



# Annual Report

FY24

Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource  
Management Association Inc.



# Acknowledgement of Country

We pay respect to the Traditional Owners of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Aboriginal people, and acknowledge their continued survival and connection with their land, sea and sky Country that spans millennia.

We acknowledge the many Nations of Tasmanian Aboriginal people, past and present, as the traditional and ongoing owners of their respective countries within Tasmania and the islands.

We pay respect to those who have passed and acknowledge today’s Aboriginal people who are the custodians of this land.

We acknowledge that all land, sea, and sky Country holds cultural values that provide strong and continuing significance to the Tasmanian Aboriginal people. We acknowledge that Tasmanian Aboriginal people are part of a continuous culture that holds traditional knowledge about the ecosystems we all depend on. The landscapes of Tasmania have been shaped by Aboriginal management of plants, animals, and water (particularly using fire).

We acknowledge that colonisation and migration has caused injustice for Aboriginal people and impacted the living cultural landscape. This has created a legacy that we seek to improve.

We are working to integrate Aboriginal cultural heritage and knowledge in natural resource management, and to develop a better understanding of the cultural, environmental, social and economic dimensions of the region’s natural resources from the perspective of Aboriginal people.

Through our work, we aim to reflect these values by recognising that Tasmanian Aboriginal people determine both the boundaries for the sharing of their cultural heritage and opportunities for participation in NRM activities that embrace and support their aspirations. We pay respect to Tasmanian Aboriginal people’s requirements to own, care and manage Country by aligning our strategic priorities to Tasmanian Aboriginal people’s land, sea and sky Country priorities.

The NRM North Annual Report FY24 has been prepared with all due care and diligence using the best available information at the time of publication. NRM North holds no responsibility for any errors or omissions within the document. Any decision made by other parties based on this report are the responsibility of those parties.

Cover photo: The Tasmanian Government’s Weeds Action Fund supports farmers and other community organisations tackle weeds impacting valuable agricultural and environmental assets at properties across the state, including ‘Somerset’ at Epping.

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We live in one of the most unique places in the world. NRM North aims to help you keep it that way by continuing to provide leadership to ensure sound management of the region's natural resources continues; to develop programs that recognise the need to balance the environmental, economic, and social needs of the people of the region; and to work in partnership with all stakeholders to determine appropriate investment and cost-sharing strategies in the management of our natural resources.



## Contents

About NRM North	8
Healthy Country	10
Emergency Preparedness	12
Celebrating 20 years	14
Water	16
Sustainable Agriculture	30
Biodiversity	40
Circular North	48
Corporate Services	56
Summary Financials	66

Working with you to care  
for the natural resources  
of our island home.



## Chair Report



***“I would like to thank the NRM North Management Committee for their consistent interest and support for the organisation.”***

Pamela Allan, Chair

It has been another important year for NRM North as we successfully secured our Federal Government funding over the next five years and also secured ongoing core funding with the Tasmanian Government following the state elections in February. Political parties at state and federal level give consistent support to natural resource management, which is widely appreciated by the NRM community. As a not-for-profit organisation, we rely heavily on our partners for support and investment. We receive our funding from government at all levels and we design our projects in collaboration with these investors as well as the stakeholders we work with on a daily basis. So, an important part of our work is maintaining our relationships with all those individuals and organisations which are so important to us.

This year we have also committed to quarterly meetings with Cradle Coast NRM and NRM South. As a result, we have presented many joint submissions to government which demonstrate that there is significant overlap in landscape conservation in Tasmania and a genuine commitment by regional NRM organisations to work collaboratively on its management. Ministers change of course so we have said farewell to Minister Palmer who so energetically celebrated the 20th anniversary of NRMs in Tasmania this financial year, and now welcome Minister Howlett who already has a strong presence in the Midlands of Tasmania - a long recognised conservation hotspot for the state.

There is currently increased debate across the country about how we fund future landscape protection and nature restoration. The Federal Government has committed to a Nature Repair Market which aims to channel more private sector funding into the work which we currently do, and which is entirely funded by government. We welcome increased commercial investment in our sector, and are working with other

NRM organisations to facilitate pathways to achieve that investment. We are also building our relationships with the accounting sector who are increasingly committed to sustainable reporting and investment. However, the role of government won't change overnight. Most of our funding will continue to come from government and philanthropic investors. We look forward however, to having positive discussions with business as to how we may build and extend our partnerships.

NRM North has many strengths, not least its staff and Management Committee. I would like to express my personal appreciation of the work of my colleagues on the Management Committee and on their behalf, our admiration for the efforts of our staff in maintaining our reputation as the pre-eminent natural resource management workplace in Tasmania.

At the beginning of FY25 we have said farewell to two of our most senior staff: Operations Manager Andrew Baldwin, and CEO Dr Jo Fearman. Both have made enormous contributions to the success of NRM North, and they will leave big shoes to fill. We wish them well in their future careers.

Pamela Allan, Chair

## CEO Report



***“With our skilled and passionate team, NRM North continues to be on a trajectory for regional and collaborative success.”***

Dr Jo Fearman, CEO

On behalf of NRM North, I am pleased to present the FY24 Annual Report that highlights our continued recognition as a trusted delivery partner for natural resource management outcomes in northern Tasmania. Over the past 12 months, we have focused on outcomes that underpin program delivery for the coming years.

Following a national Approach to Market, NRM North signed on to the Panel of Regional Delivery Partners to deliver Environmental Protection, Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management outcomes to 2028, funded through the Natural Heritage Trust. As the Regional Delivery Partner in northern Tasmania, NRM North has been working closely with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, Environment and Water and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to develop critical landscape-scale projects for our nationally significant regional priorities, building on our previous investments, and developing new partnerships.

In collaboration with NRM South and Cradle Coast NRM, and in consultation with statewide and regional stakeholders, an exciting project has been the development of a regional Emergency Preparedness Plan for Biodiversity and Agricultural Natural Capital. For the first time, vital actions required for biodiversity and agriculture assets in the preparation, response, and recovery from emergencies such as bushfires, floods, and biosecurity incursions, have been developed.

We continue to work closely with landholders, providing support to enhance soil health, manage invasive weeds, restore waterways, and promote stewardship of natural capital. Our focus on management practices that enable climate adaptation will elevate in coming years in response to demand to support landholder knowledge and capability.

Our highly regarded regional partnerships, the TEER Program, and Circular North, go from strength to strength. The TEER Program launched its 2023 Freshwater Report Card, an extensive and scientific analysis of whole-of-catchment river health, as well as preparing for a renewed 4-year agreement. Under Circular North, grants were awarded to support organisations to reduce waste and adopt circular practices. The program has developed its 5-year strategy, identifying priority actions for waste minimisation and resource recovery.

Partnering with state government, NRM North also has an integral role in the restoration of wetlands in the North Esk River. This is an exciting project seeking to increase tidal prism in the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary, as a trial for long-term management of sediment, and restoring the ecological function of historically infilled wetlands.

Securing project and partnership arrangements across environment, water, and agriculture priorities this year sets a solid foundation for program delivery over the next four years. With our skilled and passionate team, NRM North continues to be on a trajectory for regional and collaborative success.

As my time with NRM North comes to a close in August, I extend my sincere thanks to the Management Committee for their support during my tenure, in particular to our Chair Pam Allan - an astute leader with a wealth of experience in natural resource management. I am also profoundly grateful for the knowledge, expertise, and passion our team brings to their work every day, and for the strong and continuing engagement we have with stakeholders across many sectors. What we can achieve together is meaningful and inspiring, with lasting impact, and I wish NRM North every success in the future.

Dr Jo Fearman, CEO



# About Northern Tasmania

The area defined as the northern region of Tasmania covers 19,800 km² and is bounded by some of Tasmania’s most outstanding and picturesque landscapes from Bass Strait along the craggy peaks of the Western Tiers, to the stunning beaches of the Bay of Fires and the unspoiled islands of the Furneaux and Kent Groups.

Approximately 156,000 people live in the region, with the major urban areas based around Launceston and the Tamar Valley. The valley is dissected by the iconic kanamaluka / Tamar estuary. At 70 km it is Australia’s longest navigable estuary carrying the combined flows from over 10,000 km² including waters from the North Esk, South Esk, Meander, Brumbys Lake and Macquarie rivers.

The many smaller towns that service the rural and coastal communities include numerous historic colonial villages and coastal settlements. The region is governed by the eight municipal councils: City of Launceston, Break O’Day, Dorset, George Town, Meander Valley, Northern Midlands, West Tamar, and Flinders (covering the eastern Bass Strait islands).

Much of the region’s wealth is derived from industries such as agriculture, viticulture, forestry, tourism, fishing, aquaculture, and recreation – all of which depend on our natural resources.

We are fortunate to have a large number of people in our region eager to improve their natural resource assets, whether that be individually or through community groups.

# About NRM North

Trading as NRM North, the Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association Inc., is one of three formally recognised regional natural resource management bodies in Tasmania and one of 54 across Australia. NRM North is a not-for-profit organisation established in March 2003 through a community-driven process in response to the Tasmanian Government’s Natural Resource Management Framework and its enabling legislation, the *Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Act 2002 (Amendments 2018)*.

The organisation is overseen by the NRM North Management Committee to ensure the continuation of sound business and best practice in natural resource management. NRM North’s vision is to be the leading non-government organisation in natural resource management across northern Tasmania, and to undertake collaborative action for healthy landscapes and seascapes, protected natural values, and sustainable livelihoods and lifestyles.

# 2030 Natural Resource Management Strategy for Northern Tasmania

In 2022, Tasmania’s three natural resource management organisations, NRM South, NRM North and Cradle Coast NRM released regional strategies through to 2030 featuring a consistent, scalable, whole-of-state NRM framework that the NRM organisations will use to prioritise their investment.

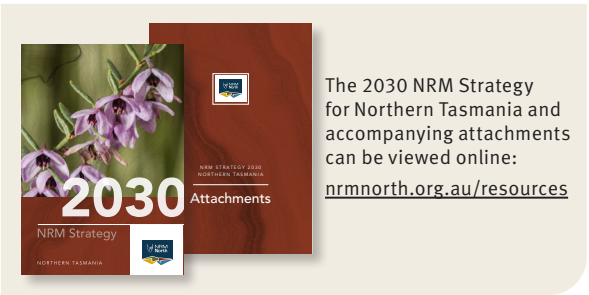
Produced in consultation with specialists, industry, government, and community stakeholders, the strategies identify the natural resource management priorities and emerging issues unique to each of Tasmania’s NRM regions. Leveraging investment from the Tasmanian and Australian governments, the strategies will assist the NRM organisations to plan, develop and deliver significant on-ground actions across the state.

Focusing on the three primary Themes of Land, Water and Biodiversity, the strategies provide a blueprint for the actions that each NRM organisation will focus on through to 2030.

With a view to long-term outcomes that include support for Aboriginal communities, improving landscape resilience to climate change, improved waterway health, and reducing impacts on Tasmania’s

threatened species, the 2030 NRM Strategy for Northern Tasmania provides a framework to facilitate sustainable management of northern Tasmania’s natural resources. Differing from previous regional strategies that identified natural resource management work across community, government and industry, this strategy identifies priorities and actions NRM North will seek to deliver in partnership with stakeholders. It is consistent with state and federal policies and priorities, and builds on a shared commitment for:

- productive and sustainable land management
- healthy and productive water and marine resources
- healthy, resilient and biodiverse environments.



The 2030 NRM Strategy for Northern Tasmania and accompanying attachments can be viewed online: [nrmnorth.org.au/resources](http://nrmnorth.org.au/resources)

# Themes & Asset Classes

Land, Water, and Biodiversity are the key Themes adopted to provide the structure of the regional 2030 NRM Strategies at a statewide scale. The Themes are consistent with state and national policies and priorities and build upon a shared commitment to address the key issues confronting productive and environmental landscapes and achieve lasting and meaningful outcomes.

Within each of the Themes, specific Asset Classes are identified to provide a structure that focuses on action and investment in priority areas. Asset Classes are described at the beginning of the Biodiversity, Water, and Land Theme (program) sections in the NRM North FY24 Annual Report.

Note: From June 2024, NRM North’s Land Program will be known as Sustainable Agriculture – Asset Classes associated with projects under this Theme will still apply. Furthermore, Circular North (previously known as the Sustainability Program) was not managed by NRM North at the time of publication of the 2030 NRM Strategy for Northern Tasmania therefore Themes and Asset Classes are not applicable.



Our vision for natural resource management is applied through the below principles:

**Stewardship**  
Promote and enable the growth and uptake of knowledge, capabilities and practices that support the natural environment and productive landscapes to sustain productivity, profitability and healthy functioning.

**Influence**  
Work with planners and policy developers to inform regional environmental and agricultural initiatives at state and federal levels.

**Aboriginal Culture and Knowledge**  
Appropriately and respectfully recognise and engage with Tasmanian Aboriginal people around natural resource management knowledge, perspectives, and practices.

**Participation**  
Actively establish and nurture partnerships and collaborations as the preferred operating arrangement for the planning and implementation of regional, cross-regional and local NRM programs, projects and activities.

**Risk and Resilience**  
Facilitate access to information that enables people to anticipate challenges, avoid or resist impacts, and recover without loss of economic, social or environmental functional capability or capacity, especially in relation to the direct and indirect consequences of changing regional climate conditions.



# Healthy Country

One of NRM North’s leading strategic principles is the consideration and application of Aboriginal culture and knowledge through all programs. This principle provides the overarching direction for our Healthy Country objectives, that is, to appropriately and respectfully recognise and engage with Tasmanian Aboriginal people around natural resource management knowledge, perspectives, and practices.

## Participation

Cultural events provide NRM North staff with the opportunity to gain valuable insights from Aboriginal Elders and other members of Aboriginal communities who share their knowledge, cultural skills, and traditions, taking the time to come together to educate and make connections.

### Mannalargenna Day

NRM North staff are proud to support traditional celebrations including Mannalargenna Day. The annual festival at Tebrakunna celebrates revered ancestor and warrior Mannalargenna. NRM North will continue to embrace cultural practices and values at various events held throughout the year.

### tunapri luna: Freshwater and Sea Country Connections from lutruwita to Martuwarra

In February 2024, NRM North staff were privileged to attend tunapri luna - women’s knowledge, a symposium for women whose lives and work involves waterways. Over two days, palawa women of lutruwita (Tasmania) and leaders from Martuwarra Country in Western Australia held powerful conversations about Aboriginal water rights, climate change threats to Country, and cultural practices.

Many women spoke of the work they are doing to fight for First Nation rights to Country and to protect our waters (both fresh and saltwater Country). The tayaritja Sea Country Indigenous Protect Area rangers are actively advocating for the protection of tayaritja waters from climate change impacts and developments that threaten the health of sea Country. The Water Sovereignty panel familiarised the audience with the term “aqua nullius” – the assumption that there are no pre-existing water laws.

Keynote speaker Auntie Anne Poelina, a Nyikina Warrwa women, emphasised that ‘Country is the greatest teacher,’ and spoke of the ‘Five Rs’ we should consider in our engagement with one another - ‘Respect, Reciprocity, Relationship, Right and Responsibility’. A key takeaway message for organisations and agencies in attendance is to consider the steps they take to avoid tokenistic First Nation’s engagement. Building genuine relationships with the First Nation’s communities and people is paramount. Organisations and agencies should also be acutely aware of engagement fatigue and be respectful of the limited time and existing pressures First Nation’s organisations, communities and people face.

It was a privilege to attend this incredible gathering of inspiring and passionate women. NRM North hopes to play our part in ensuring the payna lipuni (freshwater ripples) caused by the tunpari luna symposium ripple out into our work and long into the future.

## Engagement

NRM North values and supports inclusive and culturally informed investment in critical natural and cultural resources in northern Tasmania. We are committed to providing meaningful opportunities to engage with Tasmanian Aboriginal stakeholders to inform project design and decision making. To do this, our Aboriginal Participation Plan is regularly reviewed to reflect priorities for participation and collaboration with Tasmanian Aboriginal organisations that care for their land and sea Country in our region. To continuously improve and embed organisational cultural competency and Aboriginal heritage awareness in all aspects of NRM North operations, the organisation aims to increase the percentage of First Nations people employed by NRM North, and increase opportunities for economic participation of Tasmanian Aboriginal-owned businesses and service providers in NRM North programs and projects.

### The Aboriginal Participation Plan:

- provides opportunities for Aboriginal organisations, businesses and community to participate in planning and delivery of NRM North projects
- continues to provide opportunities for staff to experience and build an understanding of Tasmanian Aboriginal culture and practices through training opportunities delivered by Aboriginal community Elders and traditional knowledge holders
- supports Tasmanian Aboriginal community events that share traditional knowledge or commemorate significant events such as Mannalargenna Day, National Reconciliation Week, and NAIDOC Week celebrations
- offers opportunities to incorporate traditional land management practices across program areas, such as cultural burning
- works alongside Aboriginal communities at events including the kanamaluka / Tamar Forum.

NRM North will continue consultation with Tasmanian Aboriginal organisations, community members and stakeholders to optimise opportunities to work together to achieve mutual goals.



Cultural events provide the opportunity to gain valuable insights from Aboriginal Elders and Aboriginal communities.



# Emergency Preparedness, Response & Recovery Plan

Biodiversity and agricultural natural capital preparedness and emergency response in the north region of Tasmania

The ‘Biodiversity and Agricultural Natural Capital Emergency Preparedness & Response Plan’ (the Plan) addresses a growing need to enhance our preparedness for emergencies and their impact on biodiversity and agricultural natural capital assets, in light of extreme weather events.

## Objectives

At the request of the Australian Government, NRM North prepared the Plan built on lessons learned during the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires, floods in northern Tasmania in October 2022, and a statewide flood emergency in June and July 2016.

The objectives of the Plan are to:

- provide an assessment of the susceptibility of priority natural assets in northern Tasmania to bushfire, flood, coastal inundation, and biosecurity emergencies
- identify key preparedness, response and recovery actions required to protect and restore these assets in the event of an emergency
- assess the extent to which current emergency management arrangements protect environmental assets and identify areas where these can be strengthened
- identify roles that NRM North could play in improving emergency management for natural asset protection within existing emergency management frameworks and the essential supports required for these roles to be delivered
- facilitate conversation between agencies and individuals involved in emergency management with the goal of identifying opportunities for better collaboration and coordination to better protect natural assets in northern Tasmania.

## Scope

The Plan prioritises biodiversity natural assets that are matters of national significance. It focuses on federally-listed threatened species that are identified in the Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-2032, federally-listed ecological communities, Ramsar wetlands, and a small number of regional priority species and places. State-listed threatened species and threatened vegetation communities are not considered in this Plan and are a gap that should be considered in future updates.

The Plan focuses on acute emergency events. While climate change is recognised as likely to exacerbate the impact of emergencies through increased frequency and severity of events, as well as through its ongoing impact on ecosystem resilience, climate change is not explicitly considered in the Plan.

*Better emergency preparation and response bolsters the resilience of ecosystems, enabling them to recover and flourish following catastrophic events. By investing in emergency preparedness, long-term costs for recovery and restoration post-emergency are reduced, contributing to stronger regional economies in the tourism and agriculture sectors.*

## Focus

The Plan considers the most likely emergency scenarios for the northern Tasmanian NRM region which includes flood, coastal inundation, bushfire, and biosecurity incursion emergencies. It focuses on acute events, acknowledging that these interact with and are often exacerbated by longer term changes such as sea level rise, or the increasing frequency of intense rainfall events that accompany climate change. Other emergencies such as drought and marine heatwaves are not considered.

By identifying vulnerabilities, prioritising actions, and fostering coordination among stakeholders, the Plan seeks to minimise the impacts of emergencies on biodiversity and agricultural assets.

Actions are focused on building the resilience of natural assets to emergencies and supporting natural recovery and regeneration after emergency events. Actions in the Plan are considered in three phases:

1. **Preparedness** (before the event): Mitigation, prevention and preparation activities aimed at building resilience in biodiversity and agricultural natural capital assets and prioritising areas for protection.
2. **Response** (during the event): Implementation of specific emergency responses tailored to the nature of the emergency and natural resource management priorities.
3. **Recovery** (after the event): Focused on supporting natural recovery and regeneration of natural capital assets after the event, restoring the condition of natural assets, and facilitating their return to a state of resilience.

The Plan identifies areas of collaboration with various stakeholders including landholders and local government as well as engagement by NRM North that could strengthen these activities and improve outcomes for the region’s natural capital assets.



Widespread damage was evident across large parts of Tasmania in the 2016 flood event. Many farms suffered significant losses.



Riverbank restoration strengthens resistance to flooding and mitigates erosion.



# Celebrating 20 Years of NRM North

**2004**

Approximately \$2 million of interim funding secured for activities including threatened and invasive species works, riverbank fencing, and estuarine management.

**2005**

Implemented five programs to support conservation of threatened species, on-farm sustainability, community engagement, and weed mitigation.

**2006**

Formed a partnership with Landcare Australia.

**2008**

Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers Program established.

**2009**

Cultural heritage dunes protected at Musselroe Bay, Eddystone Point, Ringarooma Bay, and Bellingham.

**2010**

Implemented works for Bay of Fires Conservation Area such as weed control, community workshops, and endemic plant propagation for revegetation.

**2017**

The three Tasmanian NRM bodies partnered to deliver the \$4 million Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme following the 2016 floods. NRM North responded to approximately 280 inquiries from landholders and conducted 230 site visits.

**2016**

348,900 ha covered by 426 Property Management Plans since 2006.

**2015**

Developed the Water Quality Improvement Plan.

**2013**

Small Farm Living Program implemented.

**2012**

Over 1,500 people took part in more than 50 events and engaged 500 students from 14 schools in NRM activities.

**2011**

Addressed invasive weeds across 35,646 ha of Ramsar sites including Floodplain Lower Ringarooma River and Logans Lagoon.

Engaged 902 community members in more than 50 coastal community events.

**2018**

Regional Land Partnership bid successful with funding to deliver projects to improve outcomes for giant freshwater crayfish, hooded plover and eastern barred bandicoot.

82,000 seedlings planted as part of the Million Trees Project.

**2019**

River Health Action Plan Catchment Works Program starts – over 100 farmers submit EOIs to implement works to exclude stock from waterways and improve effluent management.

**2020**

Staff worked remotely due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Collaborated with local councils to investigate and remediate the cross-connection of sewerage into stormwater in Greater Launceston.

**2021**

2,500 ha of dairy effluent management improvements contracted.

NRM North successfully started delivery of the Tasmanian Government's Weeds Action Fund.

**2022**

River Health Action Plan exceeds expectations with 75% of fencing and 64% of effluent management targets contracted.

NRM North is one of six organisations across the country to pilot the Agricultural Stewardship Program.

**2023**

Weeds Action Fund reports over 2,000 ha of weed control, 150 management plans, 26 small grants and 24 multi-year agreements totalling \$2.4 million.

5-year Regional Land Partnership projects conclude in June 2023.

**2024**

North East Rivers and Midlands projects commence in earnest.

Rollout of NRM North's first sustainable waste management program 'Circular North'.





# Water

## Overview

In northern Tasmania, water resources form the backbone of both our environment and our community. From the vast kanamaluka / Tamar catchment nourished by rivers such as the North Esk, South Esk, Meander and Macquarie, to the critical estuaries, wetlands, and coastal systems - our water assets are indispensable.

Water assets in the NRM North region includes surface water, groundwater, freshwater lakes, wetlands, and estuaries. These assets are essential for the provision of clean drinking water, primary industries, and recreational amenity, as well as supporting unique and diverse aquatic ecosystems. The kanamaluka / Tamar estuary is a focal point for the city of Launceston, however, the health of the estuary has been a long-standing issue of concern in the community. The upper reaches are under pressure from high loads of both diffuse (catchment) and point source pollutants including nutrients, sediments, metals, and pathogens.

Recognising these challenges, NRM North's Water Program is dedicated to safeguarding and managing these assets effectively. By collaborating with local communities, industries, and government partners, we aim to mitigate the impact of these pressures. Our integrated approach not only addresses current issues, but also prepares us for new and emerging water management priorities. The Water Program focuses on improving water quality and enhancing the ecological, social, and economic value of the region's waterways.



# Water Program Asset Classes

The Water Program encompasses Tasmania’s key water assets, which includes rivers and estuaries, wetlands and waterbodies, and coastal and marine systems.

Tasmania’s water assets are essential for clean drinking water, biodiversity, and supporting aquatic ecosystem health. They support multiple primary industries including irrigation for agricultural production, fisheries and aquaculture production, industrial use, recreation, and tourism. They also support community-dependent infrastructure systems for hydroelectric power generation, drinking water supply and wastewater treatment, ports, and marine traffic.

Protection and management of water resources is closely linked with land management, including some actions listed in the Sustainable Agriculture Program (e.g. soil and erosion management and resilient landscapes) and Biodiversity Program (e.g. aquatic threatened species and important vegetation communities, including riparian vegetation). The delivery of actions across all programs will contribute to the health of Tasmania’s water resources.



The movement of fresh surface and groundwaters through the landscape supports ecological, economic, and social values. Ecological values of catchments and estuaries, and current and emerging threats in receiving waters are used to identify Priorities and Actions for rivers, floodplains, and estuaries.



Wetlands and other waterbodies include internationally recognised wetlands of significance under the Ramsar Convention, which support high-value ecological communities. Nationally and regionally important wetlands and other water bodies are recognised for their conservation value.



Coastal and marine areas encompass a wide variety of landscapes and habitat types. Important coastal and marine areas can be identified by high value habitats or species. To enhance ecological, social, and economic values, identified Actions will build resilience to pressures and emerging threats across regional Priorities.



# FY24 Achievements

## Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers Program

- released the inaugural 2023 Freshwater Report Card for the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary and Esk rivers catchment
- commenced the Biological Monitoring pilot program for the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary
- collaborated with the Derwent Estuary Program to deliver a best-practice reference document for Erosion and Sediment Control in Tasmania
- built key stakeholder knowledge and awareness of the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary through the 2023 kanamaluka / Tamar Forum
- facilitated the delivery of training of Water Sensitive Urban Design to partner councils
- monitored a blue green-algae bloom in Lake Trevallyn during summer months, providing the evidence base for closure.

## River Health Action Plan – Catchment Works Program

- protected 517 ha of streamside for regeneration / revegetation activities
- completed 101.2 km of stock fencing across dairy and grazing properties through Tamar Action Grants
- hosted a field trip for the 2024 Australasia-Pacific Extension Network Conference in Launceston which included a visit to Tamar Action Grant project sites to showcase achievements
- launched an interactive weekly social media initiative ‘Waterway Tuesday’ to showcase Tamar Action Grant eligible catchments
- supported the Dairy Australia Conference and Environment Awards and Effluent Field Day to promote best practice waterway and effluent management on dairy farms.

# FY25 Focus

## Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers Program

- continue monthly water quality monitoring of the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary
- continue monitoring of blue-green algae in Lake Trevallyn during summer months
- build community knowledge and awareness of the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary through facilitation of the 2024 kanamaluka / Tamar Discovery Day
- engage councils and stakeholders in best practice stormwater management, particularly statewide planning provisions, Soil and Erosion Control, and Water Sensitive Urban Design
- refine modelling capability and data synthesis
- deliver the 2024 kanamaluka / Tamar Estuary Report Card and accompanying technical report.

## River Health Action Plan – Catchment Works Program

- support grazing landholders to undertake riparian management activities and exclude stock from waterways through Tamar Action Grants
- support DairyTas to improve dairy effluent management practices and reduce stock effluent from entering waterways through extension activities
- undertake the third and final major evaluation of the RHAP - Catchment Works Program
- complete final reporting for the Australian Government Grant Deed
- produce a video series to celebrate achievements and additional benefits of the Tamar Action Grants.



# Tamar Estuary & Esk Rivers Program



The Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program is an important voluntary regional collaboration between the agencies responsible for waterway management within the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary and Esk rivers catchment.

At 70 km long, covering approximately 10,000 km², the Tamar estuary and Esk rivers is the largest catchment system in Tasmania. It underpins industries including agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, green hydrogen, and tourism. Importantly, this rich aquatic system remains culturally significant to Aboriginal communities.

To ensure continued strategic and program focus, funding collaborators represented on the TEER Strategy and Partnerships Committee include the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania, George Town Council, City of Launceston, Meander Valley Council, Northern Midlands Council, West Tamar Council, Hydro Tasmania, TasWater, TasPorts, Tasmania Irrigation, EPA Tasmania, the Department of Health, and NRM North.

TEER's data sharing collaborators include DairyTas, Petuna Aquaculture, Bell Bay Aluminium, and UTAS.

## TEER Strategic Plan & Governance

The vision of the TEER Program is to be 'a trusted and respected provider of science and evidence that informs decision making to protect, restore and enhance water quality in the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary and its rivers from catchment to coast'.

Fundamentally, the TEER Program is the science to inform management. It remains separate from but complementary to the Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce (TEMT) whose role is to develop policy recommendations and source investment for management of the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary. Specifically, the role of the TEER Program is to facilitate collaborative partnerships by working closely with stakeholders, and to support decision

processes by improving scientific understanding, and providing information on waterway health and improvement opportunities.

### *The TEER Program achieves its objectives through three future direction pathways:*

1. Work together to support integrated governance, planning and management.
2. Understand and advise on waterway health.
3. Build community knowledge and awareness.



Sunset on the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary. Photo: Brian Dullaghan.

# Ecosystem Health Assessment Program

The overarching goal of the TEER Ecosystem Health Assessment Program (EHAP) continues to be the provision of high-quality data and analyses to support evidence-based management of and investment in the estuary. Each month, TEER Program staff undertake water quality monitoring at 16 identification sites along the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary. The program is one of the longest ongoing water quality monitoring initiatives for a major waterway in Tasmania. In total, 36 water quality indicators are sampled, which equates to between 2,000 and 2,500 datapoints collected each month including measures of heavy metals and nutrient concentrations, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, and pH levels.

The data is valuable to a variety of users including government agencies, regulatory authorities, academic institutions, industry, and the broader community.

The data is used for a range of purposes including ecological baseline studies, biophysical investigations, and the establishment of Default Guideline Values and Water Quality Objectives, amongst others. The Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) and the Australian Centre for Research on Separation Science (ACROSS) at UTAS are utilising EHAP data to support PhD research projects investigating the relationship between the terrestrial flows of organic matter and nutrients, and their influence on phytoplankton and water catchment management solutions using remote nitrite and nitrate analysers.

In addition, EHAP data is used to produce the biennial kanamaluka / Tamar Estuary Report Card which informs the community about the state of water quality across five zones along the waterway. The ninth edition was released in August 2024.

### Quick Fact

The TEER Program and collaborators acknowledge TasWater's additional contribution in providing and maintaining a vessel to undertake long-term estuary monitoring. The vessel 'North Esk' has for many years provided a reliable and stable platform from which to collect grab samples, and to deploy a multiparameter sonde for physico-chemical profiling of the water column. In an average year, the vessel provides more than 80 hours of service to the program.



TEER's Sam Jack monitors water quality along the estuary.



Each month, the EHAP undertakes water quality monitoring at 16 sites along the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary.



# Lake Trevallyn Blue-Green Algae Monitoring

The importance of monitoring blue-green algae levels at Lake Trevallyn has never been more significant following a bloom at beginning of 2024 that led to the popular waterbody being closed to the public.

Lake Trevallyn is an important multiple-use water resource for Launceston, predominantly utilised for drinking water and generating hydroelectricity as well as being a popular space for recreation during summer. Whilst warmer weather is ideal for recreational water activities, it also increases the likelihood of an algal bloom forming.

Monitoring blue-green algae at the lake was established in 2007 following a severe bloom. Data is gathered weekly between December and April and is used to advance our understanding of the conditions that influence algal blooms. Monitoring data enables authorities to make timely and informed decisions, and to provide an early warning to the public in the event of an algal bloom.

Algal blooms have occurred previously in low rainfall, high temperature summers which provide ideal conditions for blue-green algae numbers to increase dramatically to bloom proportions, which is what was experienced this year.



Signage at Lake Trevallyn and online updates were provided during 2024’s bloom.

## 2024 Lake Trevallyn Bloom

The 2023/24 monitoring program and response was tested this season, largely due to the prevalence of two species, *Dolichospermum sp.* and *Microcystis aeruginosa*. Algal counts of both species reached a maximum of 55,000 and 8,000 cells/mL, respectively.

Monitoring samples are collected at two main sites, the Lake Trevallyn boat ramp and Blackstone Park. A telemetry buoy sited near the dam wall holds water monitoring equipment which measures pH, dissolved oxygen, algal concentration, and water stratification in real time. Together with air temperature and wind speed data, monitoring these parameters provide an evidence-base for management of algal blooms.

During the bloom this year, weekly updates were provided on the TEER website alongside Algal Bloom factsheets, social media messaging, and signage installed at Lake Trevallyn. This followed protocol in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council guidelines, which use a traffic light system to indicate the level of risk.

- GREEN**  
Surveillance Mode – very low concentrations, no public health risk, monitor as normal
- AMBER**  
Alert Mode – low to moderate concentrations, low public health risk, increase monitoring frequency and extent
- RED**  
Action Mode – high concentrations and increased public health risk, avoid contact

Data collected prompted authorities to close the waterway to the public from 25 January to 6 March 2024. By the end of February, algal concentrations had decreased substantially, and the Lake Trevallyn Working Group determined it was feasible to reopen the lake to recreational users.



Lake Trevallyn was closed to the public from 25 January to 6 March 2024 due to high blue-green algae concentrations.



Stormwater Management

One of the sources of pollutants in the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary and Esk rivers catchment is urban areas, particularly through stormwater. Water can be polluted with sediment, cement residue, hydrocarbons, or other chemicals like pesticides. Once pollutants enter waterways or the stormwater network, they can cause significant damage to infrastructure and the environment. Mitigating these pollutants at the source is key and can result in substantial water quality improvements as well as efficiencies through reduced clean up and/or repair costs.

Anyone working on a development or construction site is responsible for the prevention of erosion and mitigating the risk of pollutant runoff to our waterways. To encourage improved practices within the industry, the TEER Program, together with the Derwent Estuary

Program, produced *Erosion & Sediment Control – The Fundamentals for Development in Tasmania*. Recognised at the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) awards in May this year, the guide provides information to the Tasmanian building and construction industry on how to responsibly prevent sediment and other pollutants from leaving development sites so that legal requirements are met, environmental regulations are adhered to, off-site impacts are minimised, and our sensitive and unique waterways are protected.

The guide includes useful planning, prevention, maintenance, and legal information, and for larger and more complex sites with extreme rainfall, steep slopes, landslip risks, and dispersive soils, it provides guidance on how to find more detailed information.





**Erosion and Sediment Control - The Fundamentals for Development in Tasmania**

Download your copy:  
<https://www.teer.org.au/erosionandsedimentcontrol>

The guide encourages improved practices within the building and construction industry.

Community Engagement & Education

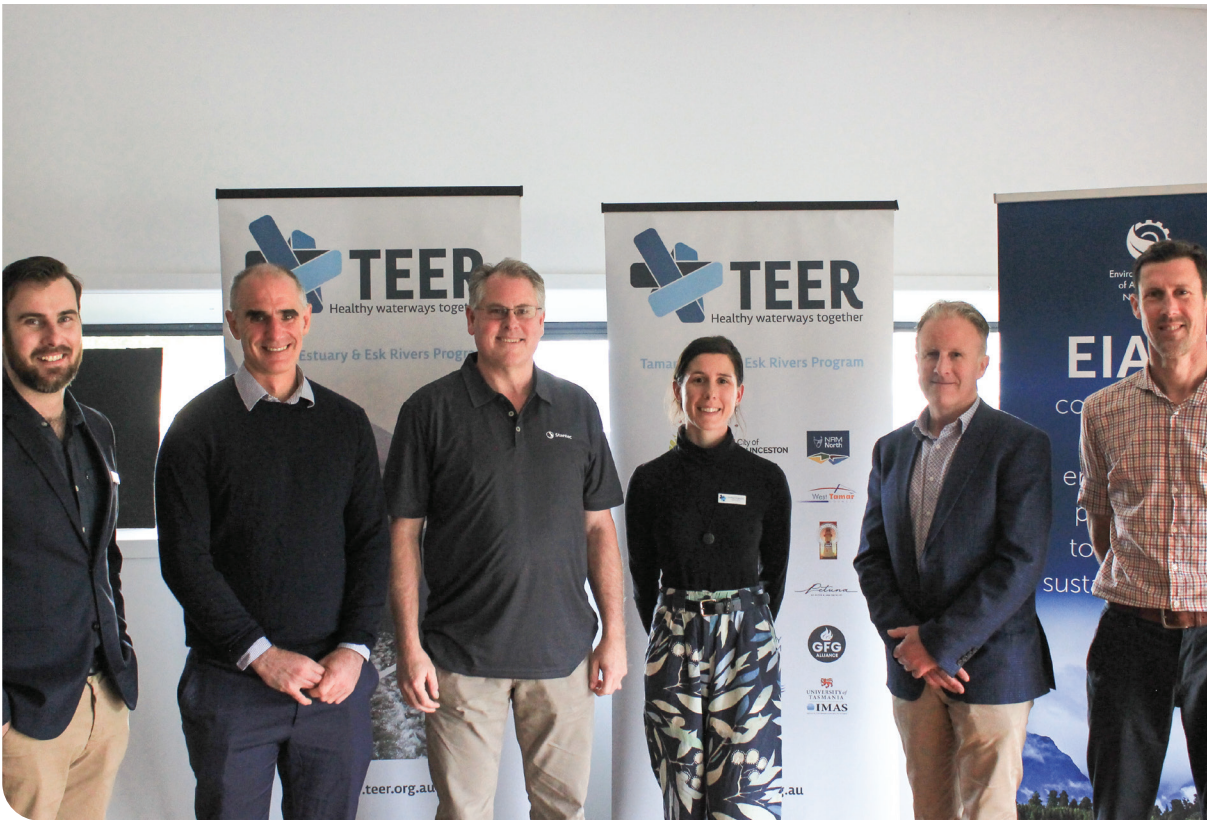
The kanamaluka / Tamar Forum is a biennial event that brings together industry professionals, local experts, and members of the community in an open discussion about the health and future of the estuary, as well as current actions to improve water quality.

Last held in Launceston in October 2023, the Forum brings together a diverse range of industry groups, environmental organisations, government agencies, and community groups. Tasmanian Minister for Parks and Environment Nick Duigan MLC and member for Bass Janie Finlay MP were among more than 70 attendees who heard from a panel of experts in the field, including Andrew Truscott from TasWater, Simon Talbot from Abel Energy, Caroline Elsner from City of Launceston, Karen Palmer and Kelsie Fractal from UTAS, Mark Bachmann from Nature Glenelg Trust, and Sue Jennings from Landcare Tasmania. Forum presentations covered:

- green methanol production
- healthy urban waterways
- TEMT vision and implementation plan
- the importance of a restored seagrass habitat
- wetland restorations in SA, Vic and NSW
- Tamar Estuary RHAP improvement projects
- rice grass eradication at Circular Head
- the TEER Freshwater Report Card.

The theme ‘Connections’ was the centre of the 2023 Forum. Aunty Nannette Shaw conducted the Welcome to Country.

Held on alternate years to the Forum is the kanamaluka / Tamar Discovery Day – a chance for community members to find out more about the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary and the rich marine ecosystems and species that call the waterway home. In October 2024, the event will return to Seahorse World at Beauty Point. The previous kanamaluka / Tamar Discovery Day in 2022 attracted more than 300 community members, keen to learn about the wonderful diversity of flora and fauna in the unique system, and to take part in engaging displays, presentations and activities.



TEER Program staff and presenters: the forum is an opportunity to discuss the health and future of the estuary.



# River Health Action Plan - Catchment Works Program

The Tasmanian and Australian Governments have committed to funding recommendations from the River Health Action Plan (RHAP) to improve the health of the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary. The objective is to improve public health by reducing pathogen concentrations in Zone 1 of the estuary (Launceston to Legana) by more than 4 per cent.

Selected as the preferred provider for delivery of the RHAP Catchment Works Program, NRM North formed partnerships with City of Launceston, DairyTas, and TasFarmers to engage the community and implement project works across catchments that flow into the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary. The program was designed with a rural component – The Tamar Action Grants, and an urban component – The Sewage

Intrusion Program. The Sewage Intrusion Program identified and rectified sewage sources entering the separated stormwater network across Greater Launceston. The program was completed in 2021 following the rectification of 44 identified intrusions and is estimated to prevent 13.2 megalitres of untreated sewage entering the estuary every year.

The Tamar Action Grants provide funding to grazing and dairy farmers to exclude stock from water courses and undertake effluent treatment upgrades to reduce pathogen levels entering rivers and streams across the catchment. To date, 618 km of stock exclusion fencing and 2,667 ha of effluent management improvements across dairy farms have been completed, improving water quality across the catchment.



The River Health Action Plan – Catchment Works Program provides funding to support a range of activities to improve water quality.

A second major mid-term program evaluation was completed in October 2022 to measure the success of investment in on-ground works to date. Using data collected from completed works, the evaluation found an estimated reduction of 7.3 per cent in median enterococci concentration in Zone 1 of the estuary, exceeding the project target of 4.7 per cent. The third major evaluation will take place in 2025 and use data collected throughout the program to determine final pollutant reduction numbers for the estuary.

The overwhelming success of the project was possible due to the significant contributions and efforts of participating landholders and project partners.

NRM North has leveraged a 47 per cent (\$4.9 million) co-investment through participating landholders. This investment has flowed through to local contractors and suppliers generating positive economic stimulus across Tasmania’s northern region over the life of the program.

The TAG Program is now 96 per cent complete, with all remaining projects due for completion in December 2024. The State Government Grant Deed finished at the end of June 2024 and will see the end of all dairy related projects. Final reporting and the third major program evaluation will see out the end of the RHAP Catchment Works Program by June 2025.



Fencing and revegetation works support significant improvements to water quality.



# Tamar Action Grants Program

The Tamar Estuary River Health Action Plan – Catchment Works Program provides funding to support a range of activities to improve water quality by reducing pathogen concentrations in the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary.

The Tamar Action Grants (TAG) Program was established to improve water quality across the TEER catchment by excluding stock from waterways, protecting and rehabilitating riparian revegetation buffers on dairy and grazing farms, and improving effluent management on dairy farms. Funding through the program has enabled grant recipients, such as Dougal Morrison, to make these improvements and upgrades.

Dougal Morrison owns a 7,900 ha mixed grazing and plantation forestry property at Oatlands, where he runs around 18,000 sheep, 19,600 lambs, 400 cattle and 360 calves. The property has been in his family since 1825. Blackmans Creek, which runs through the property, was only partially fenced when Dougal took over the family farm three years ago. Over the years he’s observed areas of bank erosion along the waterway and a decrease in biodiversity. To address this, Dougal fenced 4 km of the creek to fully exclude stock access which will provide protection for the 5,100 stems scheduled for planting in the latter half of 2024.

Once established, the revegetation will help mitigate bank erosion and build resilience to flood events. Dougal highly values the importance of biodiversity benefits on-farm including native vegetation which will compete with weed regrowth, and increase biodiversity and habitat values on the property.

*“The support from NRM North made our goal to enhance biodiversity along the watercourse more achievable. We now have decent riparian buffers and can finally re-establish some diversity in the vegetation along the waterway which is what we’ve been lacking.”*

Dougal Morrison

Looking ahead, Dougal is also transitioning from short cycle *Eucalyptus nitens* timber production to longer cycle *Pinus radiata* production. Their longer cycle of 25-35 years makes them eligible for carbon credits, diversifying the farm income to be more resilient to changing market pressures.

NRM North Water Program Manager Jesse Webster said excluding livestock and revegetating waterways will reduce bank erosion, and improve water quality, stock health and pasture growth, and resilience to flooding.

“Once livestock is excluded from waterways, landholders can spend time and resources on managing weeds before revegetating stream sides to reduce bank erosion and increase resilience to flood events. As the vegetation matures, other benefits include shade and shelter for young stock, improved pasture growth, and increased habitat for pollinating insects,” said Mr Webster.

In addition, installing larger buffers along waterways provide improved opportunities for revegetation activities which have a range of ecological, animal health and production benefits as they establish.

Projects like this are being implemented across the catchment to reduce pathogens from entering on-farm waterways, which improves riparian vegetation cover leading to more native habitat, thus enhancing biodiversity and connectivity which also provides shade and shelter for aquatic flora and fauna.

Landholders have also experienced better stock management, increased lambing and calving rates, better animal weight gains, and elimination of Liver fluke and Leptospirosis by excluding stock from wet and boggy areas and providing alternative watering points (troughs).

The Tamar Action Grants Program is supported by funding from the Tasmanian and Australian governments through the Launceston City Deal ‘working together for healthy waterways’.

## Since its inception in 2019, the Tamar Action Grants Program has:

- completed over 618 km (96 %) of fencing on grazing and dairy farms to exclude stock from waterways
- managed more than 2,600 ha of riparian area for regeneration outcomes
- completed 2,667 ha of effluent management improvements across dairy farms
- excluded 283,000 sheep, 21,300 cattle and 7,500 dairy cows at the completion of contracted works

(numbers to 30 June 2024)



Before: Over the years, Dougal has observed areas of bank erosion and a decrease in biodiversity at his Oatlands property.



After: Waterway fencing and revegetation works improve habitat and biodiversity values and resilience to erosion.



# Sustainable Agriculture



## Overview

The aim of the Sustainable Agriculture Program is to improve the condition of northern Tasmania's agricultural, natural, and cultural landscapes by partnering with landholders to promote the adoption of best practice management of soil health, on-farm native vegetation, and priority invasive weeds.

The NRM North region is one of the most important agricultural sectors in the northern regional economy, contributing 43 per cent of the \$3.52 billion gross value of Tasmania's agriculture<sup>1</sup>.

The region also encompasses the lands of several Traditional Owner groups and supports a number of threatened vegetation communities, which in turn support a range of threatened flora and fauna species. Creating awareness of innovative, sustainable, and traditional land management practices, and promoting the adoption of such practices that lead to increased resilience, is critically important in the face of increasing economic, social, and biophysical pressures such as climate change, and uncertainty in global market trends.

<sup>1</sup>[Tasmanian Agri-Food SCORECARD 2020-21.PDF \(nre.tas.gov.au\)](#)



# Sustainable Agriculture Asset Classes

The Sustainable Agriculture Program (known as the Land Theme in the 2030 NRM Strategy for Northern Tasmania) identifies how NRM organisations partner with land managers to support sustainable natural and production landscapes and industries in a changing environment. NRM North respects and acknowledges Aboriginal understanding of land and Country. We aim to conserve natural, cultural and production values associated with these assets, and to build capacity and develop resilience across these assets to protect them from ongoing and emerging threats.

Impacts to natural and cultural values, soil condition, and vegetation are projected due to changes to land use, management practices and biosecurity threats. Actions have been developed to address issues associated with the Asset Classes of Healthy Country, Resilient Landscapes, and Soils and Vegetation. The Land Program became the Sustainable Agriculture Program following the conclusion of several projects in June 2024 to reflect broader industry involvement.



Supporting Tasmanian Aboriginal people to increase capacity to manage, access or heal Country, based on self-determined priorities.



Building the capacity of land managers to address the risk of adverse events, protect natural capital, and take advantage of opportunities for production industries in the face of challenges such as climate change, weeds, pests and diseases.



Supporting land managers to improve soil condition and manage vegetation cover to improve natural values, biodiversity, and production outcomes and mitigate emerging risks.



# FY24 Achievements

- secured funding for a Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator in March 2024, under the Australian Government Natural Heritage Trust as a member of the Commonwealth Regional Delivery Partners panel
- continued partnership with the Tas Farm Innovation Hub, enabling the Soil Extension Program to offer valuable services with funding support through the Future Drought Fund
- developed and launched a robust communications campaign to promote the three Decision Support Tools available through the Soil Extension Program
- supported delivery of the Farming Forecaster Project in partnership with NRM South, enabling farmers to make timely management decisions that mitigate climate change risk and enhance ‘whole of farm’ resilience
- continued to grow membership and engagement in the Ag Talk - Northern Tasmania Facebook group
- supported a range of agricultural events to provide opportunities for face-to-face engagement, knowledge sharing, and relationship building
- continued to facilitate delivery of the Weeds Action Fund (WAF) to eradicate and contain priority weeds.

# FY25 Focus

- codesign and implement a Climate-Smart Agriculture Program in collaboration with regional stakeholders that builds on previous achievements in soil health and native vegetation on-farm
- support adoption of sustainable agriculture practices and delivery of Climate-Smart Agriculture Projects
- assist farmers in northern Tasmania to identify their natural capital, implement practical actions to improve its condition, and build skills to monitor, measure and report on improved condition
- assist farmers in northern Tasmania by building the skills and knowledge to understand and access opportunities in emerging carbon and biodiversity markets and adopt sustainability frameworks
- continue partnership with the Tas Farm Innovation Hub, enabling the Soil Extension Program to offer valuable services with funding support through the Future Drought Fund
- continue to grow membership and engagement in the Ag Talk - Northern Tasmania Facebook group. The group keeps the northern Tasmanian farming community and agriculture industry up-to-date with emerging ideas, innovative practices and relevant funding opportunities and government policy
- continue delivery of the WAF in collaboration with Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania, regional partners, local government, industry, and private landholders with a focus on supporting delivery of facilitated highly invasive perennial grasses contracts.





# Sustainable Agricultural Facilitator

The Sustainable Agriculture Facilitator (SAF) is funded by the Australian Government’s Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry through the Natural Heritage Trust Climate-Smart Agriculture Program. The program is assisting to drive agricultural sustainability, productivity, and competitiveness. The SAF is a designated central contact point for farmers, landholders, industry, and community groups to support sustainable agriculture practices in the NRM North region. This includes supporting farmers to adopt practices to reduce emissions, build resilience to climate change, support farmers to drive growth whilst adopting sustainable natural resource management practices, and to help the agriculture sector better prepare for, and respond to, climate change risks such as bushfires, floods and drought.

Starting in March 2024, the SAF role has already supported and promoted a number of events in Tasmania’s north. The Farmers for Climate Action event at ‘Lewisham’ south of Campbell Town was well attended. Focusing on the theme ‘Fire, Farming and the Unpredictable’, the landholder shared their knowledge and experience with revegetation, and field experts David Bowman (bushfire scientist) and Jon Finch (entomologist) delivered engaging presentations.

NRM North also supported Cradle Coast NRM at the Grass Roots Festival at ‘Gunningham’ in the state’s north-west. The event was supported by a range of guest speakers and displays including renowned soil scientist Dr Christine Jones who discussed the role of biology within our soils.

## SAF Conference

The first SAF Conference was held in Canberra from 30 April to 3 May 2024 and was attended by Sustainable Agriculture Facilitators from across the country. Peter Heading attended the conference on behalf of NRM North.

Discussions held over the 4-day conference provided more understanding and clarity about the SAF role. Presentations and robust discussion which focused on issues affecting First Nations people provided valuable insight into how to best engage with local First Nations people, and the best way to build respectful and productive relationships. In addition, the conference provided an opportunity to develop an understanding of the emerging natural capital accounting and carbon farming markets.

## Ag Talk

The Ag Talk - Northern Tasmania Facebook group has continued to grow membership and engagement, with discussions on various topics keeping the northern Tasmanian farming community and agriculture industry connected and up-to-date with emerging ideas, innovative practices, and relevant funding opportunities and government policy.

*Since beginning in March 2024, the SAF role has already supported and promoted a number of events in Tasmania’s north.*





# Weeds Action Fund

The Weeds Action Fund (WAF) is a \$5 million Tasmanian Government initiative aimed at tackling high-priority weeds impacting agricultural and natural assets across the state. Operating on the principle of shared responsibility, the WAF encourages collaboration among landowners, private industry, local authorities, and communities to identify and eradicate priority weeds to improve agricultural productivity and to protect Tasmania’s natural values.

In partnership with NRM South and Cradle Coast NRM, NRM North has continued to deliver and facilitate projects funded through Stage 2 of the Weeds Action Fund. In addition, NRM North has assisted the state government in progressing the delivery of the Tasmanian Highly Invasive Grasses Project.

NRM North Operations Manager Ben Slingsby said a total of 61 projects have been supported during Stage 2 of the Fund, which saw more than 14,000 ha contracted for treatment and an average co-investment of 60 per cent from grant recipients. A series of five case studies have been developed to highlight the importance of weed management and the value of partnerships in these projects.

A project undertaken by the Friends of Bass Strait Islands (FOBSI) aims to protect more than 470 ha of seabird nesting habitat on offshore islands in the Furneaux Group and in several coastal reserves on Flinders Island.

Part of the threatened native vegetation community ‘Seabird rookery complex’ is in this region and is vulnerable to the encroachment of African boxthorn and mirror bush.

FOBSI President Karen Ziegler said the group has been removing large infestations from offshore islands and key parts of Flinders Island for more than 20 years.

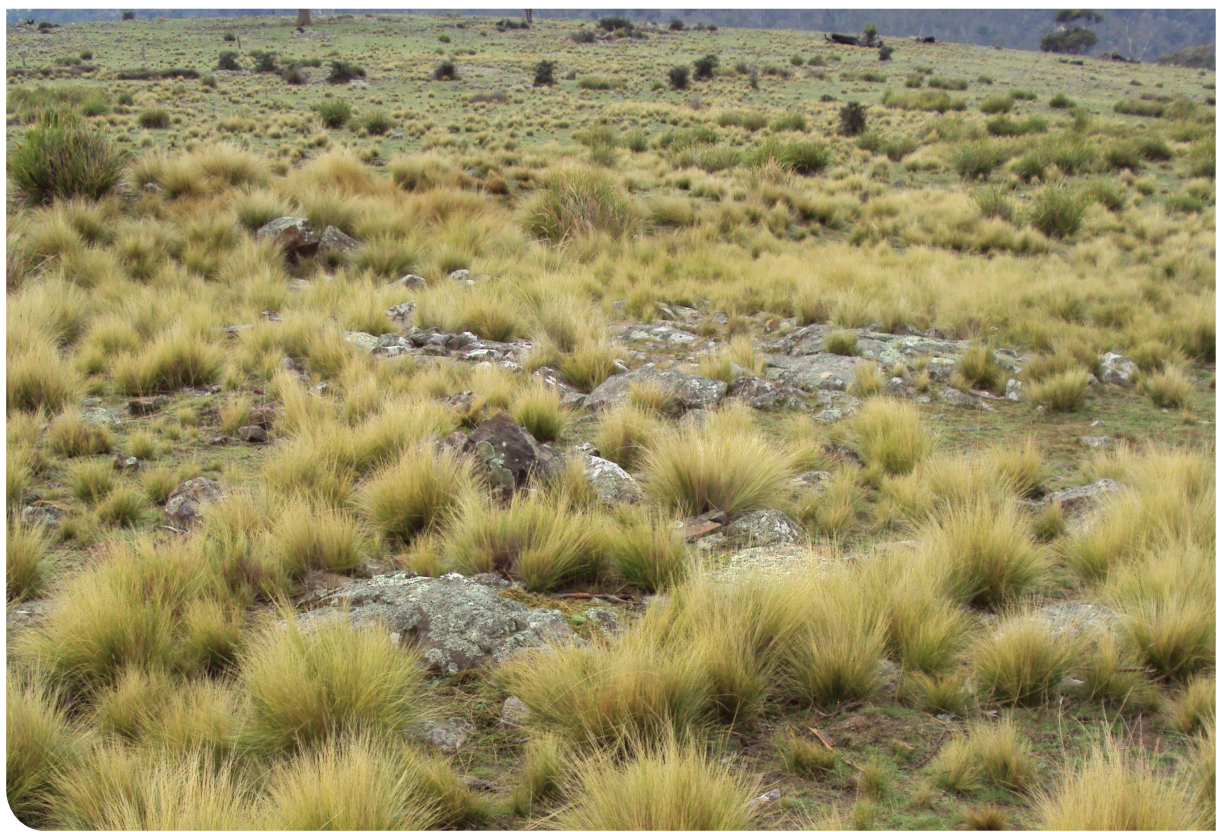
**“These islands are remote and challenging to access. It takes a coordinated effort to make this work happen.”**

**FOBSI President Karen Ziegler**

Ms Ziegler said the WAF funding allows the FOBSI to complete follow-up removal of seedlings and regrowth, which is vital for the long-term effectiveness of the project.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania will lead the delivery of Stage 3 of the WAF with an additional \$1.4 million over two years announced in the 2023-24 State Budget. Landholders with projects still underway from Stage 2 will continue to receive support from their respective region’s NRM organisation.

This project is funded by the Tasmanian Government through the Tasmanian Weeds Action Fund facilitated by NRM North with support from NRM South and Cradle Coast NRM.



Highly invasive perennial grasses such as serrated tussock pose a serious threat to Tasmania’s agricultural industry.

# Tasmanian Soil Extension Program

The Tasmanian Soil Extension Program aims to promote best management practices to improve the sustainability, productivity, and profitability of Tasmania’s agricultural landscapes and soil condition.

The statewide program has a team of three Soil Extension Officers who deliver activities that focus on the importance of soil health and improved soil management, as well as supporting farmers and land managers to utilise knowledge gained through soil testing.

In FY24, the program built on the success of the original initiative that concluded in June 2023, championing soil health and sustainable agriculture in Tasmania. With ongoing support from the Tas Farm Innovation Hub, new partnerships have been forged to provide assistance with best soil health management in Tasmanian’s agriculture community.

The program’s impact is evident in the extensive engagement with the farming community, marked by significant achievements such as a 58.3 per cent increase in new users for the Soil Test Interpretation Guide, a 95.2 per cent rise for Nutrient Management, and a 104 per cent surge for Land Drainage Decision Support Tools. The decision support tools offer a wealth of information about how to best manage soil drainage and soil nutrition. A culmination of expert information from consultants, contractors, farmers, and researchers, the resources are freely available to all landholders in Tasmania. The application of the tools allows farmers to make more informed decisions about productively, and sustainably managing soil nutrients and soil water on-farm.

In May 2024, the program facilitated a Diverse Pastures for Soil Health field day for a new farmer group in the George River catchment area in the north-east.

Together with local experts and researchers, the group discussed the benefits of pasture diversity, locally relevant pasture species selection for climate resilience, and avenues for improving and monitoring soil health, especially soil biological health.

**“The Diverse Pasture for Soil Health field day was a great chance to get locals together ... It’s always good to have multiple perspectives to consider.”**

**Darcy Niklason, George River Farmer Landcare Group President**

The program’s comprehensive approach to activity and engagement, underpinned by a cross-regional governance structure led by NRM North, is set to deliver a further suite of soil health workshops and field days in the last quarter of 2024. The program’s outreach has included soil health displays at major events such as AgFest, the Garlic and Tomato Festival, and the Grassroots Festival, as well as engaging directly with landholders to give soil sampling support and educating primary school students about soil health. These activities have raised awareness and fostered connections with the agricultural community.

The statewide team of Soil Extension Officers continues to build on-farm and community resilience by supporting improved soil health management and climate resilience.

The Tasmanian Soil Extension Program is being delivered by NRM North, NRM South, and Cradle Coast NRM with support from the Tas Farm Innovation Hub through funding from the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund.



Field experts Robin Tait and Rowan Smith discuss the benefits of pasture diversity at a field day near St Helens in May 2024.



# Farming Forecaster

Supporting farmers for drought resilience

Farming Forecaster was developed to help graziers get a greater understanding of conditions and the likely range in pasture availability, allowing for forward planning and helping farmers to adopt strategies to improve drought resilience.

Over the last two years, 46 probes have been installed at strategically selected sites across dryland areas of Tasmania including King and Flinders islands. The probes record soil moisture, soil temperature and rainfall data which show how rainfall events and changes in weather patterns affect soil moisture and thus future pasture production.

Farming Forecaster allows producers to make stock management decisions earlier, which improves the viability of their grazing enterprises and protects groundcover during times when these systems are vulnerable to erosion and over-grazing.

The East Coast Primary Producers Association were the initial drivers of project. Producers there had experienced a 3-year drought and wanted to see a predictive pasture tool made available to farmers.

Delivered by NRM South in partnership with NRM North, primary producers, advisors and NRM staff now have access to data on growing conditions to aid in decision making. The Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture played a pivotal role in improving the data that informs the forecast for Tasmanian conditions. At some sites, farmers took the opportunity to upgrade to a full weather station which adds value to the network by providing additional information on local weather including fire rating, wind speed and humidity. Data from all sites is publicly accessible.

Farming Forecaster’s uptake in Tasmania has been significant and has been supported by both producers and advisors in the Tasmanian red meat industry.

Effectiveness of the roll-out was established through extensive training opportunities that reinforced how to operate and benefit from Farming Forecaster. It also facilitated the adoption of other supportive tools and strategies to improve producer confidence in preparing for challenging seasons. Producers found the program easy to use and accessible, and the tool provided data that supported their on-farm decision making.

This partnership project has been well received by the farming community in Tasmania, and has established a data network that will continue to support decision making for improved drought resilience and natural resource planning.

A support package of communication materials has been produced to further assist producers which includes a Farming Forecaster podcast and a video series developed with livestock advisor Phil Graham. Both resources discuss the grazing support tool Farming Forecaster and other drought management tools and strategies. The podcast also includes seasonal updates for Tasmania.

Together with other initiatives through the Tasmanian Innovation and Adoption Hub, the Farming Forecaster Project has enabled primary producers to be better prepared for future dry times using containment feeding. Containment feeding is not only an extremely important component of increasing producers’ resilience to climate variability, it is also one of the most effective strategies to manage groundcover during dry seasons.

This project is a collaboration between NRM South, NRM North, the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, AgriProve, the East Coast Primary Producers Association, the Upper Esk Landcare and Productivity Group, farmers in the Midlands, north Bruny, and Flinders Island, and the Tasmanian Government.

This project has been supported by NRM South, through funding from the Australian Government’s Future Drought Fund.

**Farming Forecaster’s uptake in Tasmania has been significant and has been supported by both producers and advisors in the Tasmanian red meat industry.**



Farming Forecaster allows producers to make stock management decisions earlier.



NRM South’s Tim Ackroyd at one of the 46 probe sites across Tasmania.



# Biodiversity

## Overview

The objective of the Biodiversity Program is to maintain and enhance landscape function for biodiversity, with a focus on protecting habitat for Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) species and communities and Ramsar wetland values in northern Tasmania.

Natural landscapes make up about 60 per cent of the NRM North region. These biodiversity-rich landscapes support native species, communities, and ecosystems, and are highly valued for the way they characterise Tasmania, being a significant drawcard for the tourism industry and Tasmania's economy. However, the biodiversity values are under pressure from habitat loss, changing land use and development pressures, weeds, pests and diseases, climate change, and natural disasters such as floods, drought, and fire. There is an opportunity to work with public and private land managers to implement on-ground actions and to support policy and planning initiatives to buffer the impact of these threats and pressures on our biodiversity.



Biodiversity Asset Classes

The Biodiversity Theme in the 2030 NRM Strategy for Northern Tasmania encompasses the full variety of life found in the state, including all species of plants, animals, fungi, microorganisms, and the ecosystems in which they live. While biodiversity refers to all living things, the NRM organisations focus on natural assets native to the state.

By protecting and conserving areas that support biodiversity, the diversity of genes, species, communities, and ecosystems is also maintained. Tasmania’s NRM organisations work with partners to achieve shared strategic outcomes. Community and partner involvement in biodiversity programs range from monitoring, research, and on-ground restoration activities.

There is an overlap between Biodiversity, Sustainable Agriculture, and Water Themes (programs) including the maintenance of biodiversity on-farms and resilient landscapes, and the prioritisation of Ramsar sites and aquatic and coastal habitats that support threatened species and ecological communities. The delivery of actions across all Themes (programs) will contribute to the health of Tasmania’s biodiversity resources.



Important biodiversity areas are significant because they are home to a diversity of biota and include formally recognised sites such as World Heritage Areas, important reserves, recognised biodiversity hotspots or Key Biodiversity Areas.



Threatened species include species listed under the EPBC Act and TSP Act. Important species recognises that there are regionally or locally important species, as well as emerging threatened species.



Threatened ecological communities include the communities listed under the EPBC Act and NC Act. Regionally or locally important and emerging priority ecological communities are also recognised.



FY24 Achievements

In September 2023, NRM North submitted three project proposals for the 3-year Saving Native Species (SNS) Program targeting priority species including giant freshwater crayfish, green and gold frog, and hooded plover.

After a comprehensive project design and negotiation process, NRM North secured funding for two projects under Regional Delivery Partnerships (RDP) - one focused on the North-East Rivers (NER project) and one in the Midlands (Midlands project). Additional funding for the Midlands project was secured from the SNS Program. With funding negotiations completed, work orders were signed for the NER project ‘Giant freshwater crayfish: enhancing habitat conservation’ in March 2024, and for the Midlands project ‘Improving Midlands biodiversity: stewardship and restoration’ in May 2024.

With limited time left for implementation activities in FY24, initial site assessments and crayfish surveys have been undertaken for the NER project and a reference committee meeting was held in partnership with Cradle Coast NRM. Project planning and

stakeholder engagement for both the Midlands and NER projects have been a major focus in preparation for a busy FY25.

Other significant achievements for the Biodiversity Program in FY24 include hosting another successful Small Farm Living Field Day, and the ongoing work of our Regional Cat Management Coordinator including:

- successful launch of catio
- catio demonstrations at Bunnings, council, and Agfest to creat public awareness
- facilitated collaboration between Just Cats and City of Launceston to manage cat colonies
- council staff training sessions for City of Launceston, Break O’Day Council and Northern Midlands Council
- assisted George Town Council in developing Cat Management Policy and a long-term cat management program
- funding offer for northern councils to support cat management initiatives.

FY25 Focus

In FY25, the NER and Midlands projects will begin in earnest with significant works to be undertaken including many that were delayed due to the late signing of work orders.

Additional fauna and habitat condition surveys will be carried out by NRM North staff and aquatic ecologist Todd Walsh for the NER Project. Once sites are assessed, they will be prioritised for on-ground remediation works and management agreements will be drafted for eligible properties. It is anticipated that 2 km of riparian fencing will be constructed in late FY25, and two existing culverts will be modified to allow safe passage by giant freshwater crayfish. Workshops aimed at improving land management by industry groups and public land managers will also be held.

In partnership with the Landscape Recovery Foundation, Tasmanian Land Conservancy, and Bush Heritage Australia, NRM North will identify, survey, and prioritise sites for protection through conservation stewardship agreements as part of the Midlands project. The project will conduct remediation works including stock management, weed control, revegetation, and ecological burning which

expands on works undertaken through the Midlands Conservation Partnership. In FY25, it is anticipated that at least 100 ha will be protected and management agreements signed for at least 35 ha of on-ground works. In addition, the Midlands Conservation Partnership will commence tailored habitat management planning for properties with existing conservation arrangements.

The Landscape Recovery Foundation will begin flora surveys targeting several threatened orchids and grassland species. Five sites will be surveyed, with seed collected and propagated for future translocation of threatened grassland flora species. Before and after plants will be caged to exclude livestock and humans to record the effectiveness of this form of protection on flowering, seed set and recruitment.

With current funding for the Tasmanian Cat Management Project ending in June 2025, the final year of this project will focus on support for council-managed desexing and microchipping programs, action on several stray cat colonies, and continued support for community education and responsible ownership programs.



New Biodiversity Opportunities

Following the successful completion of several projects funded under the Australian Government’s 2018-2023 Regional Land Partnerships (RLP) program, the team behind the Biodiversity Program spent early FY24 evaluating and reporting on the eastern barred bandicoot and giant freshwater crayfish projects. Both projects were considered highly successful, achieving, and in many cases exceeding output targets and making considerable progress towards long-term outcomes. The response from project partners and stakeholders was overwhelmingly positive. Evaluation discussions reflected positively on project achievements and provided constructive feedback on associated limitations, challenges, and future opportunities.

Giant Freshwater Crayfish: Enhancing Habitat Conservation

The Tasmanian giant freshwater crayfish (*Astacopsis gouldi*) is the largest freshwater invertebrate in the world. Endemic to northern Tasmania, it is only found in rivers that flow into Bass Strait and the Arthur catchment (except for the Tamar catchment) and is culturally significant to the Tasmanian Aboriginal community.

Once a common sight in northern Tasmania, the species is now listed as vulnerable under both the *Threatened Species Protection Act 1995* and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and as endangered under the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s Red List of Threatened Species.



A blue female Tasmanian giant freshwater crayfish. Photo: Todd Walsh.

Focus quickly turned to planning for the 2023-2028 Regional Delivery Partnerships (RDP) grant program, for which NRM North submitted five project concepts in June 2023. Aimed at building on the success of RLP projects, these concepts had a greater focus on priority places and threatened vegetation communities including the Midlands Region Biodiversity Hotspot, *Eucalyptus ovata* and *E. viminalis* forest and woodlands, North-East Rivers (giant freshwater crayfish and Ringarooma Ramsar), the coastal north-east including Flinders Island, and an Indigenous community-led cat eradication and rewilding project on lungtalanana / Clarke Island. Funding was secured for the NER (Giant freshwater crayfish: enhancing habitat conservation) and Midlands (Improving Midlands biodiversity: stewardship and restoration) projects.

As part of the NER project plan, riparian habitat quality and connectivity will be improved along 15 km of streams in the Pipers, Little Forester, and Great Forester catchments in northern Tasmania by working with private landholders to co-invest in on-ground habitat restoration works. These works include livestock exclusion fencing, controlling weeds, native riverbank revegetation, and providing alternative livestock water sources.

A second key element will engage industry and agency land managers to encourage change in waterway management practices. Two demonstration sites for culvert design and fish passage activities will be piloted, coupled with a tailored training program to embed practices to reduce threats to the giant freshwater crayfish.

These actions will reduce threats by:

- maintaining and improving critical habitat and reducing habitat disturbance
- filtering sediment and effluent runoff
- mitigating the impact of climate change such as potential changes to flow and flood events, water temperature extremes, and streamside vegetation health
- improving stakeholder and community knowledge of the species, its threats and habitat requirements.

Riparian habitat will be improved along 15 km of streams in the Pipers, Little Forester, and Great Forester catchments in northern Tasmania.

Improving Midlands Biodiversity: Stewardship and Restoration

The Midlands region in central Tasmania has been identified as one of 20 Priority Places in the Australian Government’s ‘Threatened Species Action Plan 2022-2032’ due to its high biodiversity value and conservation significance. It is home to a broad variety of national and state-listed flora and fauna species and vegetation communities including:

- nationally-listed threatened ecological communities - Lowland native grasslands of Tasmania; Tasmanian forests and woodlands dominated by black gum (*E. ovata*), or Brookers gum (*E. brookeriana*)
- threatened flora species - critically endangered orchids *P. taphanyx*, *P. incorrectum*, and *P. olidum*
- listed fauna species - green and gold frog (*L. raniformis*), eastern quoll (*D. viverrinus*), Swan Galaxias (*G. fontanus*), and eastern barred bandicoot (*P. gunnii gunnii*).

Colonised by Europeans in the early 1800s and heavily cleared of native vegetation to accommodate agricultural practices, it is believed more than 70 per cent of pre-colonisation vegetation has been lost in the Midlands. Prior to colonisation, the landscape was maintained and managed with fire by the Palawa people. The conservation significance of the area is currently threatened by inappropriate fire regimes, habitat clearing, fragmentation and degradation, agricultural intensification, invasive weeds, and population decline for many species of flora and fauna.

To help secure the future of threatened species and ecological communities, NRM North is partnering with the Landscape Recovery Foundation, Tasmanian Land Conservancy, and Bush Heritage Australia to expand on the work of the Midlands Conservation Partnership (MCP) and to engage new property owners.



It is thought that 70 per cent of pre-colonisation Kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra*) is lost in the Midlands.

Since its inception in 2011, the MCP (a joint initiative of TLC and Bush Heritage Australia) has supported farmers to conserve the ecological values of their properties while maintaining viable farming operations.

Running through to June 2028, the NRM North project will build on the work of the MCP to protect and enhance ecological values on private land in the Midlands by establishing new conservation stewardship agreements and tailored action plans to mitigate threats, enhance land management practices, and improve outcomes for threatened species and ecological communities.

Funding is available for on-ground remediation works to restore, enhance, and reduce threats to threatened ecological communities and threatened species habitat including stock management, weed control, revegetation, and ecological burning. Landholders in the Midlands region are invited to participate in the project to make a significant difference in conservation efforts.

Benefits include:

- contributing to the preservation of threatened ecological communities and threatened species habitat
- tailored advice and action plans to guide private conservation efforts
- enhancing biodiversity values on your land
- increased knowledge of habitat requirements for threatened flora and fauna species
- potential for collaboration with scientists, researchers, and conservationists
- recognition of commitment to environmental stewardship.



# Small Farm Living

Over the past 13 years, NRM North’s Small Farm Living Program has empowered hundreds of small farm property owners by facilitating networking opportunities, promoting skills and knowledge development, and encouraging sustainable property management.

## Small Farm Living Field Day

Building on the program’s success, in November 2023 NRM North hosted the 6th biennial Small Farm Living Field Day in collaboration with Lilydale Landcare Group. With funding support from City of Launceston, the event was held at Lilydale District School Farm and attracted around 150 smallholders from across the state. Since coming on board 12 months ago, it was Biodiversity Coordinator Nikita Sarangdhar’s first Small Farm Living Field Day.

*“It has been really nice to interact with landholders in person to talk about biodiversity and other natural values on their properties.”*

Nikita Sarangdhar

Field experts covered a variety of topics including weed management, propagating native plants, planning revegetation projects, improving livestock health, and monitoring fauna with camera traps. Practical demonstrations included constructing fences, handling livestock, and butchery. The field day involved 19 local businesses and stallholders who provided a range of advice, products, and resources for sustainable resource management on small farms.

Former Biodiversity Manager Kate Thorn presented at the event and was impressed with the level of smallholder engagement.

“It was nice to interact with landholders who are keen to know more about conserving natural resources on their properties,” said Ms Thorn.

Mike, who was attending the event for the first time found the day both informative and enjoyable.

“The presenters and stalls at the field day were excellent. You really provided the type of information that smaller lot holders like me need but find it hard to get access to.”

## DIY Property Planning Tool

The Small Farm Living DIY Property Planning tool is designed to help smallholders get the most out of their property by understanding limitations and adopting practices to achieve plans and goals. Preparing a property plan is also a great way to ensure that everyone involved with the property has a shared vision, or to identify and explore different expectations and priorities.

This tool is freely available to all landholders in Tasmania. The DIY Property Planning Tool and other useful resources can be found on our website [nrmnorth.org.au/resources](http://nrmnorth.org.au/resources).

This project has been supported by NRM North through funding from the Australian Government’s National Landcare Program - Smart Farms Small Grants.



NRM North’s Stephen Izzard talks about native plant revegetation at the Small Farm Living Field Day 2023. Photo: Holly Corbett.

# Tasmanian Cat Management Project

The Tasmanian Cat Management Project (TCMP) is a statewide initiative funded by the Tasmanian Government to support the implementation of the Tasmanian Cat Management Plan 2017-22 and the *Tasmanian Cat Management Act 2009* (the Act), by facilitating improved cat management and promoting responsible ownership. Funded from 2022 to 2025, three Cat Management Coordinators are employed to service the three major geographic regions in the state: southern Tasmania (hosted by Ten Lives), north-west Tasmania (hosted by Cradle Coast NRM), and northern Tasmania (hosted by NRM North).

Annual implementation plans are developed in collaboration with a working group of councils and other stakeholders to identify roles, resources, and priorities required at local and regional levels to realise practical cat management outcomes and to achieve strategy objectives. Measurable success includes councils and partners embarking on initiatives such as trap loan schemes, addressing cat hoarding and colony cases, designating cat management areas, and holding subsidised microchipping events.

## Legislation

The Act is the principal legislation for managing domestic and stray cats in Tasmania. Key objectives of the Act are to encourage responsible cat ownership to improve the welfare of cats, provide for the effective management of domestic and stray cats, and to reduce the impact of cats on Tasmania’s unique environment.

## Raising Awareness

Attendance at events is an opportunity to promote the importance of responsible cat ownership and to inform future cat management initiatives. The ‘do-it-yourself’ cat enclosure (catio) brochure was developed this year, and a demonstration catio was displayed at Agfest, several Bunnings stores across the state and at the Break O’Day Council to showcase a cost-effective solution for cat owners to contain their pets.

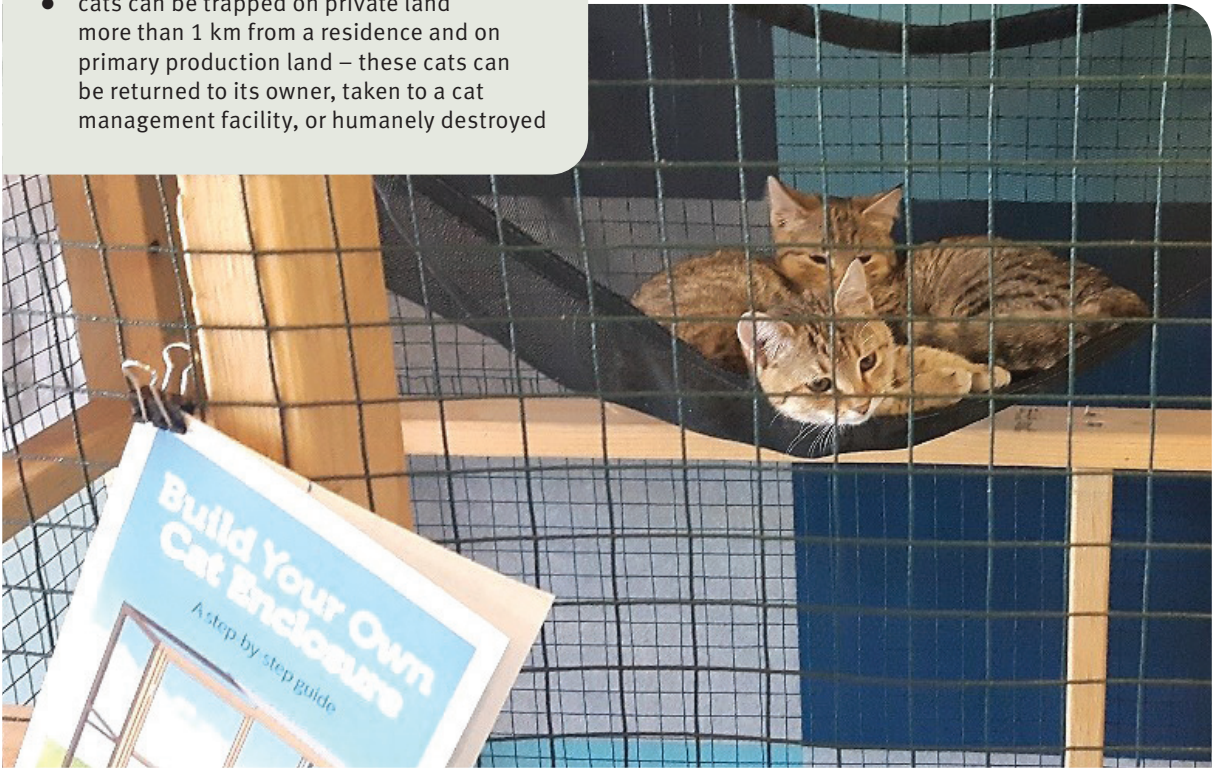
## What You Can Do

Cats are great company but owning a cat is also a responsibility which involves caring for your pet’s welfare, ensuring it doesn’t negatively impact native wildlife or become a nuisance to other people, and complying with legislative requirements. Your home is the best place for your cat. By not letting your cat roam freely you are keeping them safe from car accidents, dog attacks and injuries from cat fights, as well as keeping native wildlife safe, the neighbours happy, and reducing the risk of unwanted litters if the cat has not yet been desexed. Funding for the TCMP will continue through to June 2025.

This project is supported by Cradle Coast NRM, Ten Lives, and NRM North through funding from the Tasmanian Government.

## Did you know ...

- cats over 4 months old must be microchipped and desexed
- you can’t keep more than 4 cats over 4 months old without a permit
- cats must be at least 8 weeks old, desexed, microchipped, wormed and vaccinated before being sold or given away
- cats can be trapped on private land more than 1 km from a residence and on primary production land – these cats can be returned to its owner, taken to a cat management facility, or humanely destroyed



Two foster kittens enjoying the catio demonstration at Break O’Day Council.



A full-page background image showing a male worker in profile, facing left. He is wearing an orange high-visibility polo shirt with reflective silver stripes, an orange baseball cap, and safety glasses. He is wearing white work gloves and is operating a large green industrial machine. His right hand is on a long, curved metal lever. The machine has various components, including a red and white hazard light on the left, yellow and orange reflective safety markings, and blue caps on some ports. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the industrial setting.

## Circular North

### Overview

Circular North provides advice, funding, and education to better manage waste and recycling within northern Tasmanian communities, businesses, and local governments.

Guided by the waste hierarchy - an internationally accepted guide for prioritising waste management practices - Circular North applies principles of ecologically sustainable development to inform its strategy and to achieve significant improvements in resource recovery.

Circular North (formerly known as the Northern Tasmanian Waste Management Group), is a regional initiative established in 2007. Previously hosted by City of Launceston, Circular North is now hosted by NRM North. Partners include the region's eight local councils of Break O'Day, Dorset, Flinders Island, George Town, City of Launceston, Meander Valley, Northern Midlands and West Tamar. Circular North also supports Rethink Waste Tasmania, in partnership with the Cradle Coast Waste Management Group, TasWaste South, and the Tasmanian Government.

Circular North was previously funded through a voluntary levy on waste disposed to the region's participating landfills. With the introduction of the statewide waste levy, the program has a revised governance structure and is funded by the Waste and Resource Recovery Board.



# FY24 Achievements

- rebranded to Circular North after more than 15 years of being known as the Northern Tasmanian Waste Management Group to embody a progressive approach and commitment to the circular economy
- collected 2,836 kg of household hazardous waste during targeted community campaigns at seven sites across northern Tasmania during May 2024
- funded six projects through the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Grants, run by organisations who are making valuable contributions to circular economy outcomes and waste reduction
- sponsored the Sustainable Living Festival 2024 ‘Going Circular’ organised by Tamar NRM, hosting community education activities on resource separation
- progressed the development of a 5-year strategic plan including consultation with member councils, industry, sector representatives, and state government
- coordinated a review of Waste Management Site Best Practice of 24 council-owned waste transfer and resource recovery sites in northern Tasmania.

# FY25 Focus

- launch the 5-year strategic plan incorporating updated goals, targets, and actions focused on landfill diversion, increasing resource recovery, facilitating collaboration, and supporting strategic alignment of member councils
- deliver targeted audits of kerbside recycling bins to understand effectiveness of landfill diversion campaigns and use results to inform messaging to increase effective capture of recyclables
- coordinate problematic and hazardous waste collection and transport services to safely dispose of potentially dangerous materials while reducing landfill and environmental impact
- support a new round of Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Grants to fund innovative concepts focusing on upcycling, repurposing and rehoming goods while reducing items going to landfill and supporting sustainable practices
- leverage shared regional resource data management by facilitating the ongoing provision of waste data capture software licenses, hardware, IT support, and training to member councils to create informed decisions on future resource management programs and processes
- with co-contribution from northern Tasmanian councils, invest up to \$450,000 in waste transfer station upgrades through a series of grants to ensure industry best practice guidelines are met.



*The vision of Circular North is to support northern Tasmania to transition to a circular economy by fostering collaboration and resource-sharing at a regional level, while aligning closely with state and national waste management targets.*

# Governance & Strategy

Waste management strategic planning across Australia has sought to build upon the waste hierarchy model by introducing circular economy (CE) principles, seen in the National Waste Policy Action Plan 2019 and the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2023-2026. The Strategy provides guidance to the Waste and Resource Recovery Board and the Tasmanian Government on how the landfill levy should be reinvested.

Circular North has a unique opportunity to work independently to achieve a prosperous economy and better environment for the residents and businesses

of northern Tasmania by working towards the following objectives:

- eliminate waste and pollution – encourage product design and strategies that increase waste avoidance and allow reuse, repair and recycling
- circulate products and materials – ensure resources remain in the economy at their highest value (either a product or raw material)
- regenerate natural systems – transition away from a linear take-make-waste economy to one that supports natural regeneration.

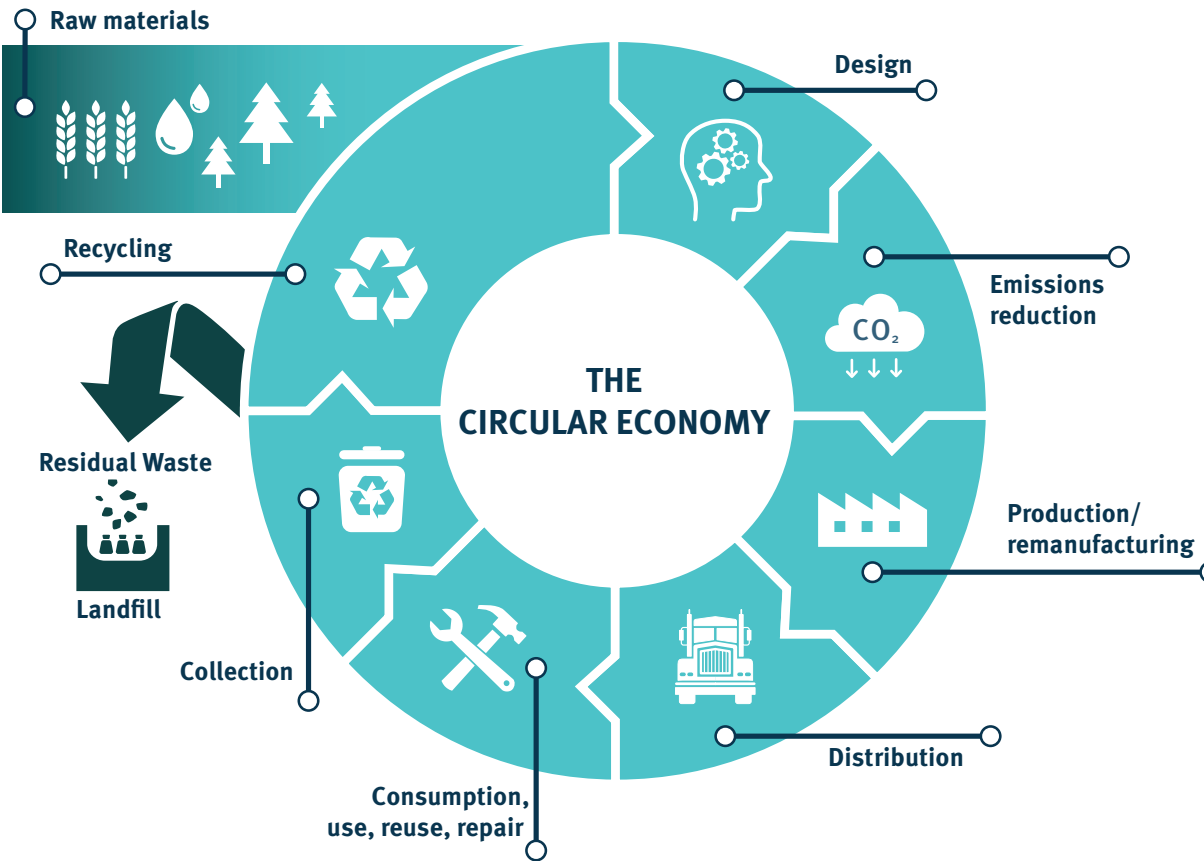


Figure 1: The Circular Economy

In a circular economy we design out waste and pollution, keep products in use for as long as possible, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of their lifecycle. The full value of products and materials is gained through sustainable design, prioritising “reuse, refurbishment and repair”. This reduces the need for expenditure on new raw materials and promotes a more sustainable and regenerative system which includes growing our renewable energy capacity, improving our economic strength, community wellbeing, and environmental resilience<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2023-2026



# Resource Recovery & Circular Economy Grants

The Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Grants support successful applicants to decrease the amount of waste sent to landfill through innovative activities and increase the recirculation of resources. Future waste targets and actions encourage the transition to a circular economy.

In Round 1 of the 2023/24 Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Grants, six organisations shared in \$50,000 to reduce items going to landfill. The theme ‘Turning trash into treasure’ supported innovative projects focused on repurposing and rehoming goods, as well as supporting sustainable practices.

## Case Study: Launceston Repair Café

On the third Saturday of every month, a team of volunteer repairers including certified electricians are onsite at Launceston’s Repair Café to teach people how to fix everyday items from clothing and furniture to bikes and electronics.

The project’s Alison Roush from City of Launceston said beyond repairing and reducing waste, it’s an opportunity for community members to connect and pass on valuable knowledge.

*“It’s an opportunity for our community to embrace a ‘repair economy’ and prevent items needlessly ending up in landfill, while saving money, connecting with others, and learning valuable skills along the way.”*

Alison Roush

The first of its kind in northern Tasmania, Alison said the Repair Café offers participants cost saving benefits and builds important habits and long-term behaviour change.

Launceston’s Repair Café secured \$3,400 in Round 1 of the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Grants, which has been used to purchase valuable equipment including an industrial sewing machine (capable of repairing tougher fabrics such as camping and hiking equipment), a bike stand, an iFixit laptop, and a phone repair kit. Alison said without this equipment, the Repair Café would be far more limited in capability to repair the range of items which may be brought in, and everything purchased will last for many years to come.

**Who:** Repair Café

**What:** Repairing goods for reuse

**Landfill diversion:** 2 tonnes



Experts at Launceston’s Repair Café are on hand to fix even the most obscure of items, instead of them being discarded.

## Case Study: Flinders Island – Earth Global Consulting Worm Farms

In a place known for its raw beauty, pristine waters, and rugged ranges, it’s no surprise that Flinders Island residents are keen to keep it that way. However, given the remote location and challenging climatic conditions, locals largely depend on food from external sources which means bringing in products by sea or air. As this can be unreliable, community and industry consultation identified the need to increase food security and reduce organic waste. Combined with the island’s vision for zero-waste, residents are being encouraged to grow their own produce, while utilising high quality vermicast obtained from worm farms processing the organic waste.

The local council has offered support for the project by providing a suitable location for the worm farm and development of community education, while many volunteers have shown interest in carrying out maintenance of the farm.

Dr. Magdalena Steffens-Bartrim is the Director of Earth Global Consulting Pty Ltd who coordinated development of the worm farm project and has been contracted by NRM North to manage the grant. She said the necessity of waste reduction while assisting locally grown food is considered of great importance to the island’s residents.

*“The project will benefit the community indefinitely through waste management awareness and sustainability. This will not only reduce the landfilled volume of organic waste, but also add value to the variety and quality of food grown on the island.”*

Dr. Magdalena Steffens-Bartrim

The Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Grants has awarded \$12,800 to go towards the installation of a trial farm which involves three worm farm units. The units are capable of processing up to 60 litres of organic waste a day, resulting in nearly 9,000 litres of microbe-rich vermicast available to food growers every year. The units have been installed at the Flinders Council main waste facility in Whitemark.

**Who:** Earth Global Consulting Pty Ltd

**What:** Using food waste to enrich productive soils through worm farms

**Landfill diversion:** 2 tonnes



Flinders Island residents are being encouraged to grow their own produce using vermicast created by worm farms.



# Household Hazardous Waste

The Household Hazardous Waste Collection initiative was established to facilitate the safe disposal of potentially dangerous substances like cleaning solvents and garden chemicals to reduce landfill and the impact they have on our waterways.

Household hazardous waste refers to chemicals used in and around the home that are flammable, toxic, explosive, or corrosive. It is dangerous to dispose of household hazardous waste in your general rubbish or recycling bin, as they can cause fires in bins and garbage trucks which creates a safety hazard for truck drivers, the general community, and the environment.

The initiative allows residents to dispose of items for free on designated collection dates with the support of a qualified chemist, storage, and transport provider. Once collected, the chemicals are packaged and transported to be disposed of safely, following appropriate environmental procedures.

In mid-2024, a total of 2,836 kgs of household hazardous waste was collected by Circular North. The collections accounted for approximately 1,145 kg of Class 6 toxic substances such as herbicides, which in relatively small amounts and in a short duration can cause serious injury or death to humans if swallowed, inhaled, or absorbed through skin contact.

Other substances disposed of included 40 kg of potentially dangerous gases, approximately 154 kg of corrosive substances, and just over a tonne of Class 3 flammable liquids such as fuel.

Circular North's Household Hazardous Waste initiative aims to have two collections every year. A second waste collection is planned for spring 2024.

Circular North is supported by the Tasmanian Government through the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board.

# Problematic Waste

Alongside the Household Hazardous Waste Collection initiative, Circular North has made significant progress in waste management and recycling initiatives.

Recycling services have expanded to address problematic waste for a number of waste streams including batteries, paint, fluoro tubes, polystyrene, and e-waste. These streams can have a serious impact on the environment if not properly disposed of. Most batteries for example contain hazardous materials like lead, cadmium, and mercury which can poison people and animals and contaminate soils and water, and they stay in the environment for a long time. If recycled, 95 per cent of the components of a battery can be turned into new batteries or used in other industries<sup>1</sup>.

E-waste such as computers, mobile phones, and tablets contain toxic chemicals as well, including arsenic that can pollute soil and water, and disrupt ecosystems. E-waste is growing at three times the rate of any other waste stream, highlighting the urgency

to improve accessibility and awareness of recycling options<sup>2</sup>. Circular North has facilitated the proper disposal and recycling of these materials. E-waste is collected by City Mission at seven sites across northern Tasmania and distributed to the Launceston Waste Centre. It is then collected by TechCollect who transport it to Victoria for processing. In FY24, TechCollect processed 154 tonnes of e-waste from northern Tasmania.

For more information about the Problematic Waste initiative and other Circular North projects go to [nrmnorth.org.au/circularnorth](http://nrmnorth.org.au/circularnorth).

Circular North is supported by the Tasmanian Government through the Tasmanian Waste and Resource Recovery Board.

<sup>1</sup> Batteries ([cleanup.org.au](http://cleanup.org.au))

<sup>2</sup> E Waste ([cleanup.org.au](http://cleanup.org.au))

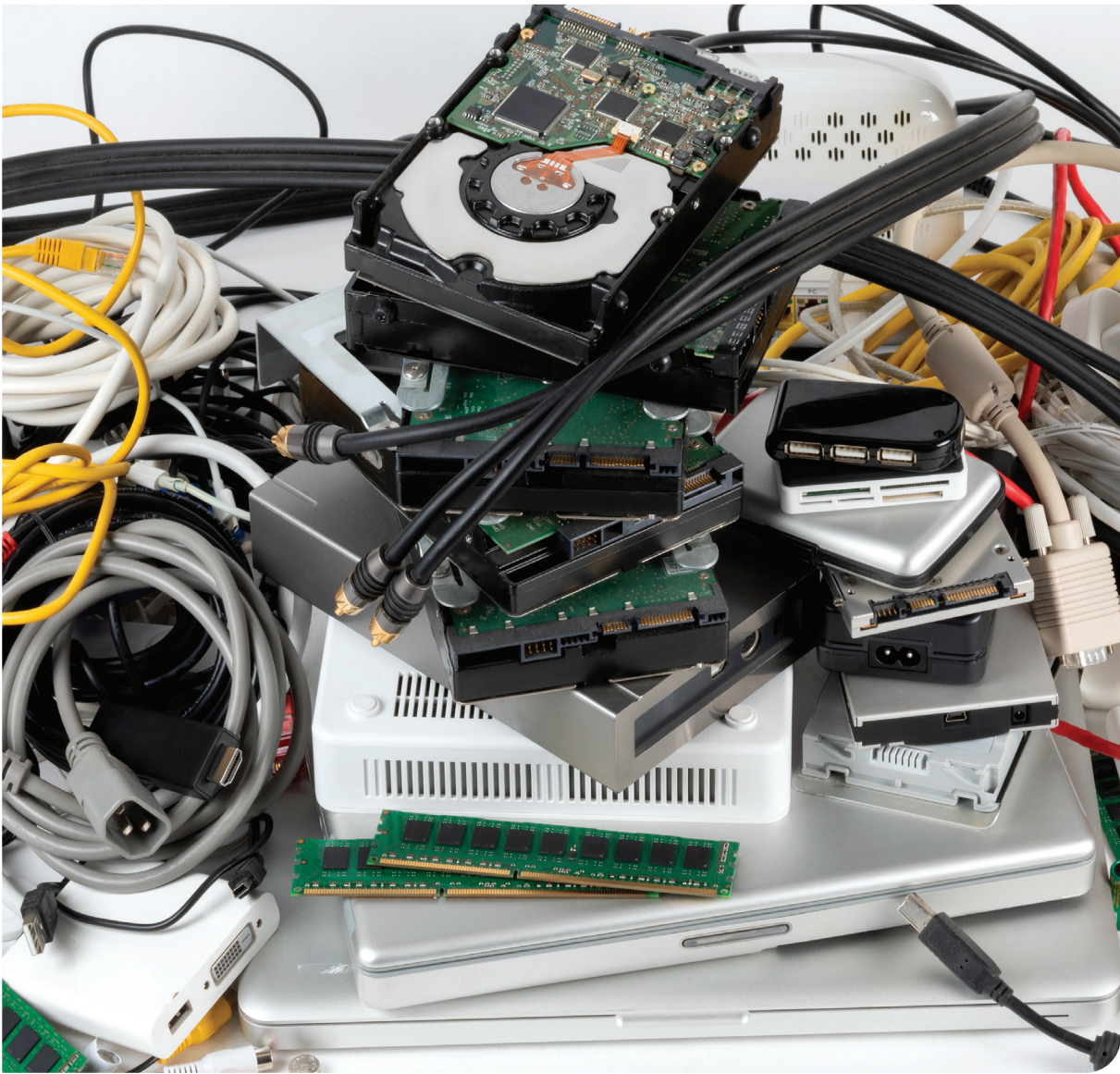


**Dispose of your household chemicals in a safe environment and for FREE!**



**What can I dispose of?**

- Solvents and household cleaners
- Floor care products
- Ammonia-based cleaners
- Pesticides and herbicides
- Poisons
- Pool chemicals
- Hobby chemicals
- Acids and alkalis





# Corporate Services

## Overview

The aim of the Corporate Services Program is to maintain a sustainable organisation that delivers strategic NRM results for the community and demonstrates best practice business management and governance.

The Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association Inc., trading as NRM North, is an incorporated association established in 2003 in response to the Tasmanian Government's Natural Resource Management Framework and its enabling legislation, the *Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Act 2002 (Amendments 2018)*.

NRM North is one of three NRM bodies in the state and one of 54 nationally. The Management Committee, management team, and staff strive for best practice governance, program delivery, and a thriving, sustainable organisation to deliver NRM outcomes for the community.



FY24 Achievements

The following are the key achievements in the past 12 months for the Corporate Services Program:

- development of NRM North Corporate Plan 2030
- continued working towards best practice governance with a focus on contract related documents, internal policies, systems and procedures
- ongoing promotion and support of a healthy working environment and culture with a focus on work planning, workload management, and flexible work arrangements
- improved communications platforms including the NRM North website

Program delivery was expanded by:

- appointment by the Australian Government to the Panel of Regional Delivery Partners for Environmental Protection, Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management (2023-2028)
- supporting delivery of the Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs program to help primary producers and regional communities be more prepared for, and resilient to, future droughts

FY25 Focus

The 2030 NRM North Corporate Plan is focused on six key outcomes to ensure:

- we are prominent in all significant discussions regarding natural resource management in northern Tasmania and sought after for our evidence-based guidance and expertise
- we are sought after as a key employer with a positive, inclusive culture that enables the realisation of our strategic objectives
- NRM North’s reputation enables us to grow our long-term viability through attracting future-focused investment for lasting impact

In FY25 NRM North will:

- prepare investment proposals and action plans to secure projects that deliver on the 2030 Natural Resource Management Strategy for Northern Tasmania
- develop an investment strategy and plan aligned with our targeted reserve levels
- develop and implement a baseline of sustainability reporting
- implement the Corporate Communication Plan and Community Participation Plan
- undertake an annual staff survey and identify key actions

- supporting the Tasmanian Government in the delivery of the Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce Trial Wetland Restoration Project – North Esk River

Supported partnership programs including:

- delivery of Stage 2 of the Tasmanian Government’s Weeds Action Fund
- support for the Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce
- hosting the Circular North Program

Supported regional collaboration with:

- TasFarmers, Dairy Tas and regional councils on delivery of the River Health Action Plan Catchment Works Project
- Lilydale Landcare group to successfully deliver a Small Farm Living event
- local government authorities, cat management facilities, and the Australia Veterinary Association to implement the Northern Tasmanian Regional Cat Management Strategy.

- communities, stakeholders and partners recognise the value of connecting with NRM North and demonstrate high level engagement with our programs and services and that consideration of Aboriginal people of Tasmania is embedded in our operations
- NRM North evolves while maintaining high standards of governance and financial resilience and the 2030 NRM Strategy for Northern Tasmania remains relevant and reflects the needs of the community
- the Management Committee is recognised as an efficient governing body through best practice governance, structure, and policy.

- continue to embed Clifton Strengths language and coaching, and behaviours of a high performing team throughout the organisation
- establish a formal approach to training and development in conjunction with the professional development process for staff
- identify and implement systems and processes to enable enhanced Management Committee engagement and effectiveness
- develop a Management Committee succession planning framework that includes the identification of the skills required to fulfill the Corporate Plan.

Partnerships

Almost all the programs NRM North implements rely on partnerships with other organisations or landholders for delivery of outcomes. In the past year, NRM North has worked closely with all levels of government, industry bodies, other regional and sub-regional natural resource management organisations, community volunteers, and allied environmental organisations. NRM North also works collaboratively with farmers and individual landholders to implement actions on-ground which is where most of the transformational results occur.

While there are many partnerships NRM North maintains, examples from the past year include:

- the TEER Program renewed a 4-year collaboration agreement with partners to continue key priorities such as production of the kanamaluka / Tamar Estuary Report Card, Lake Trevallyn Algal Bloom Monitoring, improved stormwater management, and community education and engagement
- partnering with state government, NRM North has an integral role in the restoration of wetlands in the North Esk River. This project seeks to increase tidal prism in the kanamaluka / Tamar estuary, as a trial for long-term management of sediment, and restore the ecological function of historically infilled wetlands
- working with peak agricultural bodies (TasFarmers and DairyTas) and three of the region’s local councils to implement key programs to reduce diffuse sources of pathogens in the upper kanamaluka / Tamar estuary. This investment assists graziers and dairy farmers to fence stock out of waterways and improve dairy effluent management. Over the past 12 months the programs have added to the cumulative total to:
  - exclude 253,000 sheep, 21,000 cattle and 7,600 dairy cows from waterways
  - complete 2,667 ha of dairy effluent improvements
  - protect nearly 2,200 ha of streamside riparian area
- private landholders across the region are key partners in the delivery of on-ground outcomes for threatened species conservation projects. Landcare groups also remain critical for reaching rural community members and as delivery partners for planting days and other events
- the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania, Tasmanian Land Conservancy, UTAS, and independent experts provide invaluable technical support and advice for monitoring and decision making across program areas

Communities, stakeholders and partners recognise the value of connecting with NRM North and demonstrate high levels of engagement with our programs and services.

- with funding from the Tas Farm Innovation Hub, NRM North has partnered with Cradle Coast NRM and NRM South through the Soil Extension Program to promote the importance of soil health and improve the adoption of soil testing in Tasmania, working to engage stakeholders to elicit industry input into the program as well as build a context for soil management and extension activities
- hosted by NRM North, Circular North (formerly the Northern Tasmanian Waste Management Program) is comprised of eight member councils from the northern region and exists to provide advice, funding, and education to better manage waste and recycling within northern Tasmanian communities, organisations, and local governments. The development of a 5-year strategy for waste and resource recovery in the region progressed in 2024
- with funding from the state government, NRM North is managing a collaborative project with councils and key partners involved in cat management in northern Tasmania
- in a partnership led by NRM South, NRM North supported and facilitated delivery of the Farming Forecaster project aimed at co-developing and improving digital tools for increased drought resilience with and for Tasmanian farmers. This project is a collaboration between NRM South, NRM North, the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, AgriProve, the East Coast Primary Producers Association, the Upper Esk Landcare and Productivity Group, farmers in the Midlands, north Bruny, and Flinders Island, and the Tasmanian Government
- funded by the state government and facilitated by NRM North with support from NRM South and Cradle Coast NRM, the Tasmanian Weeds Action Fund was established to tackle weeds impacting valuable agricultural and environmental assets across the state.





# Sustainable Organisational Funding Model

NRM North has a viable, long-term, and sustainable organisational funding model. Staff have worked diligently to identify and secure opportunities to diversify NRM North’s funding model to set the organisation up for a viable long-term future. For the period from 2019-20 to 2024-25, NRM North has been able to nearly triple program funding compared to the previous 5-year period. To continue to grow and develop our portfolio of projects, NRM North has, in the past year, secured the following funding to continue its works:

- secured a grant with the Tasmanian Government to support the delivery of the Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce Trial Wetland Restoration Project – North Esk River (\$135K)

- executed an agreement with the Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs program focused on helping primary producers and regional communities become more prepared for, and resilient to, future droughts (\$513K)
- secured a grant deed with the Australian Government for the delivery of the NHT Regional Delivery Partner Program over 5 years (\$9.65M) to deliver regional capacity services focused on environmental protection, sustainable agriculture, and natural resource management for northern Tasmania.

# Operations and People Management

## Central Office

NRM North has its main office at 63-65 Cameron Street, Launceston. The office provides good working conditions, adequate space and is conveniently located in the hub of the CBD.

## Personnel

Throughout FY24 NRM North personnel provided critical support for the development and implementation of natural resource management programs in the region. This support includes effective stakeholder and industry engagement, business administration and management, partnership development, and communications. NRM North staff are employed on Terms and Conditions determined by NRM North in compliance with the *Fair Work Act 2009* and National Employment Standards.

## Operational Funding

During FY24 NRM North received \$467,000 of funding for its baseline organisational operations from the Tasmanian Government to deliver its statutory roles.

This core funding remains critical to effectively carry out the regional committee’s functions under the *Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Act 2002 (Amendments 2018)*.

The Australian Government’s Regional Delivery Partner Program also provides operational funding as a percentage of funding received. Operational funding is enough to provide baseline support to the organisation but does not provide funding for project delivery. Staff must source additional funding to deliver outcomes against the 2030 NRM Strategy for Northern Tasmania.





NRM North Staff

as at 30 June 2024

Position	Incumbent	Commencement date
Chief Executive Officer	Jo-Anne Fearman	25 March 2019
Corporate Services Manager	Jenni Kew	31 March 2020
Operations Manager – Biodiversity & Strategy	Andrew Baldwin	7 March 2007
Operations Manager – Land & Sustainability	Ben Slingsby	1 July 2021
Executive Assistant	Josie Grace	22 November 2021
Finance Coordinator	Sarah Presnell	10 May 2010
Administration Coordinator	St John Pound	19 January 2022
People & Culture Lead	Joanne McCullagh	12 March 2024
Administration Assistant	Katie Bain	2 November 2021
Communications Manager	Ashleigh Walker	11 June 2019
Senior Communications Coordinator	Holly Corbett	19 October 2023
Communications Coordinator	Biba Archer	18 June 2018
Communications Coordinator	Juan Noriega	1 May 2023
Senior Project Coordinator	Kate Thorn	6 August 2012
Biodiversity Program Manager	Stephen Izzard	5 October 2020
Biodiversity Coordinator	Nikita Sarangdhar	1 May 2023
Regional Cat Management Coordinator	Jessica Taylor	11 April 2022
TEER Program Manager	Linda Kelly	29 April 2024
TEER Scientific & Technical Coordinator	Sam Jack	10 February 2020
TEER Project Officer	Ruth Murphy	9 January 2024
Water Program Manager	Jesse Webster	17 November 2014
Catchment Coordinator / Weeds Action Fund Coordinator	Andrew Easton	18 October 2021
Catchment Coordinator / Biodiversity Coordinator	Stacey Hataier	17 November 2022
Sustainable Agriculture Program Manager	Gary Martin	24 June 2024
Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator	Peter Heading	30 June 2021
Circular North Program Manager	Steve Jordan	17 June 2024

Organisational Health

NRM North strives to promote a friendly, supportive, and continual learning environment for staff members. As well as providing ongoing health and wellbeing and professional learning opportunities, an annual review of programs and procedures is conducted to maintain a healthy working environment for all staff members.

To ensure NRM North remains a healthy working environment a number of initiatives and processes exist, including but not limited to:

- NRM North Employee Handbook
- Health and Wellbeing Program

- staff induction procedures
- team development and training opportunities
- social committee and team building
- flexible workplace arrangements
- cultural awareness and sensitivity training
- Employee Assistance Program
- annual NRM North staff performance appraisal
- implementation of WHS Committee.

Corporate Governance

Enabling Legislation

NRM North is an independent non-statutory body constituted and operating under the provisions of the *Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Act 2002 (2018 Amendments)* (the Act). Reporting, accountability, and other rules for operation are set out in the *Tasmanian Incorporated Associations Act 1964*.

Functions of NRM North Management Committee

The general functions and powers of the NRM North Management Committee as determined by the Act are to:

- identify priorities for NRM in the northern region
- prepare a regional strategy for the northern region
- facilitate implementation of the regional strategy
- promote NRM principles
- facilitate planning and integration of NRM activities for the region
- seek, manage, and allocate funds according to the regional strategy

- coordinate the northern region’s participation in national and state programs relating to NRM
- monitor and evaluate implementation of the northern regional strategy

- develop and implement processes to ensure appropriate education and training in NRM.

Responsible Minister

Under Section 9 of the Act, the Minister has the power to declare a managing body or committee of an incorporated association or body corporate as a regional committee and appoint the Chairperson of the regional committee.

The NRM North Management Committee is responsible to the Minister for Primary Industries and Water for its accountabilities under the Act. The Hon. Jane Howlett (appointed as Minister for Primary Industries and Water 23 March 2024) oversees the Natural Resource Management Portfolio.

Section 11(4) of the Act stipulates that the Minister must table NRM North’s Annual Report in Parliament.

Engagement with other Ministerial Portfolios

In addition to statutory accountabilities to the Minister for Primary Industries and Water, NRM North delivers programs with links to the Environment and State Development portfolios. During FY24, programs related to portfolios included:

Program / Project	Ministerial Portfolio During FY24
RHAP - Catchment Works Program	<b>Hon. Michael Ferguson MP</b> Minister for State Growth
Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers Program	<b>Hon. Nick Duigan MLC</b> Minister for Parks and Environment





# NRM North Management Committee

## The Management Committee

The Management Committee is responsible for the oversight of the business affairs of NRM North and ensuring appropriate management is in place to carry out its objectives and functions. The Management Committee sets the strategic direction of the organisation and ensures NRM North meets all areas of compliance and performance.

## Composition of the Management Committee

Section 9 (3) of the Act requires that the composition of the NRM North Management Committee must consist of no more than 15 members who together have skills across best-practice governance, business administration, legal and contractual issues, and the achievement of natural resource management and conservation outcomes.

## Management Committee Meetings

The Management Committee meets for a minimum of six (6) scheduled meetings within a financial year. The Management Committee has out-of-session processes in place to address specific matters that require attention between scheduled meetings.

## Conflicts of Interest

The Management Committee has a policy in place for the disclosure and resolution of any matter that may

give rise to actual or potential conflicts between the interests of a Management Committee member and those of NRM North.

## Ethical Standards

NRM North aims to conduct business with the highest standard of personal and corporate integrity. The NRM North Management Committee and personnel have adopted Codes of Conduct outlining the standards of personal and corporate behaviour that Management Committee members and personnel observe.

## Remuneration of Management Committee Members

Members may claim sitting fees for attendance and participation in all formal activities, such as Management Committee meetings, subcommittee meetings and working group tasks. NRM North meetings also include those meetings that a Management Committee member has been given delegation by the Management Committee to attend on behalf of NRM North.

Eligible members may also claim reimbursement for reasonable travel and other expenses associated with formal meetings and activities. In accordance with the Constitution, sitting fees are to be set at each year’s Annual General Meeting.

## Management Committee Members as at 30 June 2024

Name & Position	Occupation	Member Since	Payments (\$)	Meetings Attended
Pamela Allan, Chair	Adjunct Professor, School of Geography, Planning and Spatial Sciences UTAS	Sept 2019	7,394.20	16
Royce Aldred, Deputy Chair	Senior Environmental Consultant, Environmental Service & Design P/L	Sept 2020	1,309.00	13
Tania Triffitt, Treasurer	Head of Accounting, JMC Group; Director, Triffitt Accounting P/L	Sept 2022	1,134.80	8
Amanda Shepherd, Secretary	General Manager, Theatre North	Sept 2020	1,128.80	10
Dr Joanna Ellison	Associate Professor, School of Geography, Planning & Spatial Sciences, UTAS	Sept 2020	870.40	10
Stuart Blom	Director Rae & Partners Lawyers	Sept 2020	1,122.80	9
Peter Sattler	Farmer, beef cattle & potatoes	Sept 2023	1,667.93	12
Leanne Sherriff	Sustainability Consultant	Sept 2021	686.80	9
Cassandra Tickner-Smith	Environment Coordinator, Tas Irrigation	Sept 2021	1,213.80	11
Justine Brooks	Manager, Specialist Homelessness Program, Department Homes Tasmania	Sept 2022	598.40	5

# Subcommittees

Subcommittees are established by the Management Committee to undertake duties and provide recommendations for action. All matters considered and determined by subcommittees are submitted to the Management Committee for information and, where appropriate, ratification and decision. The following four subcommittees operated in FY24 to assist the Management Committee to fulfil its functions effectively.

## Governance & Policy Subcommittee

Members: Stuart Blom (Chair), Pamela Allan, Cassandra Tickner-Smith, Justine Brooks, Louise Clark.

The Governance & Policy Subcommittee is responsible for ensuring that NRM North’s governance policies and procedures comply with legislation and current best-practice standards. The subcommittee reviews these policies regularly and makes recommendations to the Management Committee. The subcommittee helps to set the overall corporate ‘tone’, business practices, and ethical behaviour of the organisation.

## CEO Performance Review Subcommittee

Members: Pamela Allan (Chair), Joanna Ellison, Peter Sattler.

The primary responsibility of the CEO Performance Review Subcommittee is to oversee the NRM North Chief Executive Officer’s performance review process on behalf of the Management Committee, and to provide recommendations to the Management Committee regarding the CEO’s annual evaluation.

## Audit & Finance Subcommittee

Members: Tania Triffitt (Chair), Pamela Allan, Royce Aldred, Amanda Shepherd.

The Audit & Finance Subcommittee is responsible to the Management Committee for NRM North’s financial reports including the appropriateness of accounting policies and principles used by the organisation. External auditors are responsible for auditing the Association’s financial reports. The subcommittee takes appropriate action to set the overall standards for quality financial reporting and sound business practices.

## Recognition Subcommittee

Members: Leanne Sherriff (Chair), Peter Sattler, Joanne Fearman (Chief Executive Officer).

The Recognition Subcommittee was established to develop and implement an annual program to formally recognise individuals who have made a significant contribution to the Association, Management Committee, or operations of NRM North. The subcommittee assesses nominations received against the individual award category criteria for formal endorsement by the Management Committee.





# Summary Financial Statements

## Overview

The summary financial statements are an extract from the full financial statements of NRM North for the year ended 30 June 2024.

The summary financial statements and specific disclosures included in it have been derived from the full financial statements.

The concise financial report cannot be expected to provide as full an understanding of the financial performance, financial position and financing and investing activities of NRM North as the full financial statements.

Further financial information can be obtained from the full financial statements, which is available, free of charge, on request to NRM North.



# Statement of Profit or Loss & Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>Revenue</b>			
Funding revenue	2	6,227,271	8,039,190
Interest received		182,075	103,133
Other income		25,395	6,620
		<b>6,434,741</b>	<b>8,148,943</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee benefits expense		2,339,138	2,368,964
Contract services		3,365,762	3,436,741
Project materials		53,957	273,685
Professional services		93,911	240,092
Communications and information technology		109,345	118,070
Depreciation		180,511	153,966
Travelling and motor vehicle		70,662	70,198
Other operating expenses		190,187	224,682
		<b>6,403,473</b>	<b>6,886,398</b>
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</b>		<b>31,268</b>	<b>1,262,545</b>
Other comprehensive income		-	-
<b>Total Comprehensive Income for the Year</b>		<b>31,268</b>	<b>1,262,545</b>

# Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2024

	2024 \$	2023 \$
<b>Assets</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	7,123,671	7,302,817
Trade and other receivables	386,377	1,240,976
Prepayments	48,682	60,668
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>7,558,730</b>	<b>8,604,461</b>
<b>Non Current Assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	327,115	180,395
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>	<b>327,115</b>	<b>180,395</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>7,885,845</b>	<b>8,784,855</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Trade and other payables	775,138	1,321,370
Unexpended funding	3,762,116	4,275,682
Other deferred income	-	25,166
Provisions	135,876	153,999
Lease liabilities	119,280	96,404
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>4,792,410</b>	<b>5,872,622</b>
<b>Non Current Liabilities</b>		
Provisions	71,208	55,236
Lease liabilities	188,554	54,593
	<b>259,762</b>	<b>109,829</b>
	<b>5,052,172</b>	<b>5,982,451</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>2,833,673</b>	<b>2,802,405</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Reserves	1,931,342	1,958,814
Retained earnings	902,331	843,591
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>2,833,673</b>	<b>2,802,405</b>

Water

Sustainable  
Agriculture

Biodiversity

Circular North

Corporate Services

Summary Financials



# Statement of Changes in Equity

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Operating Reserve \$	Retained Earnings \$	Capital Reserve \$	Contingency Reserve \$	Committed Projects Reserve \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2023	915,700	843,591	75,000	737,000	231,114	2,802,405
Total comprehensive income	-	31,268	-	-	-	31,268
Transfers to and from reserves	-	27,472	-	-	(27,472)	-
Balance at 30 June 2024	915,700	902,331	75,000	737,000	203,642	2,833,673
Balance at 1 July 2022	915,700	(109,732)	75,000	350,000	308,892	1,539,860
Total comprehensive income	-	1,262,545	-	-	-	1,262,545
Transfers to and from reserves	-	(309,222)	-	387,000	(77,778)	-
Balance at 30 June 2023	915,700	843,591	75,000	737,000	231,114	2,802,405

# Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Cash from Operating Activities		
Receipts from government and corporate partners	7,160,965	9,056,265
Contract payments	(4,235,580)	(3,058,369)
Payments to employees	(2,408,235)	(2,299,932)
Payments to suppliers	(551,310)	(728,345)
Other income	25,395	6,620
Interest received	182,075	103,133
GST refunded/(remitted)	(182,060)	(523,993)
Net Cash Provided by/(used in) Operating Activities	(8,750)	2,555,379
Cash Flows from Investing Activities		
Acquisition of plant and equipment	(12,446)	(16,488)
Net cash used by investing activities	(12,446)	(16,488)
Cash Flows from Financing Activities		
Payment of lease liabilities	(157,950)	(155,617)
Net cash used by financing activities	(157,950)	(155,617)
Net cash increase (decreases) in cash and cash equivalents	(179,146)	2,383,274
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	7,302,817	4,919,543
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	7,123,671	7,302,817

Water

Sustainable Agriculture

Biodiversity

Circular North

Corporate Services

Summary Financials





# Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2024

## 1. Basis of Preparation of Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements are an extract from the full financial statements of NRM North for the year ended 30 June 2024.

The financial report covers Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association (“NRM North”) as an individual entity. NRM North is an association incorporated in Tasmania under the *Associations Incorporations Act 1964* and operates as a not-for-profit entity.

The financial statements, specific disclosures and other information included in the summarised financial report are derived from and consistent with the full financial report of the association. The summarised financial report cannot be expected to provide as detailed an understanding of the financial performance, financial position and financing and investing activities of the company as the full financial report. Further financial information can be obtained from the full financial report which is available, free of charge, on request to NRM North.

## 2. Funding Revenue

NRM North determines whether an enforceable agreement exists and whether the promises to transfer goods or services to the customer are ‘sufficiently specific’. If an enforceable agreement exists and the promises are ‘sufficiently specific’ (to a transaction or part of a transaction), NRM North applies the general AASB15 principles to determine the appropriate revenue recognition. If these criteria are not met, NRM North applies AASB1058.

Government grants and corporate contributions are initially recorded as a liability and then subsequently recognised as revenue once specific performance obligations arising under the respective contracts have been met. Contract liabilities represent NRM North’s obligation to transfer goods or services to a customer and are recognised when a customer pays consideration, or when NRM North recognises a receivable to reflect its unconditional right to consideration (whichever is earlier) before NRM North has transferred the goods or services to the customer.

## 2. Funding Revenue

	Opening Balance \$	Funding Received \$	Revenue Recognised \$	Closing Balance \$
<b>Commonwealth Government</b>				
National Landcare Program	-	846,750	(512,008)	<b>334,742</b>
Regional Land Partnership	-	-	-	-
Midlands Biodiversity Hotspot (SNS)	-	53,347	(33,347)	<b>20,000</b>
Catchment Works	1,042,853	500,000	(621,776)	<b>921,077</b>
Small Farms Small Grants	36,288	-	(36,288)	-
<b>State Government</b>				
Core funding	-	467,000	(467,000)	-
Catchment Works	1,073,352	500,000	(1,573,352)	-
Event Monitoring	7,449	43,000	(50,449)	-
Waste Management	1,332,658	1,350,333	(642,362)	<b>2,040,629</b>
UTAS Drought Hub	-	342,000	(342,000)	-
DSG Wetlands Restoration	-	94,500	(20,500)	<b>74,000</b>
Regional Cat Coordination Program	84,061	120,000	(127,645)	<b>76,416</b>
Weeds Action Fund	160,348	106,895	(198,864)	<b>68,379</b>
Weeds Action Fund Devolved Grants	504,561	909,351	(1,198,525)	<b>215,387</b>
<b>NRM South</b>				
Farming Forecaster	34,112	37,200	(59,827)	<b>11,485</b>
<b>Other Revenue</b>				
Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers Partnership	-	337,698	(337,698)	-
Small Farm Living	-	5,630	(5,630)	-
	<b>4,275,682</b>	<b>5,713,704</b>	<b>(6,227,271)</b>	<b>3,762,115</b>



Management Committee Declaration

The Management Committee declare that in their opinion:

- as described in note 1, the summary financial statements are an extract from the full financial statements of NRM North for the year ended 30 June 2024.
- the financial statements and notes present fairly the financial position of NRM North as at 30 June 2024 and its financial performance for the year then ended.
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that NRM North is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Management Committee:

Pamela Allan

Chair  
Pamela Allan  
Dated: 28 August 2024

T Triffitt

Treasurer  
Tania Triffitt  
Dated: 28 August 2024



Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of NRM North

Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and related notes, are derived from the audited financial report of Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association Incorporated (NRM North) for the year ended 30 June 2024.

Opinion

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial report, on the basis described in Note 1.

Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by *Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures* and the *Natural Resource Management Act (Tasmania) 2002* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial report and the auditor's report thereon.

The Audited Financial Report and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial report in our report dated 2 September 2024.

Management Committee's Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements

The Management Committee of NRM North is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements on the basis described in Note 1.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial report based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810 *Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements*.

Synectic  
Synectic Audit & Assurance Pty Ltd

Benjamin Coull

Benjamin Coull  
Director

Date: 2 September 2024

think  
outside  
the  
numbers

Synectic Audit & Assurance Pty Ltd

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