

# SMALL HOLDING

# property

# management

# planning *workbook*



SMALL  
FARM  
LIVING



## ABOUT NRM NORTH

NRM North is responsible for planning, delivery and implementation of integrated natural resource management (NRM) in northern Tasmania. We take a holistic approach to managing the environment through identifying regional priorities and developing integrated NRM plans that are based on sound scientific data.

### Our role is to:

- Develop programs that recognise the need to balance the environmental, economic and social needs of the community;
- Provide leadership to ensure that sound management of the region's natural resources continues; and
- Promote partnerships with all stakeholders to determine appropriate investment and cost sharing strategies.

### Where to find us:

Contact details for the NRM North head office (Launceston) and sub regional NRM facilitators are listed in Section 10.



## Acknowledgements

This document was produced as part of an NRM North project aimed to develop a process that would assist Tasmanian landholders with small holdings to produce their own Property Management Plan (PMP).

NRM North thanks the following organisations for devising the NRM North Small Holding PMP Framework:

- RM Consulting Group,
- Pear Consulting, and
- NEST (Natural Environment Services Tasmania)



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# INTRODUCTION

## 1 WHAT IS PROPERTY MANAGEMENT PLANNING (PMP)?

Property management planning (PMP) is a process for documenting visions, goals and actions for your property, recording natural and property resources and current management practices, and planning changes to the property and its management. For some people it is a case of documenting and prioritising what is already in your head, for others it may uncover new possibilities to explore.

This is also an opportunity for you assess how well you are meeting your legal responsibilities as a landholder and identify issues you may need to address.

The end result is a plan that can assist in developing and managing a property sustainably. It can guide on-ground changes, but may also prompt you to undertake research or skill development to aid in managing your property and natural resources.

To get the best out of your property management plan, you should refer to it regularly and review both your progress towards objectives, and also whether anything has changed on your property that needs to be updated in your plan.

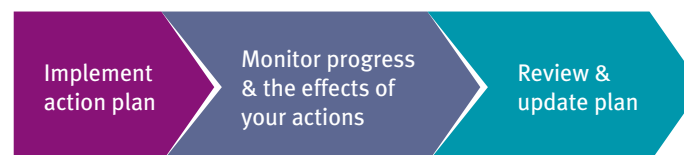


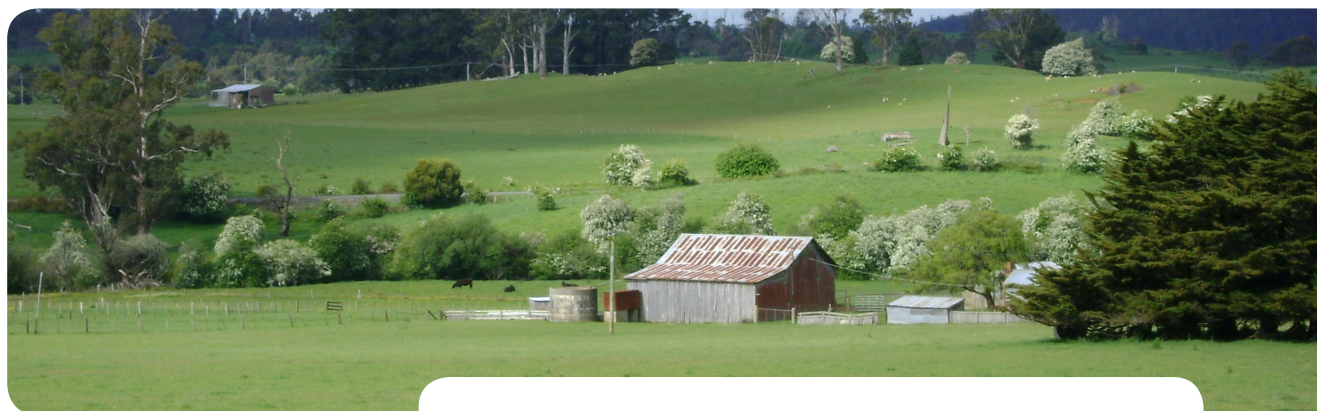
### 1.1 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT PLANNING PHASES

#### Planning



Implementing, monitoring, reviewing and updating your plan is as important as writing it in the first place.





## 1.2 WHAT NEEDS TO BE CONSIDERED?

Property management planning should recognise the following guiding principles to achieve sustainable natural resource management:

- *The natural resources supporting rural lifestyles and production from the land rely on healthy and functioning ecosystems.*
- *Sustainable property management must consider the potential for off-site impacts for all management practices. For small properties, the influence of neighbouring and catchment land use and natural resource condition can be particularly important.*
- *Sustainable properties and communities require wise use of natural resources. Better natural resource management will be achieved by working as a community to address issues which go across property boundaries. Shared knowledge and resources will also greatly enhance people's ability to manage small properties.*

Your Property Management Plan should be based on sustainable land management principles.

There may be plans developed for your local catchment, district or region that may help guide you. It is important to be aware of these and the issues they highlight as they may be relevant to your property. Your local NRM Facilitator (*see Section 10 for contact details*) will know of the existence of these.

It is the landholders' responsibility to keep plans consistent with relevant codes of practice, regulations and legislation. A summary of current legislative requirements is provided in the Small Holding Self Assessment Tool, however please note this is not an exhaustive list, and regulations can change frequently.

After identifying the values on your property, and establishing your vision and goals, the Risk Assessment and Action Plan sections will cover various aspects of your property and its natural resources, and help you to recognise issues that may need attention. You will then be able to plan appropriate actions to develop and/or better manage your property and prioritise what you wish to tackle over the next few years.

Further components such as emergency management (e.g. flood and/or fire), community relations or cultural heritage management may be added if required. Human resource management, financial management, production and marketing are also not specifically addressed in this PMP, however you may wish to include actions or priorities relating to these topics.

Your property management plan will also include maps on which you can draw current property layout and plans for the future.

# MY PROPERTY & RESOURCES



## 2 MY PROPERTY AND ITS NATURAL RESOURCES

### 2.1 DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY

---

Please describe your property e.g. location, size, crops/animals, products produced.

---

Please attach images of your property, e.g. special places, natural values, things you are proud of.



## 2.2 DESCRIPTION OF YOUR NATURAL RESOURCES

---

Please describe the natural resources on your property e.g. streams, wetlands, soil types, geology, bush/forest, animals or birds which inhabit or visit the property, and any special observations you have made.

---

What do you like or value most about your property? Do any of the natural resources have special meaning or value to you?



### 2.3 DESCRIPTION OF PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

---

**Please describe the personal skills and resources you and your family bring to your property. Think about the activities you undertake and the skills you have.**

---

**What are your community resources? Think about what skills and resources are next door or in the area, whether through groups, businesses or individuals.**



# MY VISION & GOALS

## 3 VISION AND GOALS FOR YOUR PROPERTY AND ITS RESOURCES

*Your property vision should be long term, can be general, and should encompass whatever is important to you about your property and lifestyle, not just productivity aspirations or how others think the property should be managed.*

### Consider some or all of the following:

*Why did you purchase your property?*

*What do you want to achieve from your property?*

*What values are important to you?*

*How is the property important to your family or friends, even if they don't live there?*

*Do you wish to derive an income from the land and develop a commercial enterprise?*

**What is your vision for your property? What do you want it to look like and provide for you in the future?**

### Example Property Visions

*To develop a small commercial farm that will provide an income to support me and my partner in our retirement through enterprises that are not labour intensive, while providing a beautiful environment in which to live.*

*To manage the property in an environmental friendly manner that will meet the needs of our family and return enough income to cover most costs and increase the real estate value of the property.*



**What specific goals do you have for your property to achieve your vision?**

*Goals are specific medium to long term objectives you want to achieve; you may want to list a couple of intermediate steps or targets including timeframes with each goal. It is ok to have less than 3 goals.*

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**Goal 1:**

---

Targets / stepping stones:

---

**Goal 2:**

---

Targets / stepping stones:

---

**Goal 3:**

---

Targets / stepping stones:



# PROPERTY ANALYSIS

## 4 STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS

Think about your own strengths and weaknesses and those that are inherent to your property  
e.g. due to location or other issues, and list them below:

---

Strengths

---

Weaknesses



**Think about opportunities and threats for you and your property that are beyond your control and list them below:**

---

Opportunities

---

Threats

# MAPPING – CURRENT

## 5 THE PROPERTY MAP

### 5.1 WHY MAP YOUR PROPERTY?

Property maps are excellent tools for planning land development and assisting ongoing management. A detailed map showing the natural aspects (e.g. topography) and resources (e.g. soil types, water resources and natural vegetation) of your property will help you understand many aspects of your property and assist you to plan for appropriate land use and location of infrastructure.

Careful planning will help you get the most out of your property whilst protecting valuable natural assets and/or sensitive areas and avoiding creating problems such as erosion.

Your map will be of assistance for many property planning and management tasks including

- layout of paddocks;
- positioning of tracks, buildings, pipelines and powerlines;
- locating intensive use areas such as cultivation or animal yards, chemical storage areas;
- measuring distances, areas and elevation differences;
- marking the location of issues or problems requiring management such as weeds or soil degradation; and
- highlighting locations for any visitors to the property e.g. fertiliser spreading contractors etc.



## 5.2 ABOUT YOUR MAPS

If you are registered with NRM North's PMP program you will have been supplied three types of maps relevant to your property.

1. Property Map – an aerial photograph or satellite image with your property boundary and some basic natural aspects marked. Multiple copies of this map have been provided so you can use this map as your planning base.
2. Landscape Map – a 'zoomed out' aerial image of your property and the landscape around it.
3. Natural Resources and Values Map – a reference map showing your property boundary and information that is available about the natural resources and values present.

Natural resources and values may include a range of aspects such as:

- Vegetation types (from Tasmania's Vegetation Map, TASVEG);
- Watercourses, wetlands, soaks/springs;
- Soil types;
- Land capability<sup>1</sup> classes across your property;
- Location of any known threatened plant and animal species or other special values such as nesting birds;
- Geology and special aspects such as karst<sup>2</sup> features; and
- Known weed infestations.

The amount of detail on this map depends on what studies have been done in the area. You might find that the markings may not exactly line up with or match the features you see on the image. There are a number of reasons for this including the scale of the original mapping and any on-ground development since the original mapping was done.

This information is publicly available through the Tasmanian Government DPIPWE website ([www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au](http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au)) and Land Information System Tasmania; 'theLIST' ([www.thelist.tas.gov.au](http://www.thelist.tas.gov.au)). It is worthwhile visiting these websites and learning how to access information about your property and surrounding landscape as information is updated and/or added periodically.

You may wish to add to this map with natural values you know of that are not already marked or correct any details (e.g. the exact locations, extent or label) according to what you know about your property.












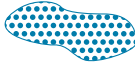
<sup>1</sup> **Land capability** is a classification system applied to different parcels of land across the landscape which determines how that land can be used in a long term sustainable manner.

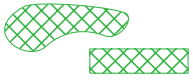
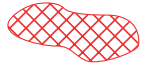











<sup>2</sup> **Karst** refers to landforms which occur particularly in areas dominated by limestone, commonly displaying features such as caves, sinkholes and fissures.

### 5.3 YOUR PROPERTY, ITS NATURAL RESOURCES AND EXISTING LAYOUT

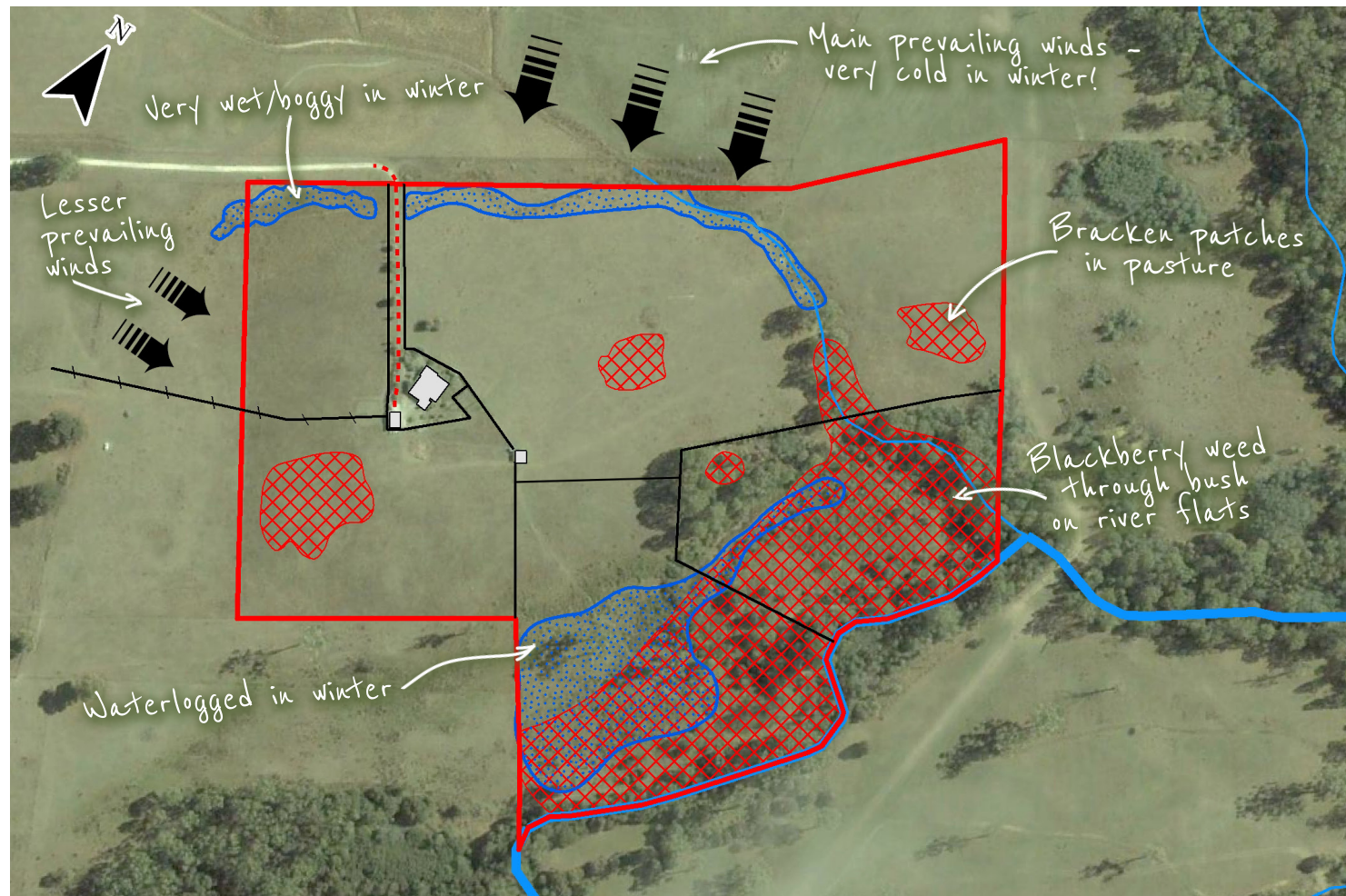
The aim of this section is to create a map of how your property currently looks. Draw directly on a copy of your Property Map. You can refer to the Natural Resources and Values map to locate any features you wish to detail on your current property layout map.

Use different colour pens or markers to draw in the following features on your map (some may already be marked, ignore any which are not relevant to your property):

FEATURE	SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
Property boundary		Solid red line
Internal fence line / yard		Solid black line
Gate way		Black cross on fence
Access roads		Dashed red line
Property tracks		Dotted red line
Watercourse		Solid blue line
Drainage line		Dashed blue line
Dams, soaks, springs		Blue shading
Ridge line		Dashed brown line
Soil type boundary		Solid brown line
Soil problem		Brown dotted shading
Water logging		Blue dotted shading
Native vegetation	<i>As per the Natural Resources and Values Map</i>	

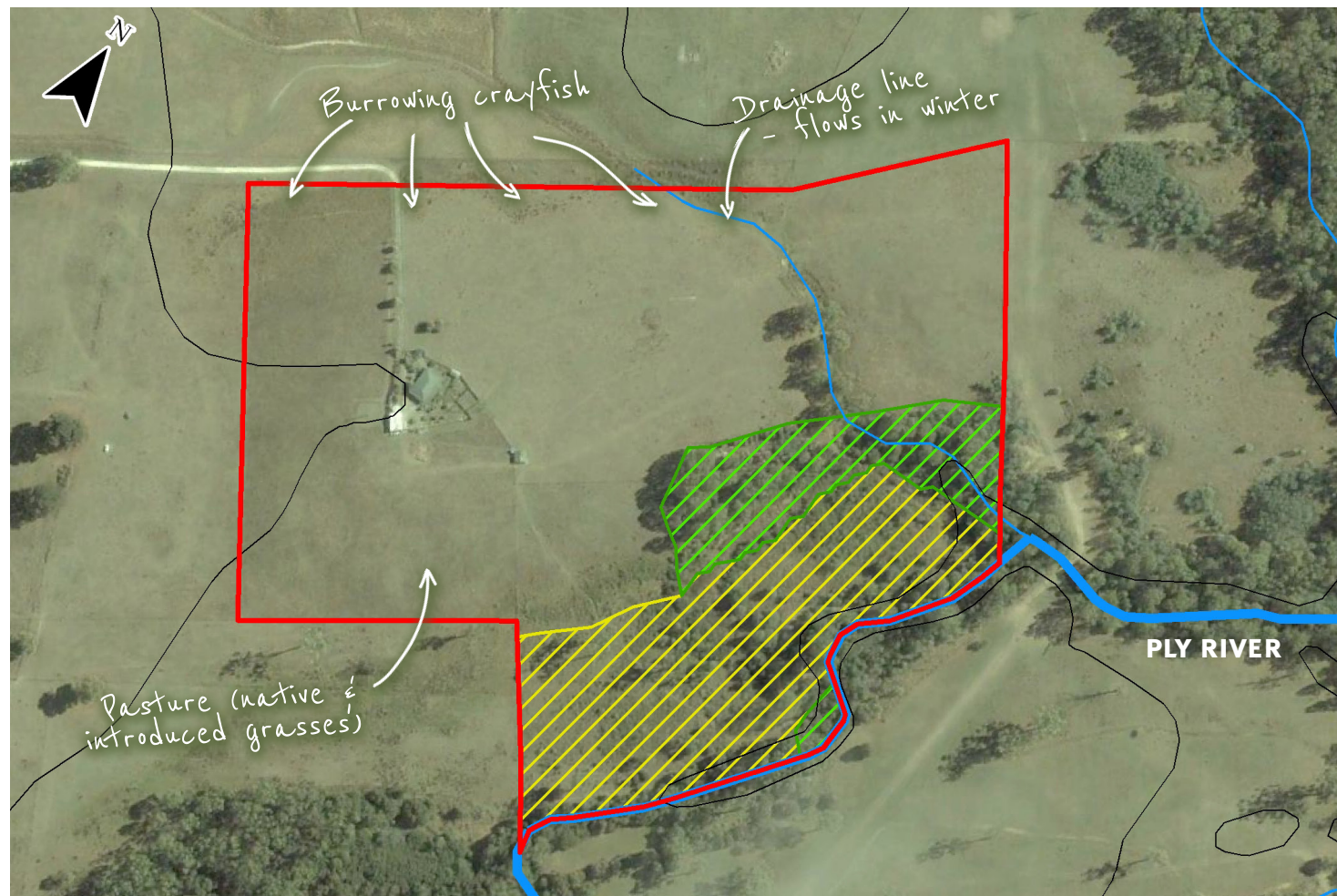
FEATURE	SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
Revegetation / shelterbelts		Green cross hatching
Weed infestation		Red cross hatching
Buildings		Black / grey shaded in shape
Hazard areas (buildings, sites)		Solid red triangle
Power line		Black line with cross hatches
Telecom line		Green dashed line
Easement		Orange dotted shading
Prevailing wind direction		Black arrows at wind direction angle
Stock shelter (building)		Solid black triangle
Water pipeline		Blue line with double cross hatches
Water pump		Blue arrow in direction of flow
Stock water trough		Solid blue dot
Water supply for fire fighting		Blue arrow with 'W'

EXISTING LAYOUT MAP





**NATURAL RESOURCES  
AND VALUES MAP**



Lowland grassland complex (GCL)



Eucalyptus amygdalina inland forest and woodland on Cainozoic deposits (DAZ)

Other natural values:  
 Swamp Harrier nesting on river flats  
 Birds of prey (wedgetailed eagle, grey goshawk, brown falcon) regularly seen over property  
 Bandicoots (Eastern Barred & Southern Brown) often seen  
 Many small native birds in bush  
 Wallabies & bettongs in bush

# RISK ASSESSMENT

## 6 HOW SUSTAINABLE IS YOUR PROPERTY USE AND MANAGEMENT?

Sustainable management of all facets of a property, whatever its size, can be complicated and difficult to achieve. There can be many questions to consider...

*Are you using your land within its capabilities or are there 'problem areas' that suggest a different use or management approach is needed?*

*How does your property layout interact with its natural resources and values? Are they protected from degradation and negative impacts from any infrastructure, agricultural /horticultural activities and/or domestic stock on your property?*

With many aspects to consider it is hard to know how you are going unless you take a step back from the individual issues and review the entire.

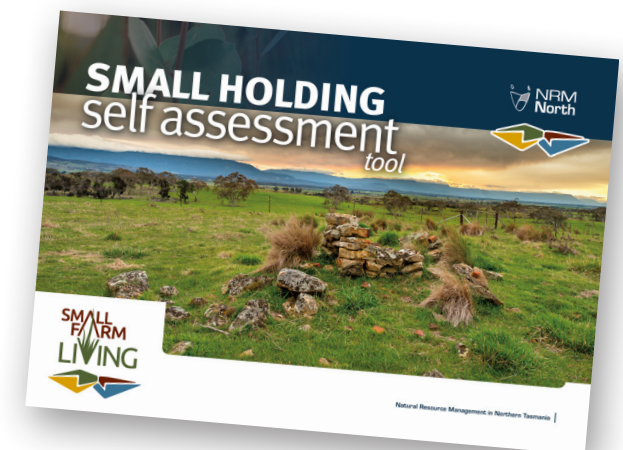
This section provides a process for you to review a wide range of property use and management aspects and will help to highlight areas that may need attention.



### 6.1 RISK ASSESSMENT OF PROPERTY MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Use the separate Small Holding Self Assessment Tool (SH SAT) to identify issues and risks as well as limitations for the management of your property.

The following section gives you the chance to collate all your actions into an easy reference list to develop and prioritise.

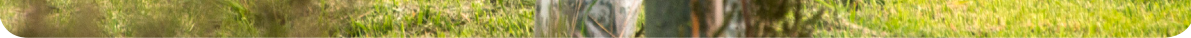


# ACTION PLAN

## 7 PROPERTY ACTION PLAN SUMMARY

Review your answers in the Small Holding Self Assessment Tool and the Strength/ Weakness/Opportunity/Threat exercise in Section 4 and use the following table to collate and summarise a list of all those issues and actions you have identified to address. Before preparing the action plan in the below table, you may wish to make a draft for each issue using a separate sheet of paper.

Issue, impact and risk	Desired outcome	Management strategies / practices (what to do)	Action plan (how, where, when to do it and estimated cost)	What and how to monitor and record	Priority (high, medium or low)
<i>e.g. Gorse reducing grazing area, risking spread off site</i>	<i>Contain spread of or eliminate gorse</i>	<i>Remove gorse and rehabilitate area</i>	<i>Spray affected area, remove or burn dead material (in favourable seasonal conditions) and re-vegetate at (location) by (date) Estimated cost: \$</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Keep photographs (before and after)</i></li> <li>• <i>Monitor site for new weed growth</i></li> </ul>	<i>How important is it to you and for managing natural resources?</i>



Issue, impact and risk	Desired outcome	Management strategies / practices (what to do)	Action plan (how, where, when to do it and estimated cost)	What and how to monitor and record	Priority (high, medium or low)

# MAPPING – FUTURE

## 8 DEVELOPING YOUR ‘IDEAL’ PROPERTY LAYOUT

Do you have issues highlighted in the preceding sections that suggest aspects about your current property layout or land use should be altered?

### Using another copy of your Property Map, create an ‘Ideal Property Layout’ map.

This activity may take some time to develop and get to a point that you are happy with. Take your time, consult others for ideas and be prepared to change things a number of times before you have it finalised. Following these steps may assist you.

1. To start with, it is helpful to mark on your map things that either can't be or are too difficult to change (e.g. soil types, drainage lines, location of houses and other expensive developments).
2. The next step should be to ensure that you have protected your natural assets with appropriate buffers and that significant landscape features and aspects are conserved and supported on your property (*see boxed text*).
3. After that, consider how you want to use the rest of your land, any issues you need to address or plans that you have, and map the rest of your property layout with these in mind. Mark on your map any planned actions identified for your property in your Action Plan. This may include the following:
  - Fencing to protect and create buffers around waterways / dams or vegetation;
  - Paddock or laneway layout changes;
  - Infrastructure e.g. sheds, wash-down facilities, stock water systems;
  - New irrigation areas; and
  - Land use changes.

Refer to the Mapping Symbols in Section 5.3 for ideas of symbols to use for your proposed development. Consult professional help if you have difficulties.

### ***Protecting your property's natural assets ... a word about buffers and landscape linkages.***

*Watercourses, wetlands, threatened and endangered native vegetation and rare geological features are examples of high value natural assets which need to be protected in order to preserve their health and functioning ...and that of the wider landscape.*

*In most cases it is not enough to just protect the feature itself; these environmentally sensitive assets also need areas of protected land around them to buffer or insulate them from any potential negative impacts of surrounding land use. These ‘buffers’ work best if they are in a natural condition, that is, covered with native vegetation.*

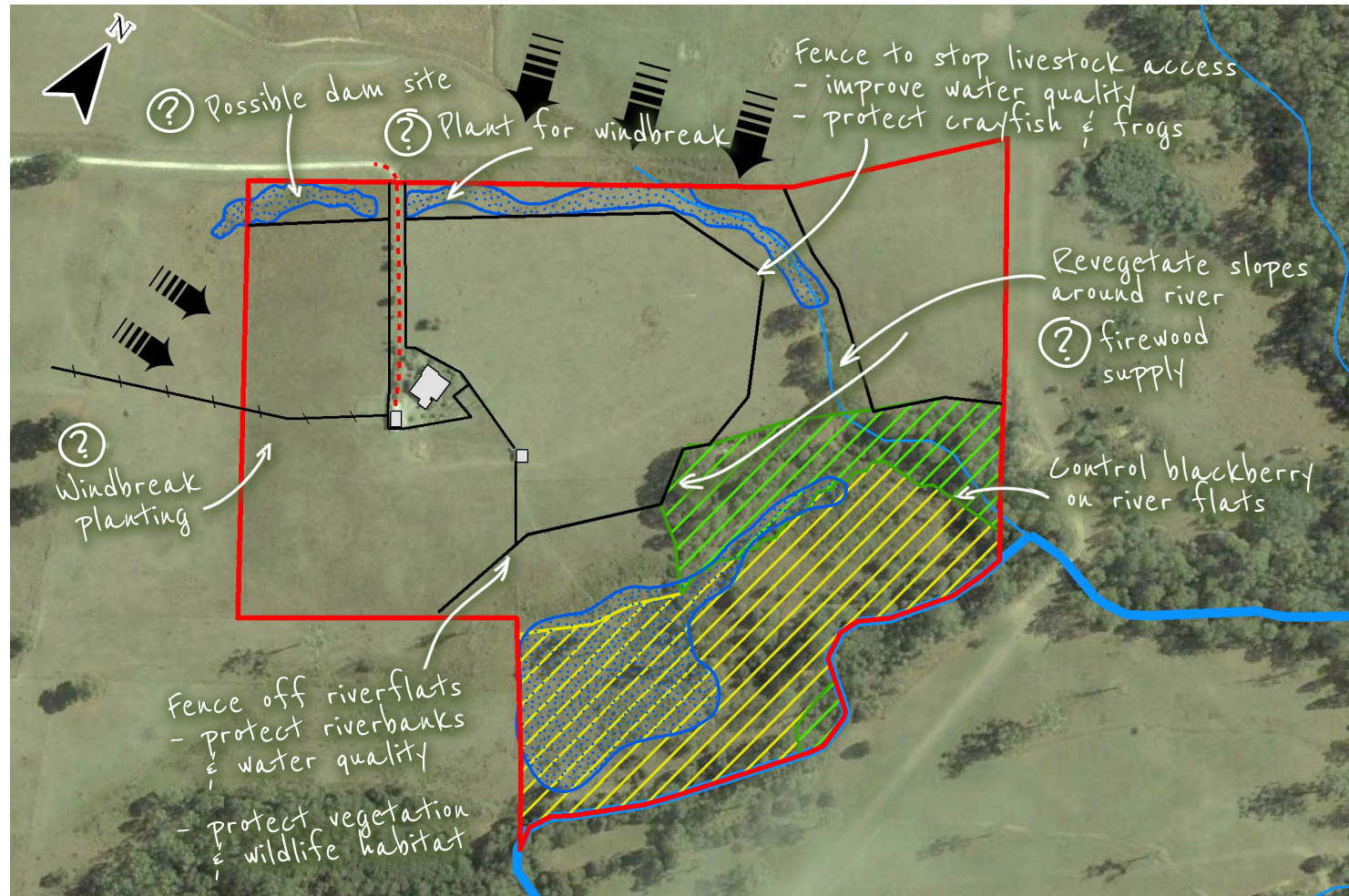
*Buffers of native vegetation along watercourses, known as riparian vegetation, also play a vital role in maintaining the stability of the watercourse, the health of its in-stream and riparian habitats and in protection of water quality.*

### ***So, how big a buffer is required?***

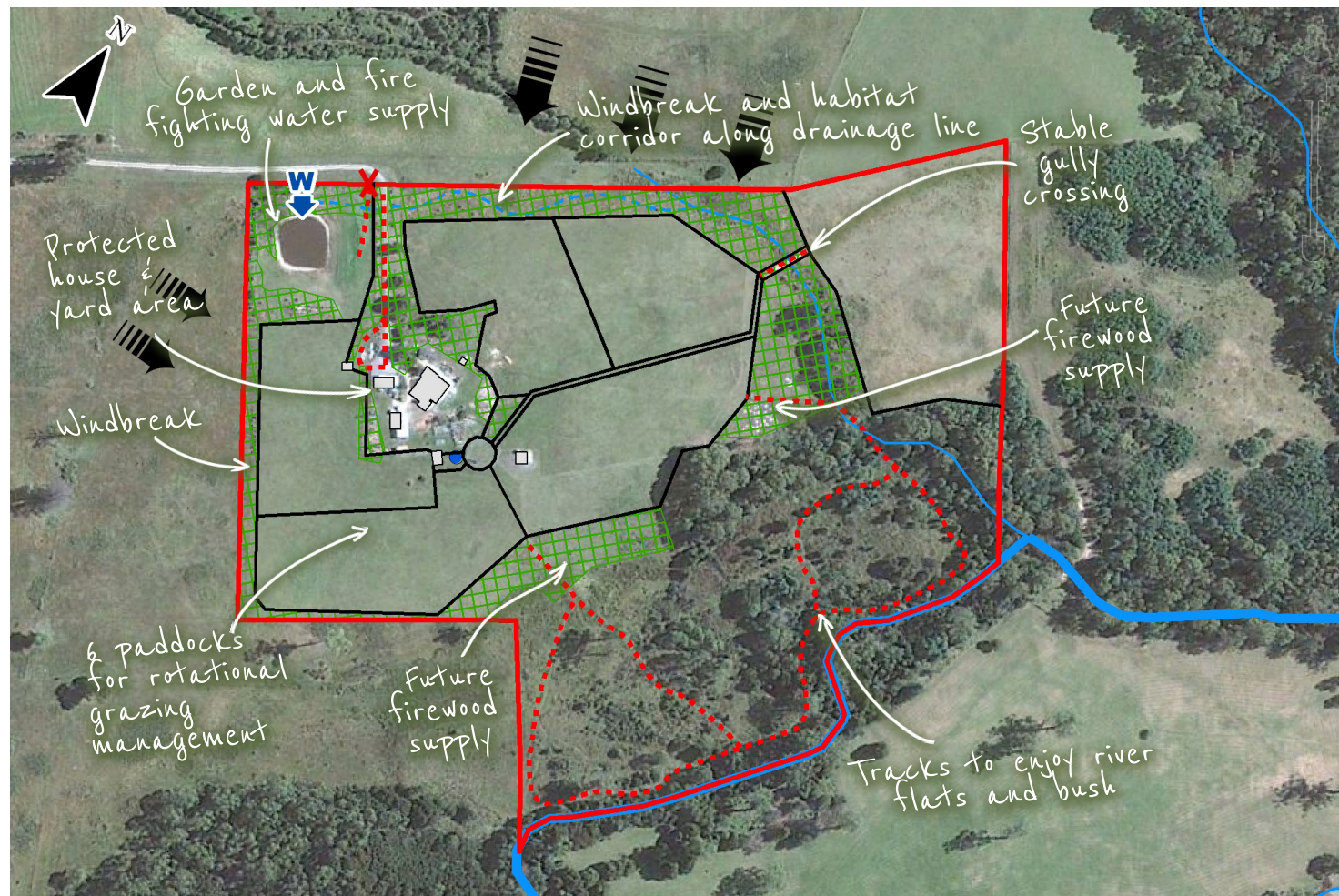
*The simple answer is ‘as much as possible’. In the case of watercourses, the larger the watercourse, the bigger the buffer should be. Even protecting small drainage lines can have significant impacts on all aspects of the health of a river system. Aim to create at least 5m, but ideally 10m buffers along both sides of all small to moderate watercourses and the same around other high value natural assets. Large watercourses need 10 – 20m wide buffers on both sides.*

*Protect as much as you can.*

**PLANNING FOR  
IMPROVEMENT MAP**



**IDEAL PROPERTY  
LAYOUT MAP**





# IMPLEMENT & REVIEW

## 9 IMPLEMENT AND REVIEW YOUR PROPERTY MANAGEMENT PLAN

### 9.1 12-MONTH PRIORITIES

Based on the process of preparing this plan, what are your top priorities for:

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**On-ground actions on your property**

---

**Outside advice/assistance you plan to obtain**

---

**Training/skill development**

### 9.2 PROPERTY PLAN REVIEW

Set a date to complete this section:  (insert a date for 12 months' time)

**How many of the above actions have you completed? Tick them off or add comments above, and /or in your Property Action Plan.**

---

**What are your next priorities?**





### 9.3 PROPERTY PLAN UPDATE

Set a date to complete this section:  (insert date – suggest 2 years' time)

---

Has this plan helped to achieve your goals and approach your vision?

---

Have your goals or aspirations changed, requiring updates to the plan?

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Have there been any external changes (i.e. threats or opportunities) which impact your property and its management and require changes to this plan?

---

Does your map need to be updated?

Yes  No

# FURTHER INFORMATION

## 10 FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

For more information about NRM North's Small Farm Living program, visit our website:

[www.nrmnorth.org.au/smallfarmliving](http://www.nrmnorth.org.au/smallfarmliving)



### NRM North Contact Details

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e: [admin@nrmnorth.org.au](mailto:admin@nrmnorth.org.au)

### Sub regional NRM Facilitators:

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Break O'Day Council  
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#### Dorset

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Meander Valley Council  
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#### Northern Midlands

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