



Catchment Management
Authority
Murrumbidgee



A GREAT IDEA FOR GOOROoyARROO

Greater Gorooyarroo is the area of land that straddles the northern border of the ACT and NSW. While the area is mostly rural it also encompasses rural residential and urban areas. Three significant nature reserves are located within Greater Gorooyarroo and the renowned box gum woodlands are an integral part of the landscape.



What makes Gorooyarroo special?

For some who live and work there, the area's agriculture makes it special; for others it is the rural lifestyle, the people, the connections within and between neighbours and local organisations, or the proximity to Canberra.

We do know that Greater Gorooyarroo is very important because it contains around 3800 hectares of white box–yellow box–Blakely's red gum grassy woodland, a critically endangered ecological community.

These remnants are nationally important as they are among the largest, best connected and floristically diverse box gum woodlands remaining in Australia. They are not just a nice part of the local scenery, but are vital to the ongoing viability and functioning of the broader Gorooyarroo landscape and to sustaining important conservation values.

We also know that if these box gum woodlands are going to be sustained well into the future, to a significant extent it will be through the efforts of local people.

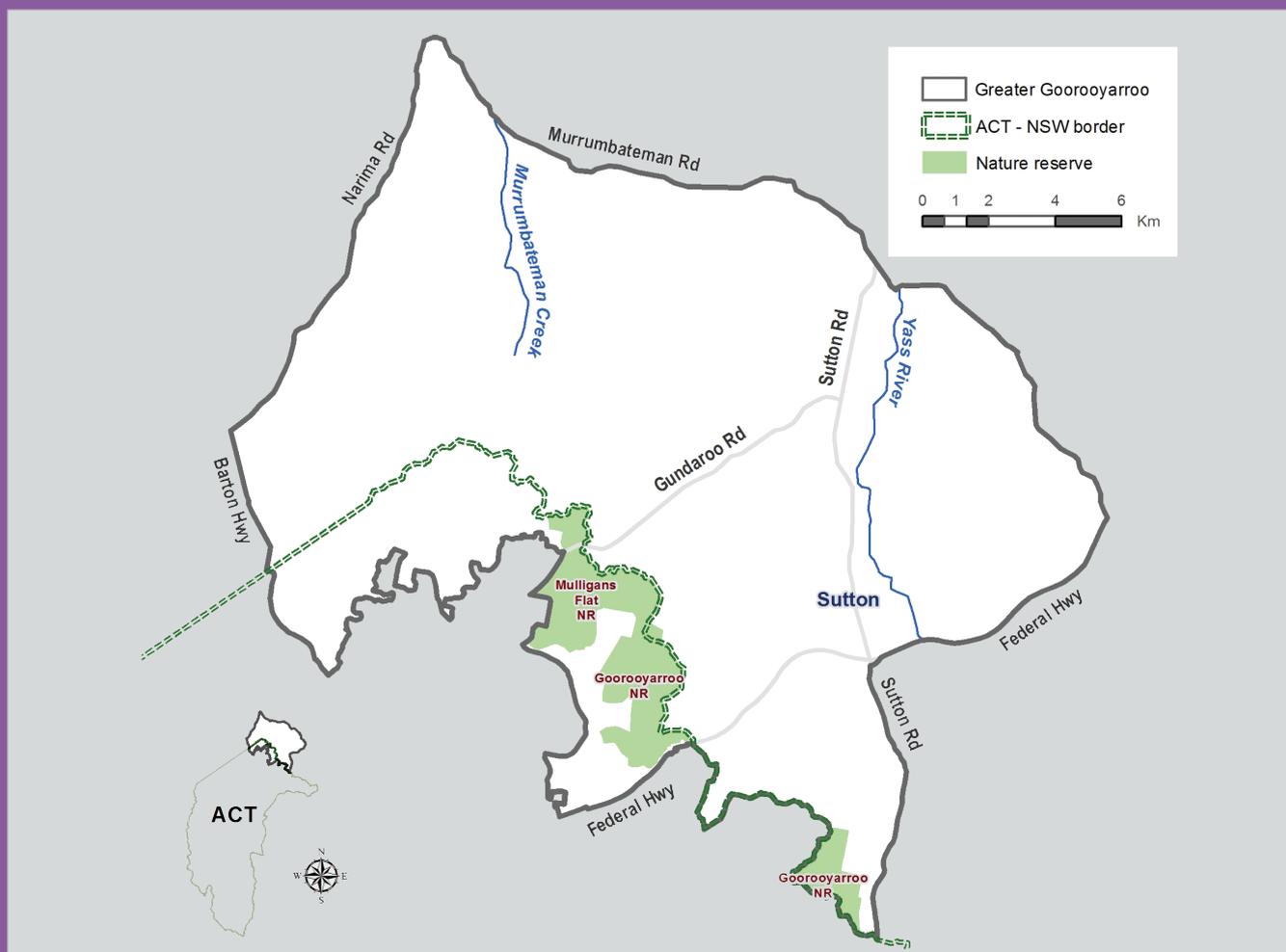
What's the great idea?

The great idea is the Greater Gorooyarroo Project; an innovative project bringing together local landholders, researchers, government agencies and indigenous and urban communities, to protect and enhance the box gum woodlands through clever and cooperative local action that:

- reflects what local people see as important about their landscape
- helps to address practical land management problems
- is informed by good science, research and planning
- is guided by best practice
- revitalises and better sustains productive agriculture as well as biodiversity.

The Greater Gorooyarroo Project is also a great idea because it has a genuine long term outlook and a strong commitment to community participation. It also harnesses good science, good land management practice and good people, with expertise and passion for this special place.

Recognising this, and the importance of box gum woodlands throughout the region, the ACT Government has partnered with Greening Australia Capital Region and the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority to plan and implement the 'Building restored resilient landscapes in the ACT and Greater Gorooyarroo project'. This project is supported through funding from the Australian Government's Clean Energy Future Biodiversity Fund.



How will the project begin and who will be involved?

The Greater Gorooyarroo Project is a significant undertaking intended to be progressively implemented over a number of years. Like other great ideas, it needs to grow and mature and gather the support of local people.

The first phase of this project will therefore start by engaging with local people. Over the next few months Greening Australia and its partners would like to visit people throughout the area to:

- talk about the project
- identify what's important about their place in the Gorooyarroo area and the wider landscape around them
- develop an understanding of the issues of shared interest or concern
- explore what local on-ground action is already happening to better secure the future of the Gorooyarroo landscape
- identify interest in undertaking additional action.

These conversations, together with conversations with the wider community of stakeholders, will form the basis for progressively developing a shared landscape vision for Greater Gorooyarroo and a strategy to progressively realise this vision.

The strategy will address local and regional issues of concern to local people. Over the next six years, the project will support some agreed key priority actions. Importantly, it will also help build local capacity to maintain progress in the long term.



Why have a Greater Gorooyarroo vision and strategy?

Natural resource management experience elsewhere over many years has shown that the best way to ensure the right things continue to get done is to work together through a shared vision and a shared, easy to read and accessible strategy. Local people must be properly involved in shaping the shared 'landscape vision' and in helping to identify actions to ultimately achieve this. After all, it is local properties and continuing prosperity that will largely underpin a truly sustainable and resilient future for the area.

Later this year, local landholders and other interested people will be invited to attend a workshop to help develop a strategy to revitalise and rehabilitate Greater Gorooyarroo.

Next steps

The next phase begins with contacting people who might like to know more about the project, get involved or support it in other ways. People who have already been involved in woodland or other rehabilitation efforts will also be contacted. Previous Landcare and landholder rehabilitation efforts are being identified so that local experience, knowledge and the plantings themselves can be built on.

On-ground action is critical, but so is good planning and strategy development. Many local issues such as weeds, feral animals and biodiversity cannot be properly managed without a co-ordinated approach.

The application to the Australian Government Clean Energy Future Biodiversity Fund recognised this and outlined some proposed directions. To the extent these are consistent with identified local values, the following 'outcomes' could be progressively achieved with the assistance of the project in coming years:

- pests are controlled at site and landscape scales
- new plantings are completed and maintained
- ground cover is improved to support productivity and soil health
- weeds are managed and optimally controlled
- well functioning woodland remnants improve in size, condition, structure and connectivity
- a unified vision of landscape restoration and prosperity is delivered via joint planning and collaboration.



What are the practical opportunities to get involved?

As the project develops there will be opportunities for local landholders and other interested people to get involved. Support will be available to:

- control weeds and feral pests
- improve soil quality through 'whole of paddock rehabilitation'
- enable better grazing management
- plant, fence and do other actions to improve landscape connectivity and resilience
- identify past rehabilitation projects and progress
- improve biodiversity and local amenity
- identify key issues and possible monitoring sites
- develop and review a common purpose strategy
- undertake community based monitoring and ecological studies
- build an increased sense of community around shared land management values
- develop opportunities for nature-based education for local schools and the wider community.

Want to find out more?

To find out more, share your ideas or have an early say in developing the Greater Goorooyarroo Project and strategy call or email Jeni De Landre, the project coordinator (Tuesday – Friday)

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