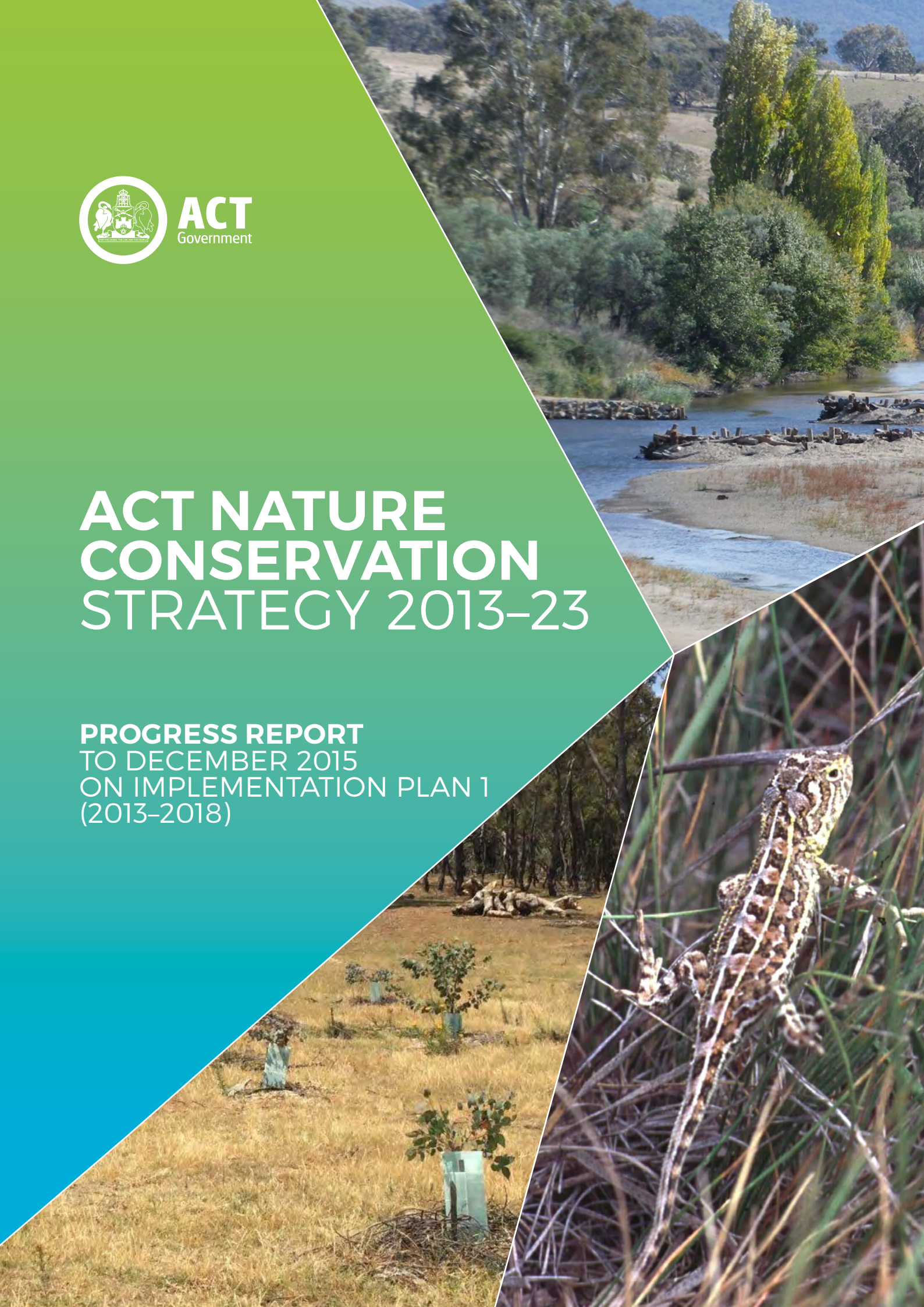




ACT
Government

ACT NATURE CONSERVATION STRATEGY 2013-23

PROGRESS REPORT
TO DECEMBER 2015
ON IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 1
(2013-2018)



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INTRODUCTION





Murrumbidgee River downstream of Tharwa Bridge

The ACT Nature Conservation Strategy 2013–23 (the Strategy) commenced on 14 November 2013. The Strategy outlined a vision for nature conservation in the ACT over the next decade, to achieve

‘biodiversity rich, resilient landscapes stretching from the inner city to the mountains, where well functioning ecosystems can meet the needs of people and the environment’.

The Strategy aims to guide protection and management of biodiversity in the ACT and region to:

1. Enhance habitat connectivity and ecosystem function
2. Manage threats to biodiversity
3. Protect species and ecological communities
4. Enhance biodiversity value of urban areas
5. Strengthen community engagement

Brief description	Detailed description
Completed	Milestone met. May be ongoing.
On track	In progress and on track. May be completed in part. Milestones progressing as anticipated.
Behind schedule	Underway with some delays



IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation Plan 1 (2013–2018)
http://www.environment.act.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/576177/NCS-Implementation-Plan-1-2013-2018.pdf

identified milestones for each of the Strategy’s 33 actions. The attached table reports progress against each milestone.

At December 2015, 28 milestones were completed, 68 were on track and 8 were behind schedule. All milestones in Implementation Plan 1 have been progressed through strong collaboration between government, the community, land managers and researchers. Although some milestones are behind schedule due to unexpected delays in national reforms and the need to ensure plans are informed by best available information and community consultation, all are expected to be completed.

A second implementation plan will be developed by the end of 2018 following a review of progress in implementing the Strategy by the ACT Conservator of Flora and Fauna. The plan will also be informed by stakeholder consultations, advice from experts and funding availability.





Molonglo River Corridor

PROGRESS

Work undertaken so far to implement the actions has made a significant impact on our landscapes through on-ground restoration and rehabilitation. This has been guided by strong collaboration between the ACT Government, the Australian Government, the local and regional community, and research and academic institutions. Between 2013 and end 2015 there has been significant progress in:

- building our knowledge on soils, vegetation and hydrology
- restoring priority landscapes and enhancing regional connectivity
- community monitoring (citizen science) including through new phone applications to report plant and animal sightings
- conducting captive breeding, plant propagation and translocation of fauna species
- developing improved systems for management of biosecurity, including the threat of new weeds and pests
- engaging community through ParkCare and Landcare.

WHAT IS NEXT

While we have achieved some great outcomes for the environment in the ACT and region, there is more to do. The focus over the next two years for implementing the Strategy will be:

- restoring and revegetating priority landscapes
- promoting biodiversity values in urban areas
- supporting better management of native vegetation on farms
- supporting traditional custodians to apply Aboriginal land management methods on Country
- connecting people to nature for health and wellbeing
- building our capacity to plan for and adapt to climate change
- building the ACT's ability to monitor conservation effectiveness within reserves.

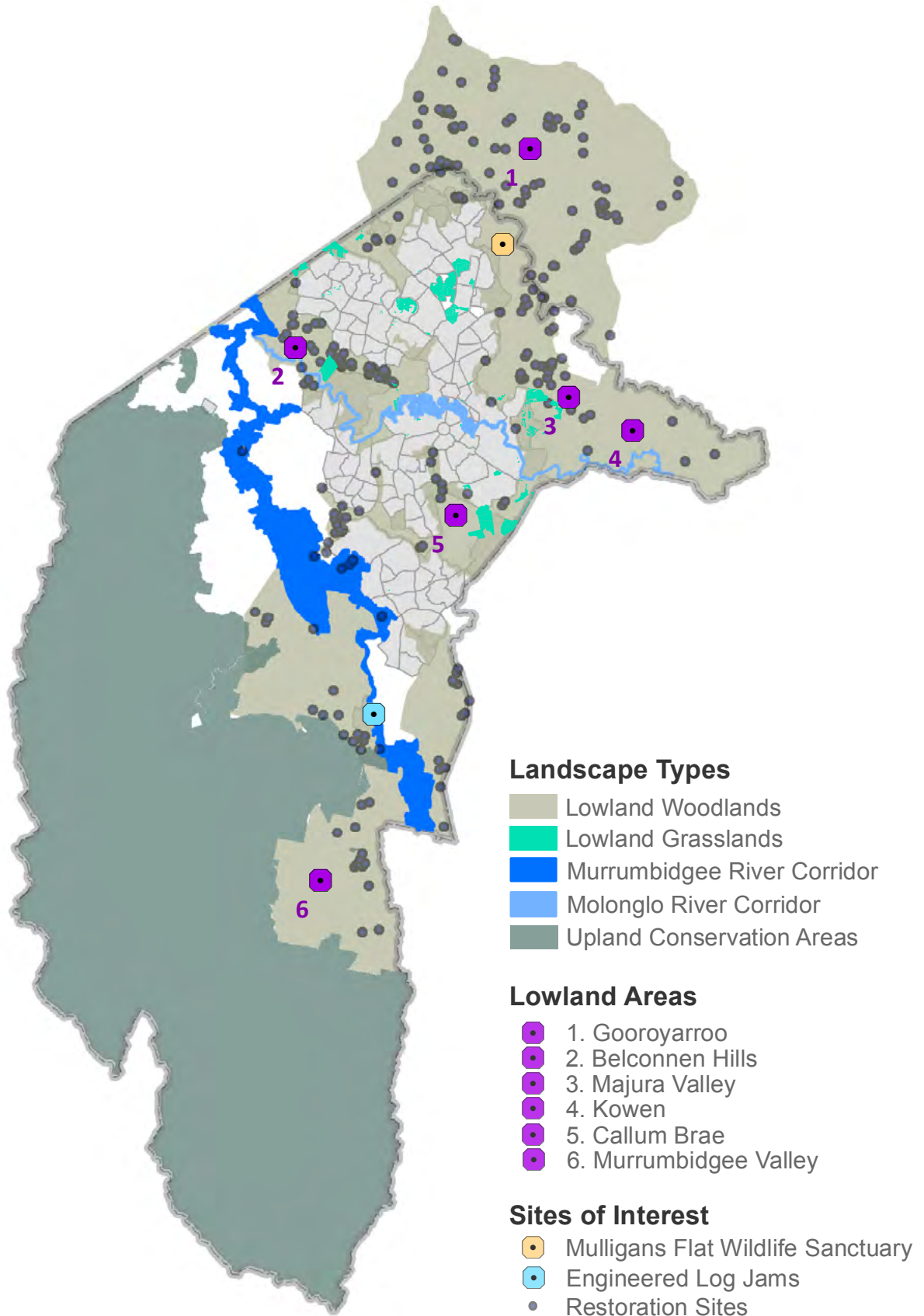
RESTORING PRIORITY LANDSCAPES AND IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY



Woodland at Goorooyaroo



The Strategy emphasised the importance of prioritising on-ground action to strengthen habitat connectivity and landscape resilience, including supporting flora and fauna to adapt to climate change. Over the past two and a half years significant on-ground investment has targeted restoration at sites to better connect woodlands and improve native grasslands. Connectivity has also been improved through restoration of aquatic habitat in the Murrumbidgee River Corridor.



CONNECTING LOWLAND WOODLANDS

ACT and Australian Government funding between 2012 and 2017 aims to consolidate and connect 60,000 hectares of the largest remaining box-gum grassy woodland landscape in Australia. On-ground restoration and regeneration works has been undertaken in the following priority areas 1. Greater Goorooyarroo; 2. Belconnen Hills; 3. Majura Valley; 4. Kowen; 5. Callum Brae; and 6. Murrumbidgee Valley, as well as the Murrumbidgee River Corridor.

The 30,500 hectare Greater Goorooyarroo area represents some of Australia's largest, best-connected and floristically diverse Box-Gum Woodland, a critically endangered ecological community. The ACT Government is working closely with Greening Australia Capital Region, NSW Government, rural landowners, aboriginal community and research institutions including CSIRO and ANU to develop a shared understanding of the area and its needs. Priorities being implemented are:

- 300 hectares of revegetation
- 7000 hectares of invasive species control, including foxes
- active involvement of Aboriginal people in natural resource management
- an informed and actively engaged community.

In the Belconnen Hills area, the ACT Government is working with the Molonglo Catchment Group and the ACT Parks and Conservation Service to revegetate previously cleared areas along the lower Molonglo river. With support through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, over 200 hectares have been replanted with 23,000 trees and shrubs to:

- improve quality and connectivity of habitat for woodland birds such as the threatened speckled warbler and brown treecreeper
- stabilise soil and reduce the area's susceptibility to erosion
- reduce the cover and abundance of weeds, including Blackberry and St John's Wort.

Improving the condition and connectivity of woodlands across the ACT is being informed by and complements world-leading research in the Mulligans Flat Woodlands Sanctuary that has reintroduced locally extinct native animals such as the Eastern Bettong to the ACT region. The Mulligans Flat Woodlands Sanctuary is a collaboration between the ACT Government, Woodlands and Wetlands Trust, Australian National University and CSIRO.



IMPROVING NATIVE GRASSLANDS

Natural temperate grasslands are listed as an endangered ecological community under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the *ACT Nature Conservation Act 2014*.

Approximately 5% of the original area of ACT natural temperate grasslands remains. These grasslands are home to a number of threatened species such as the Grassland Earless Dragon and Striped Legless Lizard.

The condition of grassland reserves are being enhanced through projects that are:

- conducting grazing and fire trials to manage biomass and increase habitat heterogeneity
- reinstating surface rock as habitat for grassland lizards and invertebrates
- managing invasive weeds, in particular grasses such as Chilean Needle Grass, African Lovegrass and Serrated Tussock
- researching the habitat requirements of threatened grassland species
- investigating techniques to replace exotic plant species with native species.

Over the next three years, over 200 hectares of natural temperate grassland in five reserves will be subject to patch burning and re-introduction of surface rock and grazing trials will be conducted over 800 hectares. The impacts of burns and grazing trials will be monitored and used to inform ongoing management of grassland nature reserves.

Grassland enhancement projects are being implemented by ACT Parks and Conservation Service and ACT NRM, and is being funded by the Australian Government National Landcare program and ACT Government.





Murrumbidgee River downstream of Tharwa Bridge

RESTORING MURRUMBIDGEE AQUATIC HABITAT

The Tharwa Fish Habitat Project is rehabilitating a 100 kilometre stretch of the Upper Murrumbidgee River near Tharwa to enhance native fish populations.

Native fish populations in the Murrumbidgee River are estimated to have fallen to 10% of pre-European levels. Large amounts of sediment have been deposited in the river system following land clearing of the Monaro region for livestock grazing, flooding and erosion.

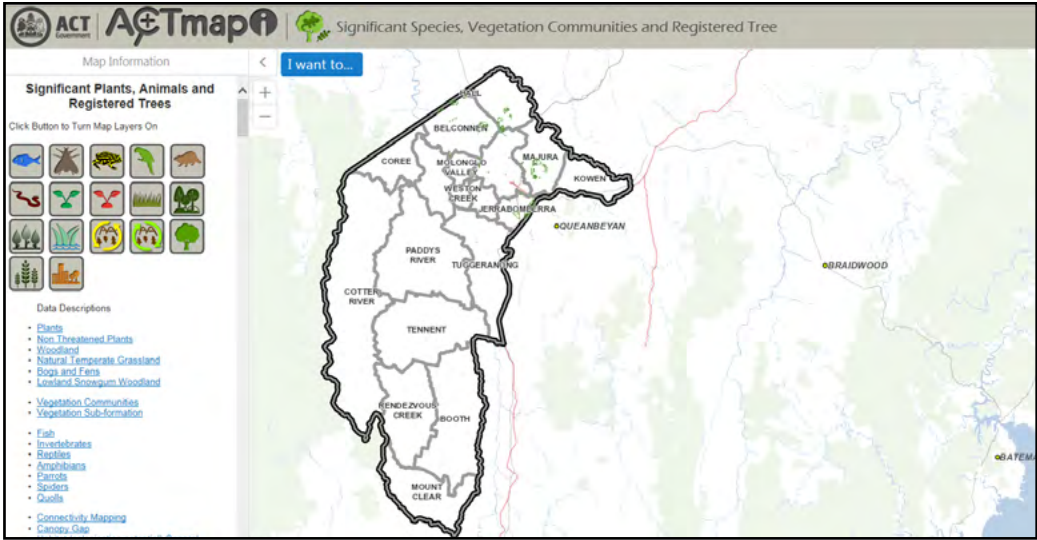
Using funding (\$287,000) from the Australian Government, Murray–Darling Basin Authority, ACT Government and Icon Water, two engineered log jams were introduced and some existing rock groynes enhanced. The artificial habitat structures have increased river channel depth past the structures and improved native fish passage and habitat in the area.

Furthermore, revegetation and weed control along the river bank has rehabilitated native habitat.


STRATEGY 1: ENHANCE HABITAT CONNECTIVITY AND ECOSYSTEM FUNCTION


Woodland Restoration at Mulligans Flat



Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 1.1: Develop baseline information on landscape function		
<p>Habitat connectivity mapping for wildlife incorporated into connectivity GIS layer on ACTMAPi (2014)¹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitat connectivity map available on ACTMAPi. http://www.actmap.act.gov.au/ Connectivity mapping data has been integrated into the ACT Environmental Offsets Calculator. http://www.environment.act.gov.au/cpr/environmental-offsets-policy Habitat connectivity mapping informs restoration priorities (see Action 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5). 	Completed
		
<p>Soil mapping (1:100,000) completed (2015)¹</p> <p>New soil data uploaded to ACTMAPi and Spatial Data Management System (SDMS) by 2015, and Hydrogeological Landscape Framework by 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Office of Environment and Heritage contracted in 2013 (\$198,000) to complete soils map for the ACT at 1:100,000 scale. Twelve new soil landscapes have been described for the previously unmapped western portion of the ACT. Laboratory analysis of soil profiles from new and existing soil landscapes is complete. Sites with significant soil degradation have been identified. The data generated will contribute to regional and national soil data sets through inclusion in the NSW Soil and Land Information System (SALIS) and the Australian Soil Resource Information System (ASRIS). Soil mapping has informed development of HGL Framework (see below). 	Completed
<p>Hydrogeological Landscape Framework (HGL) completed (2017)²</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW Office of Environment and Heritage contracted to develop an HGL Framework using information on soils, geology, lithology, slope, soil depth, vegetation and climate. Funding of \$286,000 secured by the ACT through the Australian Government's Regional NRM Planning for Climate Change Project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> By end 2015, 25 HGL Units with management areas had been mapped for the ACT and a salinity hazard report finalised. In 2016, reports for erosion risk, wetlands and climate change refugia will become available and awareness/training activities undertaken across government and with the community to support use of soils mapping and HGL in management of national parks, nature reserves, rural landscapes and catchments. 	On track

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
<p>Vegetation mapping completed for the Kowen plateau, Murrumbidgee Valley, and Namadgi National Park (1:25,000) by 2015¹</p> <p>Vegetation mapping of urban areas east of the Murrumbidgee.²</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At end 2015, high resolution vegetation mapping in the ACT had been completed over an area of 122,950 hectares (ha) including the Kowen, Jerrabomberra and Majura districts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mapping currently consists of 61 different vegetation assemblages including 41 remnant vegetation communities and 20 derived vegetation assemblages. Draft public maps have been published on ACTMAPi comprising 92,841 ha of the mapped area. The mapping project aims to complete a draft map of the whole ACT by the end of June 2016. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two interpreters are currently working on aerial photo interpretation in the Namadgi National Park and Tidbinbilla Valley areas. A pilot project is underway in conjunction with the ACT Surveyor-General and ACT Emergency Services Authority to use LIDAR (a remote sensing method) to map vegetation along the urban fringe and remnant vegetation within the urban environment. 	On track
<p>Native vegetation condition indicators to be agreed nationally by 2014.</p> <p>Monitoring systems in place (2016)¹.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National indicators for vegetation condition under the Australian Native Vegetation Framework have not been progressed by the Australian Government. See ACT progress report at http://www.environment.act.gov.au/cpr/conservation-strategies. An ACT Conservation Effectiveness Monitoring Program (CEMP) is under development that incorporates indicators for native vegetation condition (see Action 3.5). 	Behind schedule
Action 1.2: Undertake fine scale planning for habitat connectivity		
<p>Fine scale planning for grassy woodland ecosystems completed (2013)¹</p> <p>Further planning will be informed by plans and reports and new environmental data sets¹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fine scale planning across six grassy woodland restoration landscapes completed and restoration plans produced for Belconnen Hills, Majura Valley, Callum Brae, Kowen Plateau, and Greater Goorooyarroo http://www.environment.act.gov.au/act-nrm. Planning for the final restoration landscape—Murrumbidgee River Valley—has scoped out potential restoration work on public lands, but more detailed consultation with rural lessees is required to gauge interest for restoration on private land in this area. Reports commissioned by ACT Government include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater Goorooyarroo Strategy (December 2012) Works Plan – Black Mountain to Murrumbidgee Corridor (2011) Scoping Study – Majura Valley Area (2013) Scoping Study – Callum Brae, Kowen and South Murrumbidgee (2015) CSIRO Flyways and Byways: Guiding restoration of wildlife corridors: Monitoring connectivity restoration in the Australian Capital Territory . 	Completed

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 1.3: Enhance regional connectivity		
Regional corridor Links identified and agreed with regional partners by 2013 ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT continues to work with a number of partners in NSW on cross-border and regional connectivity initiatives. On ground restoration works continue in the Greater Goorooyaroo area (working with South East Local Land Services, Greening Australia, Landcare groups, and rural landholders). 	On track
Collaborate with partners to submit funding bids to the Commonwealth Biodiversity Fund for on ground restoration activities to support regional corridors (2013–17) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT NRM proposal for a Biodiversity Fund Woodlands Project to restore a number of woodland landscapes across the ACT and adjacent NSW (including Greater Goorooyaroo to the north of the ACT) was successful in attracting \$2.155 million (2012–17). (see Action 3.3) 	On track
Develop a climate change risk impacts statement for the ACT's biodiversity ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modelling of potential fine-scale biodiversity impacts under future climate scenarios for the Murray Basin Cluster finalised. New South Wales Climate Impact Profile Technical Report includes assessment of Southern Tablelands and Australian Alps http://www.climatechange.environment.nsw.gov.au/Impacts-of-climate-change/Biodiversity The risk impacts inform future planning/programs for management of species in the ACT, including assessment and development of action plans for threatened species and ecosystems. 	Completed
Develop a dynamic NRM planning framework to be used to plan for climate change adaptation (2013–2017) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT NRM secured \$260,001 through the Australian Government Regional NRM Planning for Climate Change Project (2014–16). Key elements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » filling critical information gaps including HGL Framework (see Action 1.1) » development of adaptation pathways for grasslands, woodlands, aquatic ecosystems, with knowledge workshops held in 2015 » In 2016 an ACT and Region Investment Prospectus will be provided to the Australian Government and is being compiled through consultation with the NRM Council and other experts, community stakeholders and delivery partners. 	On track
 <p>Jerrabomberra East Nature Reserve Grassland</p>		

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 1.5: Fund priority landscape actions		
Deliver at least 2000 ha of revegetation and restoration in lowland grassy woodland ecosystems, and 15,000 ha of invasive species control in these ecosystems by June 2017 ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By end 2015, over 2700 ha had been revegetated with native vegetation and 6982 ha of invasive species control undertaken through the Biodiversity Fund and ACT Woodlands projects and the regional delivery component of the National Landcare Program. 	On track
Finalise current fish habitat works in the Molonglo and Murrumbidgee Rivers (2014) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works completed—monitoring program on track (See Action 2.5) 	Completed
Seek funding opportunities through the Commonwealth, and ACT governments (2013–2018), and deliver activities on ground ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the regional stream of the National Landcare Programme, ACT NRM will receive more than \$3.18 million from 2014–18. The ACT received \$2.155 million from the Commonwealth Biodiversity Fund to deliver a woodland restoration project (2012–17). Through ACT NRM, in partnership with the Woodlands and Wetlands Trust, the Australian Government is also funding threatened species projects, comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » expand a nationally significant woodlands conservation sanctuary (Mulligans Flat)—\$600,000 » improve the condition of native temperate grassland sites—\$4651 » extend the Corroboree Frogs captive breeding program at Tidbinbilla Nature Reserve to outdoor enclosures that replicate the frogs' natural habitat—\$20,000. Twelve Green Army projects have been approved in the ACT. The successful proponents are Greening Australia, Parks and Conservation Service, Woodlands and Wetlands Trust the Southern ACT Catchment Group and Environment and Planning Directorate. 	On track
 <p>Greening Australia Volunteers</p>		


STRATEGY 2: **MANAGE THREATS TO BIODIVERSITY**




Fire used for grassland management at Jerrabomberra West Nature Reserve




Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 2.1: Implement ACT Weed Strategy (2009-2019)		
Pest plant management plans for critical weed species developed (2017) ¹ , pending a proposed review of ACT biosecurity legislation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pest plant management plans that allow for integrated pest management across tenure and regulatory action are being developed including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Fireweed (notified on 15 July 2014) » Chinese Fairy Grass » Serrated Tussock (draft pending finalisation following consultation with stakeholders). Review of ACT biosecurity legislation to commence 2016. 	On track
ACT and region web-based weeds portal on the Atlas of Living Australia developed to support improved mapping and monitoring (2014) ² Weed alert system developed for the ACT (2014) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT and Southern Tablelands Weed Spotter app, developed in partnership between the ACT Government and 10 NSW Local Government Areas, three catchment groups, the Conservation Council and the regional Landcare community, was launched on 12 June 2014. User manuals have been developed and training provided to assist public land managers and community groups identify new weeds and lodge these on the Atlas of Living Australia website. https://root.ala.org.au/bdrs-core/act-esdd/home.htm Grant funding has been provided to Canberra Nature Map, community run and publicly accessible web site http://canberranaturemap.org/ and app, that enables members of the public to post plant photographs and have them identified by experts. Reports have included several new significant weeds, with these initial infestations subsequently eradicated. Weeds include Madeira Vine, Portuguese Heath, Winged Daisy, Oxeye Daisy, Gazania and Butterfly Bush. Rapid developments in mapping apps has lead to the rolling out of the new Collector app for weed mapping. It is used by Parks employees, Contractors and Parkcare volunteers. This new system is fully integrated with ACT Government ArcGIS On-line weed mapping databases. The Collector app and ArcGIS On-line mapping system has become the industry standard for field based mapping. 	Completed
Mapping of serious and widespread weeds completed (2018) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Collector app-ArcGIS On-line mapping system has become the standard tool for weed mapping in the ACT. It has allowed consolidation of data from multiple sources. Options for consolidated mapping of serious and widespread weeds are being explored including use of remote sensing technologies. Each year, areas where invasive weed control operations were completed are mapped and included in the ACT Parks and Conservation Weeds Atlas. This ensures invasive weed control locations are permanently recorded and helps with follow-up control to protect the ACT Government's initial investment at the site. 	On track


Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Programs to reduce new weed problems will be developed and implemented (2014–2017) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessments have been completed for 20 potential weeds (currently in NSW), and sleeper weed species, based on the NSW risk assessment framework. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The completed risk assessments apply to: Ox-eye Daisy, Mexican Feather Grass, Mouse-ear Hawkweed, Orange Hawkweed, Butterfly Bush (Gaura), African Olive, Madagascan Fireweed, Coolatai Grass, African Parramatta Grass, South African Daisy, Gazania, Chinese Fairy Grass, Giant Parramatta Grass, Shasta Daisy, Chinese Pistachio, Mexican Water Lily, Butterfly Bush (Buddleja), Golden Rain Tree (subsp formosana), Bridal Creeper, Madeira Vine. • The Pest Plant Declaration list has been updated to include new Weeds of National Significance and higher risk species including Orange Hawkweed and Mouse-ear Hawkweed, very high-risk weed species for the alpine areas of the ACT. 	On track
		

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 2.2: Implement ACT Pest Animal Management Strategy 2012-2022		
Develop effective identification, surveillance, response and reporting strategies for new pest animal species ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To identify high-risk pest animal species for surveillance, response and reporting purposes, a South Australian risk assessment system is being adopted. A second risk assessment system for pest fish is being explored. 	On track
<p>Rabbit Pest Animal Management Plan finalised (2013)¹</p> <p>Pest Animal Management Plans for additional priority species such as wild dogs, pigs, and deer (2014-2018)²</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To inform management of rabbits as a pest animal, Best Practice Management Guide for Rabbits was released in April 2015. http://www.environment.act.gov.au/cpr/conservation-strategies/pams2 A template for regional integrated pest management that allowed for regulation provisions to apply to land managers was prepared in February 2015. 	On track
		


Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
The schedules to the <i>Pest Plants and Animals Act 2005</i> updated (2015) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public consultation on draft amendments commenced in November 2015. The key changes to declarations relate to: species of deer; wild cats (refers to cats not owned by people); fish species from the national noxious fish list; Redfin Perch and the European Wasp and European Red Fox. 	Behind schedule
Priority pest animal management programs implemented, focusing on assisting wildlife corridor restoration (annual) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The pest animal program in the Parks and Conservation Service accounts for the majority of recurrent expenditure on vertebrate pests. These include feral pigs in Namadgi National Park, rabbits in areas of Canberra Nature Park, Murrumbidgee River Corridor and Namadgi as well as wild dogs at the rural/reserve interface. These programs aim to hold pest numbers below a level at which they cause unacceptable damage to park amenity, rural enterprises, or biodiversity values. Prevention and early intervention are often the most cost effective techniques for managing pest species, for example, feral horse management along the south-western ACT border over the last decade has resulted in the ACT currently being free of resident feral horse populations. Management in this region is now focused on surveillance to allow the control of feral horse as soon as they are detected to prevent re-establishment in this area. The Biodiversity Fund project (2012–2017) has undertaken extensive control activities for foxes in the Greater Gorooyarroo region, a focal landscape for enhancing connectivity. This has involved collaboration with South East Local Land Services, and dozens of rural landholders in the area. By the end of 2015, 8293 ha of fox baiting control had been achieved. 	On track
Guidelines developed for controlled native species management plans for damage reduction (2014) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A guideline has been developed to inform the development of controlled native species management plans to ensure key matters, such as animal welfare, have been included. 	Completed
Continued investment in the Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre (IACRC) to 2017 ¹ to access national research and best practice outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$30,000 is committed per year to support IACRC research programs. Recent outcomes include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » development of a Rabbit Decision Support System and Rapid Assessment Tool » identification of release/monitoring sites for release of the Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease Virus K5 strain (national release scheduled for 2016) » ongoing fertility control research » Cyprinus Herpes Virus testing for efficacy and safety. <p>http://www.invasiveanimals.com/</p>	Completed

Strategy milestones Progress against milestones		Status
Action 2.3: Manage total grazing pressure on ecosystem function in reserves		
Reserve Operational Plans (RoPs) developed for 14 reserves (2014). Remaining RoPs developed (2018) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Action 3.1 	On track
Rabbit Pest Animal Management Plan implemented (2014 ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to Action 2.2. A Best Practice Management Guide for Rabbits was developed in 2015 and provided to land managers and a template for regional integrated pest management that allowed for regulation provisions to apply to land managers was prepared in February 2015. 	Completed
Biomass Management Plans developed for grassland reserves (2014) ^{1 2}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biomass management trials being conducted in grassland reserves is providing input to development of plans. Two Plans will be completed in 2016. 	Behind schedule
Annual monitoring of kangaroo populations in selected reserves. ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual surveys of kangaroo populations at selected reserves undertaken in 2013, 2014 and 2015. 	On track
<div>  </div>		

Strategy milestones Progress against milestones		Status
Action 2.4: Establish and implement ecologically appropriate fire regimes		
ACT Strategic Bushfire Management Plan revised by the end of 2014 ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Version 3 of the Strategic Bushfire Management plan completed in 2014. 	Completed
Post-fire recovery monitoring of vegetation to continue until 2014 ¹ .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-fire recovery monitoring continued. Monitoring species and community post fire contributes to an improved understanding of ecological resilience, including for climate change adaptation. A 2014 study was conducted in Canberra Nature Park to improve understanding on the effects of past fire regimes on dry forest communities. The study involved collecting vegetation and habitat structure data from over 120 plots in dry forest on Black Mountain, Bruce Ridge, O'Connor Ridge and Aranda Bush. 	On track
Ecological fire management guidelines updated in 2014 and implemented through the TAMS Bushfire Operational Plan ¹ . Fuel and Fire Suppression Guidelines for ACT Declared Threatened Species and Endangered Ecological Communities updated by 2015 for high priority species ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ecological fire management guidelines updated in 2014 and implemented through the TAMS Bushfire Operational Plan¹. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative post-fire assessments were made at a number of prescribed burns to determine if stipulated ecological guidelines were met. Fuel and fire suppression guidelines have been revised and are awaiting comment from TAMS. 	On track
Long-term monitoring undertaken of prescribed burning of high conservation value nature reserves or on specific flora and fauna ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring program on the impact of prescribed burning on biodiversity conservation values continued. Composition, structure and function of vegetation, terrestrial fauna habitat, and species populations monitored in areas identified for fuel reduction in the BOP. Approximately 10% of planned burns are assessed each year. Natural temperate grassland fire and grazing trials are being monitored to help better understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how fires and fire seasons affect the structure and composition of grassland ground vegetation how fires and fire seasons affect grassland fauna how fires and fire seasons affect plant diversity whether burning alters kangaroo grazing patterns. 	On track

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 2.5: Implement improved catchment management to support aquatic ecosystems		
<p>Cod balls in place in Molonglo River and Yerrabi Pond, and fish usage of the structures (2014) monitored on an ongoing basis</p> <p>Tharwa Fish Habitat structures constructed, and fish usage and changes to the river geomorphic profile monitored (2013)¹</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All structures were completed in 2014. • Construction of two engineered log jams (ELJ) and augmentation of some existing rock groynes in the Murrumbidgee River downstream of Tharwa Bridge was completed with funding of \$287,000 provided to the ACT Government and the Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach initiative from several sources, including Caring for Our Country, the Murray–Darling Basin Authority Native Fish Strategy, ACT Climate Change Strategy, ACT Environment Grants and ACTEW. (http://upperbidgeereach.org.au/node/599) • Monitoring of the structures since construction has found the ELJs to be successfully increasing the water depth from 45 centimetres to over 2 metres by increasing the velocity of water past the ELJs and consequently shifting sand through the river section. Surveys conducted in 2014 and 2015 found Murray Cod are the dominant species around the ELJs, groyne habitats and in rocky areas. The Murray Cod around the structures are mostly juveniles suggesting that the structures are providing protective habitat to improve success of the small fish reaching maturity. 	Completed
 <p>Cod balls being place in Yerrabi Pond</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 2013 report recommended modifications to enhance fish passage. Using funding from the Murray–Darling Basin Authority through the Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach initiative, a fishway designer was funded to assess the fishway and determine design modifications to improve its function. Modifications were completed in 2015. 	Completed
<p>Determine the efficacy of the Casuarina Sands fishway to allow fish to pass using passive integrated transponder (PIT) tagging technology (2014)¹</p>		

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Determine the best method to monitor Murray Crayfish and the condition of the crayfish population within the ACT at selected sites (2014) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A report on methods to monitor Murray Crayfish was finalised in 2013.Recommended changes to monitoring methods to improve capture of the Murray River Crayfish were used in a survey of Murray Crayfish in 2015 at Pine Island, Allens Creek, Casuarina Sands and Tharwa Sandwash.The survey showed Murray Crayfish, listed as vulnerable in the ACT, are still in low numbers and have a patchy distribution.	Completed
<div></div>		
Annually stock the larger lakes in Canberra with native fish species to reduce angling pressure on the natural river populations and improve the ecological functioning of the artificial urban lakes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The ACT Government conducts an annual fish stocking program in accordance with the ACT Region Fish Stocking Plan 2015–20. In 2013–14, 18,730 Murray Cod were stocked into Lake Tuggeranong, 11,000 Murray Cod were stocked into Yerrabi Pond, and 20,636 Golden Perch were stocked into Gungahlin Pond. In the 2014–15 season, 39,000 Murray Cod were stocked into Lake Ginninderra. The Stocking Plan can be found at http://www.environment.act.gov.au/cpr/fish/fisheries_management/fish-stock-plan-for-the-australian-capital-territory-2015-2020In surveys of the urban lakes, the stocked native angling species of Murray Cod and Golden Perch were detected in each of the sampled waterbodies.	Completed

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Implement key actions in the Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach Implementation Plan (2013–2018) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach coordinator was maintained for 2014–15. Key projects to address threats included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » FeralFishScan citizen-science portal was launched in the Upper Murrumbidgee catchment in November 2014 » Trialling of a carp control device (2014–15) on the Murrumbidgee near Bredbo and at Jerrabomberra Wetlands. » See Actions 1.2 and 3.3 	On track
		
Finalise Catchment Management Plan and first implementation for the ACT and region (2014), and seek funding for implementation through Murray–Darling Basin Reform Agreement ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT Government formed an inter-jurisdictional coordination body known as the ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group in February 2014. The group was further strengthened in August 2014 when amendments to the <i>Water Resources Act 2007</i> were passed in the Legislative Assembly, establishing the group as a statutory body. The group, which has an Independent Chairperson, is an executive-level group formed from the Commonwealth, ACT and NSW (state and local) governments, Icon Water and a community representative. The group has been tasked with developing a catchment strategy (plan) that will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » provide a regional catchment vision to all stakeholders » offer a mechanism to resolve jurisdictional challenges and capitalise on the opportunities for improved catchment management outcomes » drive the alignment of inter-jurisdictional processes » guide investment in catchment management. The Strategy is planned to be open for public consultation in 2016 with a view to being adopted by the various stakeholders before the end of 2016. 	Behind schedule

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 2.6: Develop and implement a migratory species and action plan		
Migratory Species Action Plan finalised (2014) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Nature Conservation Act 2014</i> includes a new provision requiring the Conservator of Flora and Fauna to prepare a Migratory Species Action Plan for migratory species which are listed under Commonwealth law, are subject to international migratory species agreements and visit the ACT. 31 migratory species have been identified in a draft action plan being prepared in consultation with the ACT Scientific Committee and Australian Government. Public consultation on the draft Plan is expected in 2016. The Action Plan will identify critical habitat within the ACT, long-term objectives, strategies and priority actions. The plan will also consider climate change implications, with natural waterways and urban wetlands expected to become increasingly important. The Action Plan will inform reserve management (much of the critical habitat is already protected in reserves) and urban planning through environmental impact assessment and environmental offsets. 	Behind schedule
Action 2.7: Develop and implement an ACT Soils Strategy		
Develop and implement an ACT soils strategy ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This action will build on the outcomes of the HGL and soil mapping projects (see Action 1.1). 	On track


The background consists of several overlapping geometric shapes in shades of green and teal. A large teal triangle points from the top right towards the center. Another teal shape is at the bottom right. The remaining areas are filled with various shades of green, creating a layered, abstract effect.

STRATEGY 3: **PROTECT SPECIES AND ECOLOGICAL COMMUNITIES**


Grassland Earless Dragon in tussock



Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 3.1: Manage the protected area estate		
Reserve Operational Plans (RoPs) developed for 14 reserves (2014). Remaining RoPs developed (2018) ¹ See Action 2.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RoPs developed for 14 reserves by 2015. Each RoP is being discussed with the ParkCare Group for that reserve. RoPs for the remainder of Canberra Nature Park Reserves are under development. 	On track
Canberra Nature Park Plan of Management reviewed (2015). ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised Reserve Management Plan for Canberra Nature Park is under development. 	Behind schedule
Complete Molonglo River Corridor Plan of Management (2014) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft Molonglo River Reserve Management Plan has been prepared and will undergo community consultation in 2016. 	Behind schedule
Commence preparation of a Lower Cotter Catchment Plan of Management (2013) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft reserve management plan for the Lower Cotter Catchment has been prepared and takes into account recommendations in the May 2015, Auditor General's report on the Restoration of the Lower Cotter Catchment, including that a risk plan be developed. The risk assessment process was completed in January 2016 and the draft Reserve Management Plan has been revised to incorporate management of the identified risks. Targeted stakeholder consultation and release of the draft plan for public comment will be undertaken in mid 2016. The final plan is required to be completed by July 2017 in accordance with the Auditor General's recommendations. 	On track
Progressive implementation of actions in Plans of Management and Threatened Species and Ecological Communities Action Plans (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT Scientific Committee has reviewed implementation of the following action plans since 2013: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribbons of Life, ACT Aquatic Species and Riparian Zone Conservation Strategy 2006 (2013) http://www.environment.act.gov.au/cpr/conservation_and_ecological_communities/aquatic_species_and_riparian_zone_conservation_strategy Woodlands for Wildlife, ACT Lowland Woodland Conservation Strategy 2004 (2013) http://www.environment.act.gov.au/cpr/conservation_and_ecological_communities/lowland_woodlands/woodlands_strategy Spotted-tailed Quoll (2013) http://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/576541/actionplan30spotted-tailedquoll.pdf Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby (2014) – revised Action Plan (2015) http://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/576529/Brush-tail-Rock-Wallaby-Action-Plan-ACCESS.pdf Canberra Spider Orchid, Brindabella Midge Orchid and Tarengo Leek Orchid (2015) http://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/576552/Canberra_Spider_Orchid_Action_Plan_-_Combined.pdf http://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/576551/Brindabella_Midge_Orchid_Action_Plan http://www.environment.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/576527/actionplans4.pdf Combined.pdf 	On track


Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Trails Strategy finalised and implementation commenced (2014) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trails ACT: Planning Guidelines finalised.(see Action 5.6). 	Completed
Restoration of degraded areas within Canberra Nature Park (2013–2018) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately 2800 ha of degraded land in Canberra Nature Park have been restored through the ACT Woodlands Program (2011–18), Grassland Enhancement Program (2016–18) and other complementary funding sources (e.g. ACT Environment Grants, Green Army). 	On track
Action 3.2: Develop, implement and review action plans for threatened species and communities		
Action plans will continue to be developed to identify and manage threats to declared species and communities (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action plans are in place for 33 of 34 listed species and two listed ecological communities (Yellow Box–Blakely's Red Gum Woodland and native temperate grasslands). An action plan for the 34th and most recently listed species, the Scarlet Robin, is being prepared. To align with arrangements in other jurisdictions, provisions in the <i>Nature Conservation Act 2014</i> require newly-listed species to have a conservation advice and provide some flexibility to not prepare an action plan if a conservation advice is considered sufficient. 	On track
Action plans will be reviewed, and updated where necessary to ensure they remain current (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Nature Conservation Act 2014 requires five-yearly progress reports on implementation of action plans and comprehensive reviews of action plans every 10 years. Public consultation on a draft Native Grassland Strategy and its component action plans (listed below) will be undertaken in 2016: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Button Wrinklewort » A Subalpine Herb » Ginninderra Peppercress » Golden Sun Moth » Grassland Earless Dragon » Perunga Grasshopper » Striped Legless Lizard » Natural Temperate Grasslands. A comprehensive review of the ACT Lowland Woodland Conservation Strategy will commence in 2016. This has been slightly delayed to enable completion of vegetation mapping that will inform review and revision of the strategy and action plans. 	On track
		


Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 3.3: Restore and manage priority landscapes		
Implement woodland restoration activities and invasive species control within priority lowland woodland areas across priority 'focal' landscapes (2017) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Woodland Restoration Program funded by ACT Government (\$1 million) and Australian Government (\$2.155 million) between 2012 and 2017 is undertaking on-ground restoration and regeneration works in priority landscapes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Greater Goorooyarroo » Belconnen Hills » Majura Valley » Kowen » Callum Brae » Murrumbidgee Valley » Murrumbidgee River Corridor At end 2015, the Program had: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » revegetated and enhanced 1716 hectares to enhance connectivity and resilience of landscapes to climate change; » dispersed 4415 tonnes of coarse woody debris to improve habitat for native species; and » undertaken 8293 hectares of feral animal control. <p>See Action 1.3 http://www.environment.act.gov.au/cpr/conservation_and_ecological_communities/lowland_woodlands/restore_act_and_greater_goorooyarroo_woodlands</p>	On track
One Million Trees program finalised in Murrumbidgee River Corridor (2018) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Murrumbidgee River Corridor Million Trees project (2008–2018) is a component of the ACT Government's commitment to plant one million trees across the Territory under the ACT's Climate Change Strategy, Weathering the Change. To date, 250,000 trees have been planted by the ACT Parks and Conservation Service in the Murrumbidgee Corridor and adjacent rural lands. 	On track
Finalise monitoring and restoration of alpine bogs affected by the 2003 fires, and commencement of long-term monitoring (2014) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-fire (2003) bog restoration activities commenced in 2003 and were completed in 2012. Baseline mapping for climate change monitoring has been undertaken (finescale map produced of boundaries of bogs and of component plant communities). 	Completed
Priority activities delivered from the Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach Implementation Plan (2013–2018) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See actions 1.2 and 2.5 	On track

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 3.4: Identify biodiversity refugia under drought and climate change		
<p>Develop criteria and principles for identifying and managing refugia (2013)¹</p> <p>Identify refugia in the ACT and region using NSW and ACT Region Climate Model (NARCLiM) data and other data sets (see also Activity 1.1) (2015)¹</p> <p>Manage at least one identified site for refugia values (2018)²</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criteria and principles refined from the literature and considered in ACT Reserve Condition Monitoring project. The ACT HGL Framework has developed criteria and principles and utilise NARCLiM hydrological impact assessments to identify potential climate refugia in a wetland climate vulnerability assessment (see Action 1.1). Sites to be managed for refugia values to be identified through HGL Framework. 	On track
		

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 3.5: Monitor five priority ecosystems most vulnerable to threats		
Monitoring of five ecosystems—native temperate grasslands, grassy box-gum woodlands, alpine bogs, montane forests, and Murrumbidgee-Cotter River system (2013–2018) ² .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An ACT Conservation Effectiveness Monitoring Program (CEMP) is being developed for monitoring eight ACT ecosystems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » lowland native grasslands » aquatic and riparian ecosystems » lowland woodlands » lowland dry forests » upland montane grasslands » upland woodlands » upland forests » upland bogs and fens. The CEMP will provide field protocols for selected indicators and develop systems to compile, analyse and report on monitoring data to inform reserve management. The CEMP is being piloted in restoration programs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » the Grassland Enhancement Program (2016–18) that has established monitoring sites in six grassland nature reserves to assess effectiveness of mosaic burning and grazing treatments » the ACT Woodland Restoration Program that has established 15 monitoring sites across the ACT and Greater Goorooyarroo. 	On track
Monitoring of riverine ecosystems to date focuses on in-stream biodiversity, primarily fish. Additional resourcing will be required to properly undertake riparian monitoring. ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Murrumbidgee Fish Monitoring program is undertaken biennially to monitor the fish populations in the Murrumbidgee River in the ACT region. In 2015 nine sites on the Murrumbidgee River were surveyed. The six sites within the ACT form part of the ACT Government's long-term monitoring of the Murrumbidgee River. The other three sites are upstream of the ACT. The Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch (Waterwatch) released a Catchment Health Indicator Program (CHIP) Report in 2013–14 and 2014–15. The 2014–15 report presents data on aquatic ecosystem health across 90 reaches in the upper Murrumbidgee Catchment based on 1556 water quality surveys, 206 water bug surveys and 178 riparian condition surveys conducted across 229 sites. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 'Rapid Assessment of Riparian Condition' (RARC) surveys were included for the first time in the 2014–15 CHIP Report to assess the functional characteristics of river bank vegetation. This information will help identify key areas that can be targeted for future remediation works. 	On track

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 3.6: Implement captive breeding programs and translocation programs		
Captive breeding program for the Corroboree Frog to be continued (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juvenile Corroboree Frogs bred in captivity have been released to sphagnum moss bogs in Namadgi National Park since 2011. Monitoring in 2015 showed that some of the juvenile frogs released in 2011 had reached breeding age and begun calling. While the number was low (about 10% of the number released in 2011), the results are encouraging as they demonstrate captive-bred frogs can survive in the wild for several years to reach breeding age. The next stage of the recovery program is to determine overall survivorship of frogs released during subsequent years and whether the offspring of captive frogs will successfully breed in the wild. 	On track
Reintroduction of the Macquarie Perch in the enlarged Cotter reservoir (in partnership with ACTEW) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juvenile Macquarie Perch have been translocated from the Enlarged Cotter Dam to two areas in the ACT in an attempt to establish additional populations of the species. Recent poor breeding of the dam population has resulted in no translocation in 2014 and 2015. This project is part of environmental commitments to the Australian Government for development of the enlarged Cotter reservoir. 	On track
Translocation programs will continue to be undertaken in the Mulligans Flat Sanctuary consistent with the aims of the ecological research project (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Eastern Bettong, a woodland-dwelling, rabbit-sized kangaroo was re-introduced to the Sanctuary in 2012. The population has increased from 30 to over 200 bettongs. The New Holland Mouse was released in 2013. Bush Stone-curlews were released into the Mulligans Flat Woodlands Sanctuary in early Spring 2014 and 2015. The Australian National University, in partnership with ACT Government, have been successful in attracting Australian Research Council to reintroduce the Eastern Quoll to the sanctuary in 2016. 	On track
The methodology for translocating Golden Sun Moths will continue to be developed and will lead to the production of translocation guidelines (2015) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Golden Sun Moths successfully translocated (new population in place for two seasons) at two locations. Further translocations in 2016 will inform development of a methodology to include in guidelines. Note, translocation of other threatened species is also being progressed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A research project on how to translocate the vulnerable Striped Legless Lizard is being undertaken by Bush Heritage Australia, with some financial and on-ground support of the ACT Government. Lizards have been translocated from development sites in Gungahlin to a grassland near Bredbo in NSW. The survival of lizards within confined and unconfined areas will be monitored over a number of years. The ACT Government provided \$50,000 in 2015–16 to support captive breeding of the Grassland Earless Dragon. 	Behind schedule

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Programs for the Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby and bettongs to be continued and expanded, including translocation of bettongs outside Mulligans Flat Sanctuary (ongoing) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work continues in exploring options for the release of Bettongs 'beyond the fence' into areas associated with the Lower Cotter Catchment. Parks and Conservation Service continue to work with and support the lead partner being ANU. Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby program – Parks and Conservation continues to work with the Brush-tailed Rock-wallaby recovery team to support the release of genetically diverse animals into suitable locations in Victoria. 	On track
Action 3.7: Propagate and translocate threatened plants		
Propagation and translocation programs for Tuggeranong Lignum, Button Wrinklewort, Small Purple Pea and Ginninderra Peppercress developed and underway if technically possible and resources available (2016) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A total of 129 Tuggeranong Lignum planted in Murrumbidgee River Corridor, Point Hut Hill and Bulleen Nature Reserve. Monitoring of survival ongoing. Experimental translocation of Button Wrinklewort into Jerrabomberra East Nature Reserve. The translocated population appears to be stable and the best methods for translocating this species were identified by the project. Small Purple Pea translocated into an offset site near Williamsdale. Population appears stable and monitoring and site management will continue via ACTEW. A total of 1500 Ginninderra Peppercress planted in two locations (Crace and Dunlop Nature Reserves). Monitoring of survival will be ongoing, however the translocation appears to have failed. 	On track
		
Subject to community interest, a community plant rescue program will be developed and implemented (2016) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seed has been collected from a Woden population of the locally rare tough scurf-pea for propagation and translocation into nearby woodland reserves, by Parkcare groups. 	On track


Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 3.8: Establish seed banks and seed orchards		
Development, management and use of seed banks and seed orchards (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ginninderra Peppercress seed was collected by the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) from 406 plants from the Lawson population between 2002 to 2008; seed has been successfully germinated from 307 of these individuals. By 2013 the ANBG seed bank had more than 99,750 Ginninderra Peppercress seeds, including over 500 from the North Mitchell population. New accessions to the seed bank were made in 2015. To enhance the Murrumbidgee Bossiaea long-term conservation prospects, a collaborative partnership was established between the ANBG and EPD, with assistance from National Seedbank volunteers, to collect seed from the two largest population clusters on the Paddys River in late 2014. 21,000 Murrumbidgee Bossiaea seeds were successfully harvested and stored for ex situ conservation purposes at the ANBG national seedbank. Material was collected from 12 wild plants and 10 translocated plants so Tuggeranong Lignum could be propagated in the ANBG. 	On Track
		
Seed collection policy released (2014) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of regional NRM planning for climate change, CSIRO has developed guidelines for climate-ready restoration that includes information on seed collection and storage and species choice. 	Completed

STRATEGY 4: **ENHANCE BIODIVERSITY VALUE OF URBAN AREAS**




Woodland at Goorooyaroo paddock




Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 4.1: Manage impacts of urban development on biodiversity		
Manage impacts of urban development on significant biodiversity assets through Environmental Impact Statement processes and Strategic Environmental Assessments (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An environmental impact statement is required if the development is listed in Schedule 4 of the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i>. This includes assessment of vegetation clearing, consideration of impacts on threatened and protected species and consideration of matters of national environmental significance. The offsets policy applies to listed threatened species and listed migratory species. Connectivity mapping is utilised as part of the development assessment process, with the aim of avoiding further significant fragmentation. A strategic assessment was completed for development of five new suburbs in Gungahlin and is underway in the Majura and Jerrabomberra valleys to help identify industrial and commercial land. Offsets agreed under the Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment are being implemented. 	On track
Accreditation of ACT environmental assessment processes through a revised Bilateral Assessment Agreement (2014) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised bilateral assessment agreement signed in June 2014. 	Completed
Development and finalisation of the approach to environmental offsets in the ACT (2013–2018) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT Environmental Offsets Policy was finalised in 2015. The policy is embedded in the <i>Planning and Development Act 2007</i>. http://www.environment.act.gov.au/cpr/environmental-offsets-policy 	Completed
Action 4.2: Manage urban open space		
Continue to stock lakes with native fish species annually. ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stocking takes place annually as per the stocking plan, which was updated in 2015. http://www.environment.act.gov.au/cpr/fish/fisheries-management/fish-stock-plan-for-the-australian-capital-territory-2015-202 See Action 2.2 	Completed
 <p>Murray Cod Release</p>		

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Policies to improve biodiversity outcomes from landscaping developed (2015) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT Government's requirement to incorporate Water Sensitive Urban Design in urban development has significantly improved biodiversity outcomes. The Design Guidelines for the Water Sensitive Urban Design General Code requires the creation of habitat through the use of a mix of species with the majority of plants being local to the ACT in order to attract a variety of native birds and aquatic species. The implementation of this code has resulted in a large number of water bodies landscaped with native shrub bed plantings and the establishment of semi-natural creek lines that support a range of groundcover, shrub and tree plantings throughout public open spaces. 	Completed
TAMS revised guidelines ('Tree Selector') used to plant appropriate species in urban parks and open space to enhance biodiversity and climate change adaptation (2013–2018) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TAMS is currently finalising a review of Design Standard 23 (Plant Species for Urban Landscape Projects). The revised standard will be used to develop a web-based tool called 'Tree Selector'. The Tree Selector Tool will allow the community to look up information on a wide range of plants. Over time, more plants will be added to this tool. The tool will provide guidance on the appropriate range of plants for particular areas taking into account growth habit, sun, shade and frost tolerances and the water requirements of plants. http://plantselector.thinkwater.act.gov.au/ 	On track
Key areas mapped where environmental plantings can enhance connectivity and biodiversity outcomes in urban areas (2014) ¹ and deliver plantings through the urban component of the One Million Trees program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key areas are identified as part of the Habitat Connectivity mapping. Some plantings have occurred as part of the development approval process. See Action 4.3 	Completed
Encourage native plantings and retention of mature/hollow bearing trees across urban areas, or any other areas that require more native vegetation coverage, ensuring fire fuel management responsibilities (ongoing) ^{1,2}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trees are an integral part of Canberra's landscape and design. TAMS manages over 700,000 trees in residential streets, major road verges, urban parks and other open space areas throughout the city. The <i>Tree Protection Act 2005</i> provides that any work which may cause damage to significant trees on leased land, or trees that have been placed on the ACT Tree Register, requires approval. This includes tree removal, major pruning or lopping and groundwork near a regulated or registered tree. The removal of existing trees on urban development sites is considered through the development assessment process. Trees that provide habitat for wildlife, for example hollow bearing trees, are retained wherever possible. http://www.tams.act.gov.au/parks-conservation/trees_and_forests/management-of-trees-on-public-land 	Completed

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 4.3: Enhance connectivity through urban areas		
One Million Trees urban component finalised (2018) and lessons learnt incorporated into connectivity planning (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The One Million Trees project is continuing with the current focus on street trees in urban areas and plantings in the Lower Cotter Catchment and Murrumbidgee Corridor and environs. The lessons learnt are incorporated into connectivity planning, particularly in relation to fire management zones, retaining the value of natural temperate grasslands and planting density and species selection. 	On track
<p>Implementation of education and incentive programs to encourage more native plantings in backyards close to reserves and urban fringe areas commenced (2014)²</p> <p>(See also Action 5.3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since 2004, the Bush Friendly Garden is a regular display at Floriade that helps educate visitors about many of the invasive weeds that originate from suburban backyards while showing alternative bush-friendly plants. Weed Swap is a biannual event providing Canberrans with an opportunity to exchange invasive weeds from their garden for free Australian native plants. Annually, invasive species are exchanged for approximately 4,000 native plants. This event, which has been well supported by the Canberra community for over 10 years, is a partnership between the Australian Native Plants Society and the ACT Government. Garden Plants Going Bush Brochure is available at a range of Parks and Conservation events including Weed Swap, Bush Friendly Garden display at Floriade and World Wetlands Day at Jerrabomberra Wetlands Open Day. 	On track
 <p>Serrated tussock</p>		

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 4.4: Manage the urban edge		
ACT Trails Strategy completed (2014) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trails ACT: Planning Guidelines finalised in 2015. » See Action 5.6. 	Completed
The ACT Government to continue its commitment to pet containment, waste management, recreational use, fire management (ongoing) ¹ , the spread of invasive plants into bushland and support for the current Bush on the Boundaries (BoB) program ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bush on the Boundary Reference Groups (BoB) are a community initiative of the Conservation Council ACT Region, the Ginninderra Catchment Group, the Canberra Ornithologists Group and academics from the Australian National University. A number of BoB groups exist around new developments at Gungahlin, Molonglo and North Watson. These groups provide stakeholders with the opportunity to discuss new developments and strategise approaches to retain and enhance adjacent ecological values. The ACT Government provides support to catchment groups who participate in BoB initiatives, and Government representatives attend meetings. Guided walks and 'induction' workshops for new residents have helped foster new Forde residents' understanding of the Mulligans Flat Nature Reserve and attracting people to conservation activities. The ACT Government, pursuant to Section 81 of the <i>Domestic Animals Act 2000</i>, has declared the following areas to be cat containment areas: Bonner, Crace, Coombs, Denman Prospect, Forde, Lawson, Molonglo, Moncrieff, Wright, and The Fair at Watson. Throsby was announced as a new cat containment area on 20 April 2015. Cat containment legislation will also be effective in Jacka from 1 January 2017. 	On Track
Implement education program on the impacts of escaped domestic animals (pets such as fish, dogs, cats etc) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A report on responsible cat ownership and impacts of domestic cats on Canberra's wildlife was produced and is publicly available at http://conservationcouncil.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Eyles-Mulvaney-Background-Paper-Responsible-Pet-Ownership-and-the-Protection-of-Wildlife-2014.pdf In 2014 and 2015, TAMS, in partnership with the Conservation Council, undertook a comprehensive public awareness campaign to increase the community's awareness of cat containment in the ACT and to educate the public about responsible cat ownership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Actions included the distribution of flyers to residents in cat containment areas and residents in non-cat containment areas adjacent to nature reserves. » Key stakeholders such as the RSPCA, veterinary clinics and pet stores were provided with information to distribute to their clients and customers. ACTMAPi was updated to include a cat containment layer. » TAMS installed permanent signage at the entrances to existing cat containment areas to inform residents of their responsibilities under the <i>Domestic Animals Act 2000</i>. Domestic Animal Services and the RSPCA provide a pamphlet and advice to current and potential pet owners. 	On track


Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 4.5: Support Urban Landcare and ParkCare activities		
Continue to support urban Landcare and ParkCare groups (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2015 Parks and Territory Services supported 46 ParkCare and Urban Landcare groups, with Urambi Hills and Mount Pleasant ParkCare groups welcomed as new additions in 2015. A new ParkCare Support Officer position was created in 2013 to provide on-ground support to ParkCare groups and assist with the development of annual work programs for each group. In 2014–15 ParkCare and Urban Landcare volunteers contributed a total of 18,000 hours on a range of activities including weed control, identification and mapping of weed infestations, pest animal monitoring, rehabilitation works such as tree planting and erosion control and trail maintenance. Of these, 16,000 hours (90%) were ParkCare activities undertaken in forests and reserves and 1300 hours (7%) were Urban Landcare activities undertaken in urban parks and open space. 	On track
Work with existing urban Landcare and ParkCare groups to identify key areas of weed infestation and incorporate this knowledge into proposed weed mapping targets (2013–2018) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2014–15, 42% of volunteer time was spent undertaking weed control, including the identification and mapping of weed infestations. 	On track
Showcase and promote the research undertaken and knowledge held by Urban Landcare and ParkCare groups as examples of community driven, urban based nature conservation initiatives (2013–2018) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The annual Scribbly Gum newsletter reports on the work of ParkCare and Urban Landcare groups. This publication is available online on the TAMS website and is promoted at community environment events. Annual forums organised by the Parks and Conservation Service and ACT NRM brought together ParkCarers and Landcarers with scientists, park managers and government. Over 70 community participants attended each forum. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In October 2014, a forum 'Reflect, Explore and Inspire' was held to celebrate 25 years of ParkCare and Landcare in the ACT. Over 70 community participants attended. In September 2015, a forum 'Voices in Reserve Management' was held for ParkCare volunteers. Park Carers were invited to attend the Ecofocus Seminar held by the Conservation and Research Unit in EPD in August 2015. 	On track
Provide training opportunities for urban Landcare and ParkCare groups in biodiversity research techniques and mapping (2013–2018) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eight ParkCare groups have been trained and are involved in the Molonglo Catchment Group initiated Vegewatch program. In 2015, ACT Parks and Conservation Service staff provided training to volunteers in the use of mapping applications for improved reporting of rare plants and weed infestations. Weed and plant identification training for volunteer groups is ongoing. 	On track


Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Create and support new Urban Landcare and ParkCare groups that capture urban open space and roadsides and other green areas (2013–2018) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2015 three new Urban Landcare groups were established to assist City Services maintain areas of urban open space. There are now 19 groups. 	On track
Action 4.6: Assess urban areas, manage and enhance green assets and infrastructure		
Assess urban areas to determine the need and suitability for additional tree coverage to mitigate potential heat island effect (by 2016) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT Government has prepared a draft Climate Change Adaptation Strategy that will be finalised in 2016. The Adaptation Strategy will play a key role in helping the city adapt to the impacts of climate change. 	On track
Strategy for the maintenance and management of the ACT's green assets and infrastructure developed (2018) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT Government will progress a Living Infrastructure Strategy in 2016. ACT Government has commenced a number of initiatives to improve water quality infrastructure in urban areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » The ACT Basin Priority Project 'Improving long term water quality in the ACT and the Murrumbidgee River System' (if approved by the Commonwealth Government) will invest up to \$93 Million in water quality infrastructure www.act.gov.au/basinpriorityproject » The Water Sensitive Urban Design review has focused on improved management of existing assets. www.environment.act.gov.au/Water-Sensitive-Urban-Design 	On track
		

STRATEGY 5: **STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

Tree planting




Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 5.1: Support greater community involvement through volunteering		
Continue support for ParkCare, Urban Landcare and catchment management groups (refer to Action 4.5) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Action 4.5 (Support Urban Landcare and ParkCare Groups) • A number of ACT, Commonwealth and NSW government programs also provide grants and funding for implementing environmental activities under contract. Programs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » National Landcare Programme ACT Regional Investment provided \$1.08 million to ACT Catchment groups between July 2013 and December 2015. » Environment Grants (see Action 5.2): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 2013–14—\$111,000 was provided to Catchment Groups and ParkCare Groups to undertake environmental projects » 2014–15—\$101,000 was provided to catchment groups and ParkCare groups to undertake environmental projects. • In 2015, ACT landcare groups worked towards the establishment of a peak body, Landcare ACT, to advance community landcare activities in the ACT region, and to act as a focal point for broader stakeholder communications and community input to regional natural resource management planning. 	On track
		
Provide support to community events related to woodland restoration (2013–2017) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT Woodland Restoration Program supports community planting events for ParkCare groups and seed collection and propagation by volunteers. Between 2013 and 2015, over 450 events were supported through the Woodlands Restoration program and the National Landcare Program. Examples include community planting days, and seed collection and propagation by volunteers. 	On track

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 5.2: Enhance and promote the use of citizen science projects		
Continue to provide support to community groups to provide critical monitoring of the ACT's biodiversity (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key initiatives included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 180 Waterwatch volunteers surveyed 229 sites across the upper Murrumbidgee catchment in 2014–15 (an increase from 160 volunteers surveying 184 sites in 2013–14). » The annual ACT and Region Frogwatch Census, funded through the ACT Government and the Capital Woodlands and Wetlands Trust, supported training events at Mulligans Flat and Jerrabomberra Wetlands Nature Reserves. Researchers from the Australian National University (ANU) collaborated with citizen science program ACT Frogwatch to analyse 13 years of data and found that maintaining green space and healthy wetlands in Canberra's suburbs is playing a key role in preserving our frog populations http://www.ginninderralandcare.org.au/frogwatch#sthash.FfFb5ZzB.dpuf » In the Canberra Nature Map's first year (2015), over 200 people lodged 7200 plant and fungi reports, including records of a further 2000 rare or uncommon species (40% of the total recorded over the previous 110 years). 	On track
		
Update ACTMAPi with new conservation related data layers and analysis (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft vegetation maps (covering 90,000 ha) have been published on ACTMAPi. Data products for the ACT Soil and ACT Hydrogeological Landscapes projects will be finalised in 2016 and made publicly available on ACTMAPi. The Office of Surveyor General has released aerial imagery services from a new ACTMAPi basemap section http://actmap.i.act.gov.au/basemaps.html. Some data obtained through citizen science has augmented biodiversity data layers on ACTMAPi. 	On track
Annual environment grants - Community groups will be supported through grants and provision of equipment and training (ongoing) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Environment Grants were awarded to community groups as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » 2013–14—6 projects, \$176,000 » 2014–15—10 projects, \$180,000 » 2015–16—7 projects, \$185,000 	On track

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 5.3: Implement targeted community education campaigns on priority issues See also Action 4.3		
Education/outreach activities with anglers on responsible fishing (2013–2018) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Angler educational activities included production of gate stickers for threatened species and fisheries regulations, a recreational fishing brochure, and an enforcement blitz (TAMS and EPA) and public talks. 	On track
Campaigns delivered: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understanding the importance of box-gum woodlands and native grasslands (2013)¹ implications of climate change on biodiversity in the ACT and region (2014)¹ managing the impacts of pets roaming from the suburbs (2015)² managing backyards for biodiversity (2016)² greater awareness about managing the urban/ bushland edge (2017).² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between 2013 and 2015 over 450 events were supported through the Woodlands restoration program and the National Landcare Program. The Territory and Municipal Services Directorate provides web-based information on people's responsibilities as dog and cat owners and cat containment areas in the ACT. Since 2004, the Bush Friendly Garden is a regular display at Floriade that aims to educate visitors about many of the invasive weeds that originate from suburban backyards, while showing alternative bush-friendly plants. Weed Swap is a biannual event providing Canberrans with an opportunity to exchange invasive weeds from their garden for free Australian native plants. Annually, invasive species are exchanged for approximately 4,000 native plants. The Garden Plants Going Bush brochure is available at a range of community events. 	On track
Biennial forum on nature reserves to promote information exchange, community education and awareness and planning (2014) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forum 'Reflect, Explore and Inspire' was held to celebrate 25 years of ParkCare and Landcare in the ACT in October 2014. A second forum held in July 2015 focussed on bridging the gap between research and management in reserve management. 	Completed

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 5.4: Build indigenous engagement in the management of natural resources		
Involve Indigenous people in woodland restoration (2013–2017) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Indigenous Restoration Officer is employed with Greening Australia through a Commonwealth funding grant to the ACT Government. A local traditional owner is supporting restoration of a significant cultural site in a threatened box–gum woodland in Canberra (with funding support provided through an ACT Environment Grant) 	On track
Continuation of the Indigenous Ranger Program ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indigenous Ranger Program continues with the Murumbung Yurung Murra Rangers, Working on Country and cultural activities. 	On track
Support <i>Murrumbung Yurung Marra</i> Indigenous group in ACT Government to engage with the aboriginal community on NRM issues (2013–2018) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of the Aboriginal Fire Management Framework in 2015. Traditional custodians assisted with the Aboriginal cultural burns at Jerrabomberra Wetlands Reserve in 2014 and 2015. 	On track
Continue to employ an Indigenous Natural Resource Management (NRM) Facilitator ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT Aboriginal NRM Facilitator runs a range of programs to support increased engagement of Aboriginal people in land management and promotes culturally appropriate approaches to sharing Indigenous knowledge. A Ngunnawal Plant Use Field Guide was released in 2014. The Aboriginal NRM Facilitator works with the Indigenous Restoration Officer at Greening Australia Capital Region to support Indigenous inmates in the ACT correctional facility (Alexander Maconochie Centre) to raise cultural awareness and develop skills land management. 	On track

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Action 5.5: Encourage the involvement of youth in nature conservation		
Develop and implement a program to encourage and support educational institutions to 'adopt' an area of conservation significance as places for nature-based education (mid 2015) ^{1,2} Five areas adopted by 2018 ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marist College and Radford College regularly undertake school community service activities such as plantings, weeding, trail closures and erosion control in Canberra Nature Park reserves. Many schools participate in Waterwatch and Frogwatch. 	On track
Action 5.6. Support appropriate recreational and tourism use of natural areas		
Finalise and implement the ACT Tracks and Trails Strategy ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trails ACT: Planning Guidelines finalised in 2015. Completion of the rationalisation of the trail network on Bruce Ridge Reserve. The new trail network improves protection of the natural values at the sites while providing suitable access for walkers, joggers and mountain bike riders. 	Completed
Finalise the ACT Mountain Bike Strategy ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Mountain Bike Strategy being prepared for community consultation. 	On track
Action 5.7: Enhance key partnerships across government, community and the private sector		
Continued support of Mulligan's Flat Goorooyarroo Woodland experiment (currently funded until 2015) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional funding of \$600,000 from the Australian Government, \$900,000 from the ACT Government and a community profile and fundraising campaign 'Bettong Bungalow' aims to expand the Mulligans Flat–Goorooyarroo Woodland Sanctuary from 485 hectares with a perimeter of 11.5 km to 1,253 hectares with 23.2 km of predator-proof fencing. 	On track
Work with rural landholders, Rural Landholders Association and institutional landholders on woodland restoration works (2013–2017) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Grants (\$165,000 from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and administered by ACT NRM) provided ACT rural landholders with grants to improve sustainable agriculture while protecting and enhancing habitat across the landscape. 21 grants provided in 2014 and 2015 supported fencing to protect tributaries and trees and promote regeneration. Grants to control priority weeds (e.g. serrated tussock) aim to enhance box-gum woodlands and native grasslands. 	On track

Strategy milestones	Progress against milestones	Status
Formalise engagement with national networks focused on biodiversity and climate change by the end of 2013 ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT NRM regularly engages with AdaptNRM on the development and application of climate adaptation planning products and guidance materials. AdaptNRM is a national initiative that aims to support NRM groups in updating their NRM plans to include climate adaptation planning. Among other things, this engagement has led to inclusion of a case study from the ACT in a technical planning guide 'Helping Biodiversity Adapt' around implementing connectivity projects to achieve multiple strategic objectives. 	Completed
Work with NSW partners to identify regional wildlife corridors (2013) ¹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT and NSW work together to enhance wildlife corridors at larger landscape scales. ACT and NSW partners collaborate for example on the Kosciusko to Coast (K2C) and the Great Eastern Ranges (GER) initiatives. ACT Government, represented by ACT NRM and Conservation Research, participated in development of the Greater Capital 1st Draft Corridors Mapping in October 2015. This exercise is being led by NSW Office of Environment and Heritage and included extensive consultation with South East Local Land Services and relevant local councils (Yass, Palerang, Queanbeyan, Cooma). 	Completed
Work with research partners to develop a dynamic ACT Natural Resource Management framework that is 'climate change ready' (2016) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT NRM hosted a two-stage participatory workshop process (October–November 2015) that combined the use of scenario planning and adaptation pathways analysis to identify options that will enable adaptation to future climate change for three priority ecosystems (natural temperate grasslands, box-gum woodlands, river corridors and wetlands) and knowledge management. Workshops included a diverse range of stakeholders representing: ACT Government, NSW Government expert advisory bodies, community groups (Canberra Nature Map, Frogwatch, Waterwatch, Friends of Grasslands), researchers (CSIRO, ANU, University of Canberra) and NGOs (Greening Australia, Kosciusko2Coast, Conservation Council). 	On track
		

EXPLORE AND VOLUNTEER





Over half of the ACT land area consists of parks and reserves. Most Canberrans reside within walking distance of one of Canberra Nature Park's where they can explore quiet grassland reserves, or hike to the summits of Canberra's ridges and peaks to enjoy an eagle-eye view of the ACT region.

In exploring the parks and reserves of the ACT, remember you are walking in the footsteps of the ancestors of the traditional custodians, the Ngunnawal people. Caring for Country is the Indigenous concept of natural resource management which includes the nurturing and management of the land as well as the cultural responsibility to protect the sites, values, stories and ancestral obligations of that Country. Volunteering is a great way to learn more about the environment, get outdoors, stay fit and meet new people. Each year, hundreds of volunteers help conserve, rehabilitate and protect our natural environment through weed control, monitoring feral animals, seed collection, plant propagation, tree planting, trail maintenance, erosion control, monitoring plants and animals and raising community awareness.

People can volunteer for their local reserve or the wider ACT and region. There are currently 46 Landcare/ ParkCare groups working across ACT nature reserves, national parks, urban parks and open spaces.

The ACT Government, through ACT NRM and ACT Parks and Conservation Service, work closely with the community and organisations such as Greening Australia and ACT Catchment Groups (Ginninderra, Molonglo and Southern ACT), to manage the biodiversity and resilience of our landscapes and support our landcare community. Between 2013 and 2015 over 450 community events were supported through the Woodlands restoration program and the National Landcare program. In 2015, 180 Waterwatch volunteers surveyed over 200 sites across the upper Murrumbidgee catchment and over 200 people recorded 7200 plant and fungi sightings in Canberra Nature Map.

To find out more

Take a look at [Volunteering for the environment booklet](#), and check out the [Scribbly Gum newsletter](#)

Go to the [ACT Landcare website](#).

Get involved through the [Parks and Conservation Service](#)



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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FOOTNOTES

¹ Funding identified in 2013

² Unfunded in 2013

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We would like to thank the ACT Parks and Conservation Service for photos used on pages 4 and 53.

