliant
2.3 The agency has an Internal Audit Charter that is consistent with the content of the 'model charter'	In transition
Audit and Risk Committee	
3.1 An independent Audit and Risk Committee with appropriate expertise has been established	Non-compliant
3.2 The Audit and Risk Committee is an advisory committee providing assistance to the agency head on the agency's governance processes, risk management and control frameworks, and its external accountability obligations	Compliant
3.3 The Audit and Risk Committee has a Charter that is consistent with the content of the 'model charter'	In transition

Membership

The chair and members of the Audit and Risk Committee are:

- Independent Chair, Mr Bruce Turner AM, appointed 1 March 2014 to 28 February 2018
- Independent Member 1, Ms Geraldine Brus, appointed 1 March 2014 to 28 February 2018
- Independent Member 2, Ms Elizabeth Crouch, appointed 26 May 2014 to 25 May 2018
- Independent Member 3, Ms Suzanne Jones, appointed 12 May 2015 to 30 January 2016
- Non-independent Member 1, Dr Kate Wilson, appointed 20 February 2015 and ongoing

Departures from Core Requirements

I, the Secretary of the Environmental Trust, advise that:

- the internal audit and risk management processes for the Environmental Trust depart from the following core requirements set out in the *Internal Audit and Risk Management Policy for the NSW Public Sector*; and
- the departure from the core requirements is due to the agency implementing measures to achieve compliance with new policy requirements consistent with the permitted transitional arrangement; or
- the circumstances giving rise to these departures have been determined by the Portfolio Minister, and the Environmental Trust has implemented the following practicable alternative measures to meet the core requirements:

Departure	Reason for departure and description of practicable alternative measures implemented/being implemented
Non-Compliance	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2.1 – An internal audit function has been established and maintained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Chief Audit Executive is not an employee of the Environmental Trust. The Environmental Trust is not allowed to share the Office of Environment and Heritage's Chief Audit Executive under NSW Treasury policy as the Office of Environment and Heritage is not a principal department. ▪ The Portfolio Minister has approved the Office of Environment and Heritage's Chief Audit Executive to fulfil the role of Chief Audit Executive for the Environmental Trust. The Environmental Trust is included in the Office of Environment and Heritage's internal audit program with dedicated internal audit coverage each year.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3.1 – An independent Audit and Risk Committee with appropriate expertise has been established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Environmental Trust does not have a standalone Audit and Risk Committee. The Environmental Trust is not allowed to share the Office of Environment and Heritage's Audit and Risk Committee under NSW Treasury policy as the Office of Environment and Heritage is not a principal department. ▪ The Portfolio Minister has approved the Office of Environment and Heritage's Audit and Risk Committee to provide independent oversight and advice for the operations of the Environmental Trust. The close relationship between the Office of Environment and Heritage and the Environmental Trust allows a single audit and risk committee to have increased insight into the management of risks in and between the agencies.
In Transition	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2.3 – The agency has an Internal Audit Charter that is consistent with the content of the 'model charter' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Environmental Trust became compliant with this requirement on 15 February 2016 when the updated Internal Audit Charter was approved, in accordance with the permitted transitional period for policy clause 2.3.1.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3.3 – The Audit and Risk Committee has a Charter that is consistent with the content of the 'model charter' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Environmental Trust became compliant with this requirement on 15 October 2015 when the updated Audit and Risk Committee Charter was approved, in accordance with the permitted transitional period for policy clause 3.3.1.

These processes, including the practicable alternative measures implemented, demonstrate that the Environmental Trust has established and maintained frameworks, including systems, processes and procedures for appropriately managing audit and risk within the Environmental Trust.



Terry Bailey, Secretary
Environmental Trust

6 October 2016

Agency Contact Officer
Beth Overton, Director Governance and
Chief Audit Executive
02 9995 6082

Membership of the NSW Environmental Trust

As defined in Section 6 of the *Environmental Trust Act 1998*, the Trust consists of five members. They are:

- Minister for the Environment (as Chairperson)
- Secretary of NSW Treasury
- Chief Executive of the Office of Environment and Heritage
- a person appointed by the Minister from a panel of three nominated by the Nature Conservation Council (NCC) of NSW
- a person appointed by the Minister from a panel of three nominated by Local Government NSW (LGNSW).

The Trust met four times in 2015–16.

Members of the Trust and meeting attendance

Member	Position	Meetings attended by member or deputy	Meetings eligible to attend
The Hon Mark Speakman MP	(Chairperson) Minister for the Environment (statutory appointment)	4	4
Mr Rob Whitfield	Secretary of NSW Treasury (statutory appointment)	0	4
Permanent deputy: Mr Bill Stanhope	Senior Financial Analyst, NSW Treasury	4	4
Mr Terry Bailey	Chief Executive, Office of Environment and Heritage (statutory appointment)	3	4
Deputy: Mr Ian Hunter	Deputy Chief Executive, Office of Environment and Heritage	1	1
Mr Rob Pallin	Representing Nature Conservation Council of NSW (to October 2016)	3	4
Deputy: Professor Don White	Chairperson, Nature Conservation Council of NSW	1	1
Cr Keith Rhoades	President, Local Government NSW (to December 2017)	4	4

Membership of Trust Subcommittees

The Trust had eight subcommittees in operation under section 9 of the *Environmental Trust Act 1998* during 2015–16 to assist with the management of its grant programs. Trust subcommittees provide input into the development of program business plans in consultation with external stakeholders, oversee program governance arrangements and provide ongoing advice to the Trust. Membership of each subcommittee follows.

Biodiversity and Green Corridors Subcommittee

Dr Carolyn Davies (Chairperson)

Director, Environmental Programs Branch, OEH

Ms Deborah Bate

Manager, Land Services, Central West Local Land Services

Ms Susannah Bilous (delegate Ms Susan Johnston)

Environmental Officer, NSW Rural Fire Service

Ms Susy Cenedese

Strategy Manager, Local Government NSW

Mr Peter Dixon

Senior Manager, Environmental Grants, NSW Environmental Trust

Ms Karen Eardley

Project Officer, Reserve Establishment Team, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, OEH

Mr Tim Low

Project Officer, Invasive Species Council

Dr Ross Peacock

Code Review Coordinator, Operations, NSW Rural Fire Service

Ms Bronwyn Petrie

Representing NSW Farmers

Mr Richard Thackway

Consultant, VAST Transformations

Dr Peter Turner (delegate Ms Hillary Cherry)

Senior Weeds Officer, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, OEH

Community and Sustainability Subcommittee

Dr Tony Wilkins (Chairperson)

Head of Environment, News Corp Australia

Ms Susy Cenedese

Strategy Manager, Local Government NSW

Ms Kalina Koloff

Senior Team Leader, Community Engagement Services, OEH

Ms Rebecca Simpson

Senior Team Leader, Major Projects, NSW Environmental Trust

Ms Madelaine Townsend

Director, Conservation Volunteers Australia

Dr Greg Walkerden

Lecturer, Environmental Management, Macquarie University

Professor Don White

Chairperson, Nature Conservation Council of NSW

Environmental Hazards Subcommittee

Dr Cameron Hazelhurst (Chairperson)

Foundation Principal, The Ethicos Group

Mr Jeff Angel

Executive Director, Total Environment Centre

Ms Phillippa Biswell

Environmental Scientist/Educator, Sutherland Shire Council

Ms Eleanor Carswell

Community representative

Mr Ian Gregson

Principal Environmental Consultant, GHD

Ms Nicole Lawler

Health Safety & Environment Manager, Boral

Dr Alex Pulkownik

School of the Environment, University of Technology Sydney

Ms Rebecca Simpson

Senior Team Leader, Major Projects, NSW Environmental Trust

Flying-fox Netting Subsidy Program Subcommittee

Dr Carolyn Davies (Chairperson)

Director, Environmental Programs Branch, OEH

Mr Glenn Fahey

Representing NSW Farmers

Mr Bruce Glover

Manager, Grants Administration, NSW Rural Assistance Authority

Mr Leigh James

Senior Land Services Officer (Horticulture), Local Land Services

Mr Myles Parker

Leader Horticulture Development, NSW Department of Primary Industries

Mr Evan Quartermain (alternate Ms Nancy Pallin)

Senior Program Manager, Humane Society International

Ms Rebecca Simpson

Senior Team Leader, Major Projects, NSW Environmental Trust

Grow Sustainable Nature Based Tourism Subcommittee

Ms Sally Chatterjee (Chairperson)

Director, Customer Experience, Tourism & Partnership, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, OEH

Ms Samantha Crosby

Coordinator of Education Services, Centennial Parklands

Mr Rod Hillman

Chief Executive, Ecotourism Australia Ltd

Ms Suzanne Jones

Chair, National Parks and Wildlife Advisory Council

Mr Anthony Laver

General Manager Marketing, Destination NSW

Ms Rebecca Simpson

Senior Team Leader, Major Projects, NSW Environmental Trust

Offsets Subcommittee

Mr David Trewin (Chairperson)

Regional Manager Greater Sydney, OEH

Mr Michael Dyson

Associate Director, Knight Frank Valuations

Mr Minh Nguyen

Principal Financial Analyst, Planning and Environment, NSW Treasury

Ms Paula Tomkins

Senior Planner, Housing and Employment Delivery, Department of Planning and Environment

Mr Neville Pavan (alternate Mr Paul Bennett)

Manager Land Services, Greater Sydney Local Land Services

Ms Rebecca Simpson

Senior Team Leader, Major Projects, NSW Environmental Trust

Ms Rachel Walmsley

Policy and Law Reform Director, Environmental Defenders Office NSW

South Coast Forests Subcommittee

Mr Peter Dixon (Chairperson)

Senior Manager, Environmental Grants, NSW Environmental Trust

Ms Sally Bayley

Industry representative

Ms Susanna Bradshaw (alternate Mr Ian Darbyshire)

Former Chief Executive Officer, Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife

Mr Michael Hood

Principal Manager, Forestry, EPA

Mr Mladen Kovac

Chief Economist, OEH

Mr Mick O'Flynn (alternate Ms Alison Gibbins)

Senior Manager Nature Conservation, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, OEH

Waste and Recycling Subcommittee

Mr Stephen Beaman (Chairperson)

Director, Waste and Resource Recovery, EPA

Ms Tracy Chalk

Waste and Community Protection Manager, Penrith City Council

Mr Brian Fox-Lane

Director, Fox-Lane Consulting

Dr Paul Hogan

Director, Business Advisory and Industry Development, NSW Department of Industry

Mr Paul Klymenko

Chief Executive Officer, Planet Ark

Mr Miles Lochhead

Convenor, Community Recycling Network Australia

Dr Adam Read

Practice Director, Ricardo-AEA

Professor Don White

Chairperson, Nature Conservation Council of NSW

Dr Tony Wilkins

Head of Environment, News Corp Australia

Membership of Trust Technical Review Committees

The Trust has established several technical review committees under section 9 of the *Environmental Trust Act 1998*. These committees assess and recommend grant applications, provide guidance in program implementation and may review progress and final reports. The membership of each committee during 2015–16 is set out below.

Bush Connect

Dr Judy Henderson (Chairperson)

Former Chair, former Northern Rivers Catchment Management Authority

Dr Patricia Bowen

Team Leader, Strategic Land Services, Murray Local Land Services

Ms Louise Brodie

Committee Member, Australian Association of Bush Regenerators

Mr Stuart Gold

Team Leader, Landscape Conservation, OEH

Mr Ian Turnbull

Executive Manager, Natural Environment Planning, Cessnock City Council

Mr Gary Saunders

Team Leader, Monitoring and Improvement Biodiversity and Wildlife Team, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, OEH

Mr Chris Scott

Treasurer, Landcare NSW

Data-deficient Species Research Grants

Dr Klaus Koop (Chairperson)

Director, Environmental Protection Science, OEH

Dr John Hunter

Adjunct Senior Lecturer, School of Behaviour, Cognitive and Social Sciences, University of New England

Dr Richard Major

Principal Research Scientist, Australian Museum

Ms Robin Woods

Coordinator, Hawkesbury Environment Network Inc.

Eco Schools Program

Ms Maria Rickert (alternate Mark Caddey) (Chairperson)

Senior Team Leader, Sustainable Communities, OEH

Ms Brigitte Herrmann

Support Teacher Transition, NSW Department of Education

Ms Anne Lanyon

Coordinator, Centre for Peace, Ecology and Justice, Columban Mission Institute

Ms Alex Montgomery

Primary Curriculum Advisor, Early Learning & Primary Education, NSW Department of Education

Ms Janet Rannard

Bushland Management Officer, Penrith City Council

Mr Brian Williams

Procurement Manager, Catholic Education Office

Environmental Education Program

Ms Roz Hall (Chairperson)

Former Director, Business and Community Programs, OEH

Ms Wendy Blair

Chair, Education and Training Committee, Australian Hairdressing Council

Ms Kalina Koloff (alternate Karen Paroissien)

Senior Team Leader, Community Engagement Services, OEH

Ms Rebecca Raap

Principal Consultant, RfR Consulting

Ms Jane Smith

Executive Officer, Community Environment Network

Ms Erika Van Schellebeck (Community Program)

Sustainability Officer, Coffs Harbour City Council

Ms Sarah Warner (Government Program)

Environmental Planner, Lake Macquarie City Council

Environmental Research Program

Dr Klaus Koop (Chairperson)

Director, Environmental Protection Science, OEH

Dr Graeme Batley

Chief Research Scientist, Centre for Environmental Contaminants Research, CSIRO Land and Water

Dr Brent Jacobs

Research Director, Natural Resources & Environment Cluster, Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney

Professor Deirdre Lemerle

Director, Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation, Charles Sturt University

Dr Derek Van Dyk

Director, Strategic Research Partnerships and Pre-Award, Macquarie University

Lead Environmental Community Groups Grants Program

Mr David Trewin (Chairperson)

Regional Manager, Greater Sydney, OEH

Ms Judy Christie

Former Chair, Greater Sydney Landcare Network Inc.

Ms Tania Crosbie

Director, The Crosbie Collective

Ms Armanda Scorrano

Policy and Research Officer, NSW Council of Social Service

Restoration and Rehabilitation (Community) Program

Ms Jane Gibbs (alternate Mr Richard Davies) (Chairperson)

Senior Manager Environmental Program Services, OEH

Ms Sue Baker

Representing the National Parks Association of NSW

Mr James Dawson

Senior Team Leader, Ecosystems and Threatened Species – Illawarra, OEH

Mr Keith Hyde

Regional representative on State Management Committee, Landcare NSW

Ms Mary-Lou Lewis

Committee Member, Australian Association of Bush Regenerators

Mr Charles Lucas

Senior Land Services Officer, Natural Resources Management, Riverina Local Land Services

Mr Justin Sauvage

Stormwater Engineer, Sutherland Shire Council

Mr Marc Worner

Representing the Australian Institute of Landscape Designers and Managers

Restoration and Rehabilitation (Government) Program

Ms Jane Gibbs (alternate Mr Richard Davies) (Chairperson)

Senior Manager, Environmental Program Services, OEH

Ms Louise Brodie

Committee Member, Australian Association of Bush Regenerators

Mr James Dawson

Senior Team Leader, Ecosystems and Threatened Species – Illawarra, OEH

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Mr Charles Lucas

Senior Land Services Officer, Natural Resources Management, Riverina Local Land Services

Ms Kirsty McIntyre

Senior Policy Officer, Natural Resources Management, Local Government NSW

Mr Chris Scott

Treasurer, Landcare NSW

Mr Marc Worner

Representing the Australian Institute of Landscape Designers and Managers

Saving Our Species Partnership Grants Program

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Former Chief Executive Officer, Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife

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Senior Team Leader, Ecosystems and Threatened Species Environmental Programs, OEH

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Team Leader, Environmental Planning and Threatened Species Assessment, Shoalhaven City Council

Mr Simon Duffy

General Manager, Life Sciences, Research & Conservation, Taronga Conservation Society Australia

Dr John Hunter

Adjunct Senior Lecturer, School of Behaviour, Cognitive and Social Sciences, University of New England

Dr Richard Major

Principal Research Scientist, Australian Museum

Mr Bob Makinson

Former Conservation Botanist, Science Conservation & Education Branch, Botanic Gardens & Centennial Parklands

Mr Peter Ridgeway

Senior Land Services Officer (Biodiversity), Greater Sydney Local Land Services

Waste Less Recycle More Initiative grant programs

Food Waste Avoidance Education Grants

Ms Kalina Koloff (Chairperson)

Senior Team Leader Stakeholder Engagement, OEH

Mr Geoff Isaac

Director, Immediate Media

Ms Lynda Newnam

Volunteer, Keep NSW Beautiful

Ms Linda Tohver

Education Coordinator, North East Waste (NE Waste)

Improved Systems Household Problem Wastes – Community Recycling

Mr David Coleman (Chairperson)

Member of Local Government Professionals Australia, NSW

Mr John Davis

Financial and Committee member Men's Bowls, Club Urunga

Ms Jo Immig

Coordinator, National Toxics Network

Mr Aaron Malloy

Waste Management Coordinator, Port Stephens Council

Ms Rose Read

Manager Recycling, Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association

Ms Martina Rienzner

Strategic Coordinator Hume Region, Sustainability Victoria

Landfill Consolidation and Environmental Improvements

Mr Peter Lowery (Chairperson)

Rehabilitation Manager, Waste Assets Management Corporation

Mr Keith Baxter (delegate Ms Laura Love)

Leader, Innovation and Development, Office of Local Government

Ms Lyndal Holstein (delegate Lynda Newnam)

Programs Manager, Keep NSW Beautiful

Ms Megan Vallas

Project Coordinator, EPA Victoria

Local Government Organics Collection Systems

Mr John Street (Chairperson)

Chairperson, Hawkesbury Environment Network, representing the Nature Conservation Council of NSW

Mr Justin Lang

Program Manager Local Government, Office of Green Industries SA

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Sustainable Services Coordinator, Clarence Valley Council

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Mr Brock Baker (Chairperson)

Project Leader Market Development Organics Resource Recovery, Sustainability Victoria

Mr Mark Gorta

Independent technical expert in waste and recycling sector

Mr Lachlan Jeffries

Managing Director, Jeffries Group

Mr John Street

Chairperson, Hawkesbury Environment Network, representing the Nature Conservation Council of NSW

Mr James Turnell

Manager Waste and Drainage, Armidale Regional Council

Mr Michael Wood

Director, EnviroMix

Recycling Innovation Fund – Innovation in Priority Problem Wastes Management

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Senior Policy Officer, Waste, Local Government NSW

Mr Dennis De Kantzow

Volunteer, Keep NSW Beautiful

Mr Stephen Holland

Operations Manager, Waste Management Association of Australia

Dr Sean O'Malley

Research and Technical Manager, Planet Ark

Mr Tony Wright

Joint Managing Director, Wright Management Association Australia

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Manager, Commercial Services, Lismore City Council

Contact Information

Public access

Further information on the NSW Environmental Trust can be obtained by contacting:

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PARRAMATTA NSW 2124
Telephone (02) 8837 6093
Email: info@environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

Information on the Trust's grant programs is also available on the Trust's website at www.environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

Offices

The Trust office is located at:

Level 4, 10 Valentine Avenue
Parramatta NSW 2150

The office is open from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Publications

The following publications are available from the Trust:

- guidelines and grant application forms for all grant programs
- NSW Environmental Trust annual reports from 1992–93 to 2015–16.

This annual report is available to download from the Trust's website at: www.environmentaltrust.nsw.gov.au

A range of case studies highlighting successfully completed grant projects is available from the Trust's Dissemination webpage at:

www.environment.nsw.gov.au/grants/casestudies.htm

Public access to government information

The NSW Government's *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* concerns rights to public information and relates to personal and non-personal information held by government.

There are four ways in which the Trust makes its information available:

- through mandatory release (such as policies and guidelines available on the Trust's website)
- proactive release, which requires the Trust to release as much government information as possible in an appropriate format free-of-charge (or at lowest reasonable cost)
- through informal requests from members of the public
- through a formal application process, requesting specific information under the Government Information (Public Access) Act. This is the last resort if a member of the public has not been able to get information in any other way.

Government agencies are required, under section 20 of the Government Information (Public Access) Act, to make available an information guide outlining the agency's structure and functions, the type of information held by the agency, and how members of the public can access information through that agency. The Trust's operations are covered by the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 OEH information guide*, available on the OEH website.

The Trust regularly and proactively releases information through its website. This includes information relating to the management of grant programs, provision of grant applications, applicant guidelines and other supporting documents, as well as publishing lists of successful grantees for each program. The Trust endeavours to release this information as soon as possible once it is available. The Trust publishes other information on an intermittent basis, such as case studies of successful grant projects.

All Government Information (Public Access) requests relating to the Trust are reported by OEH in its annual report.

Abbreviations

AWT	alternative waste treatment
BMAD	bell miner associated dieback
CALD	culturally and linguistically diverse
CCA	copper chrome arsenate
CRC	community recycling centre
CSIRO	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DGT	diffuse gradients in thin film
EOI	expression of interest
EPA	NSW Environment Protection Authority
FNPW	Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife
FOGO	Food organics and garden organics
GER	Great Eastern Ranges
IFOA	Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals
LECG	Lead Environmental Community Groups
LGA	local government area
LLS	Local Land Services
MER	monitoring, evaluation and reporting
MWOO	mixed waste organic outputs
NGO	non-government organisation
NPWS	NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
NRM	natural resource management
NSW	New South Wales
OEH	Office of Environment and Heritage
PLCG	Private Land Conservation Grants
POP	Protecting our Places
SOS	Saving our Species
TEC	threatened ecological community
TSR	travelling stock route or reserve
WELE	Waste and Environment Levy Envelope
WSU	Western Sydney University (formerly known as University of Western Sydney)
WLRM	Waste Less, Recycle More

Photographs

Page Title and source

- 5 Moss-covered lianes in Cedar Brush Nature Reserve. Photo courtesy of Shelley Braithwaite/OEH.
- 6 Aboriginal Art in a sandstone cave in Yengo National Park, to which 203.15 hectares were added through the Land Acquisition Program. Photo courtesy of Shelley Braithwaite/OEH.
- 9 A new water control structure during the installation process. Landholders now use these structures to regulate water levels. Photo courtesy of Simon Walsh/NSW DPI.
- 14 Over four years the Port Macquarie Landcare Group has transformed many formerly weedy areas, including this roadside site, which is now a regenerating native bushland corridor. Photo courtesy of Estelle Gough, Port Macquarie Landcare Group Inc.
- 18 Bell miner bird. Photo courtesy of John Turbill/OEH.
- 26 A female *Homalictus* bee collects pollen from a rock rose. Photo courtesy of Dr Megan Halcroft, Bees Business.
- 27 The treated timber initiative is educating consumers on how to reduce potential hazards associated with the use and disposal of treated timber products. Photo courtesy of Tony Hodgson/NSW EPA.
- 34 Psyllid infestation. Photo courtesy of Stephen Hardy/OEH.
- 36 Trust and EPA staff host an induction day for new grantees to provide one-on-one support and networking opportunities. Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Craggs/NSW EPA.
- 37 Residents can easily and safely drop off hazardous household chemicals for recycling at no charge at the Deniliquin Community Recycling Centre. Photo courtesy of Kent Gillman, NSW EPA.
- 40 Wollondilly Shire Council is spreading the Love Food Hate Waste message through community events. Photo courtesy of Yolande Presland Wollondilly Shire Council.
- 41 New machinery at the Global Renewables Eastern Creek facility extracts and cleans metals from mixed household waste, creating a high-value product for recycling and re-use. Photo courtesy of Aaron Azzopardi Global Renewables.
- 46 The Honourable Mark Speakman MP, Minister for the Environment, with Sharyn Hunnisett and Theresa Adams from Lismore City Council, and Will and Jessica Brook from Brookfarm at the NSW Government Green Globe Awards. Photo courtesy of Alice Cahill/OEH.
- 51 This year, the Growth Centres Biodiversity Offset Program protected an additional 40 hectares of threatened vegetation. Photo courtesy of Kathryn Collins/OEH.
- 69 *Eucalyptus oresbia* in Ben Hall's Gap Nature Reserve. Photo courtesy of Shelley Braithwaite/OEH.

