

# Tamar Estuary River Health Action Plan - Tamar Action Grants

## FUNDING APPLICATION GUIDELINES



Supported through funding as part of the Tamar Estuary River Health Action Plan, an initiative of the Launceston City Deal. 'Working together for a healthy estuary'.

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## 1 Background

The Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce (the Taskforce) was established under the Launceston City Deal with an aim of identifying investments to improve the health of the kanamaluka/Tamar estuary. As part of this work, the Taskforce was charged with delivering a River Health Action Plan (RHAP) by the end of 2017.

The RHAP identified a series of influences for the kanamaluka/Tamar estuary not meeting modern expectations of health and amenity. The influences include the City's combined sewerage and stormwater system, the inability of the estuary to flush sediment due to marine tides meeting freshwater river flows, agricultural practices in the catchment, historical industrial practices, outflows from multiple wastewater treatment plants, floods and man-made changes to the flow and channels of the estuary.

Dairying, grazing and urban areas were identified as the three largest land use contributors to pathogen loads in the greater estuary catchment, and as major controllable sources of nutrient and sediment loads. Large benefits were determined to be available by limiting stock access to streams to minimise the input of faecal matter, while improved effluent management practices in dairying and the implementation of riparian zones on grazing properties were also assessed to have good potential for pollutant load reduction.

## 2 What is the purpose of the River Health Action Plan?

The plan aims to improve public health measures related to water quality in Zone 1 (Launceston to Legana) by reducing pathogens entering the system through changes in land use practices in the catchment and from reducing combined sewer overflows. The Tamar Action Grants provide funding to assist landowners grazing stock or running dairy cows within the kanamaluka/Tamar estuary and Esk rivers (TEER) catchments to undertake works that will help reduce pathogen loads entering the estuary.

Modelling the effect of pollutants from the different sub-catchments, stream flow times and distance from Zone 1 of the Estuary, has been used to establish priority areas (Figure 1 and Table 1). Figure 1 identifies the North Esk catchment and Zone 1 of the kanamaluka/Tamar estuary as the highest priority area. Priority area two incorporates the lower catchments of the Meander, Brumby's-Lake, Macquarie and South Esk as areas to have the most influence over pathogen concentrations in the upper estuary. However, all landholders within the greater TEER catchments are eligible to apply for funding.

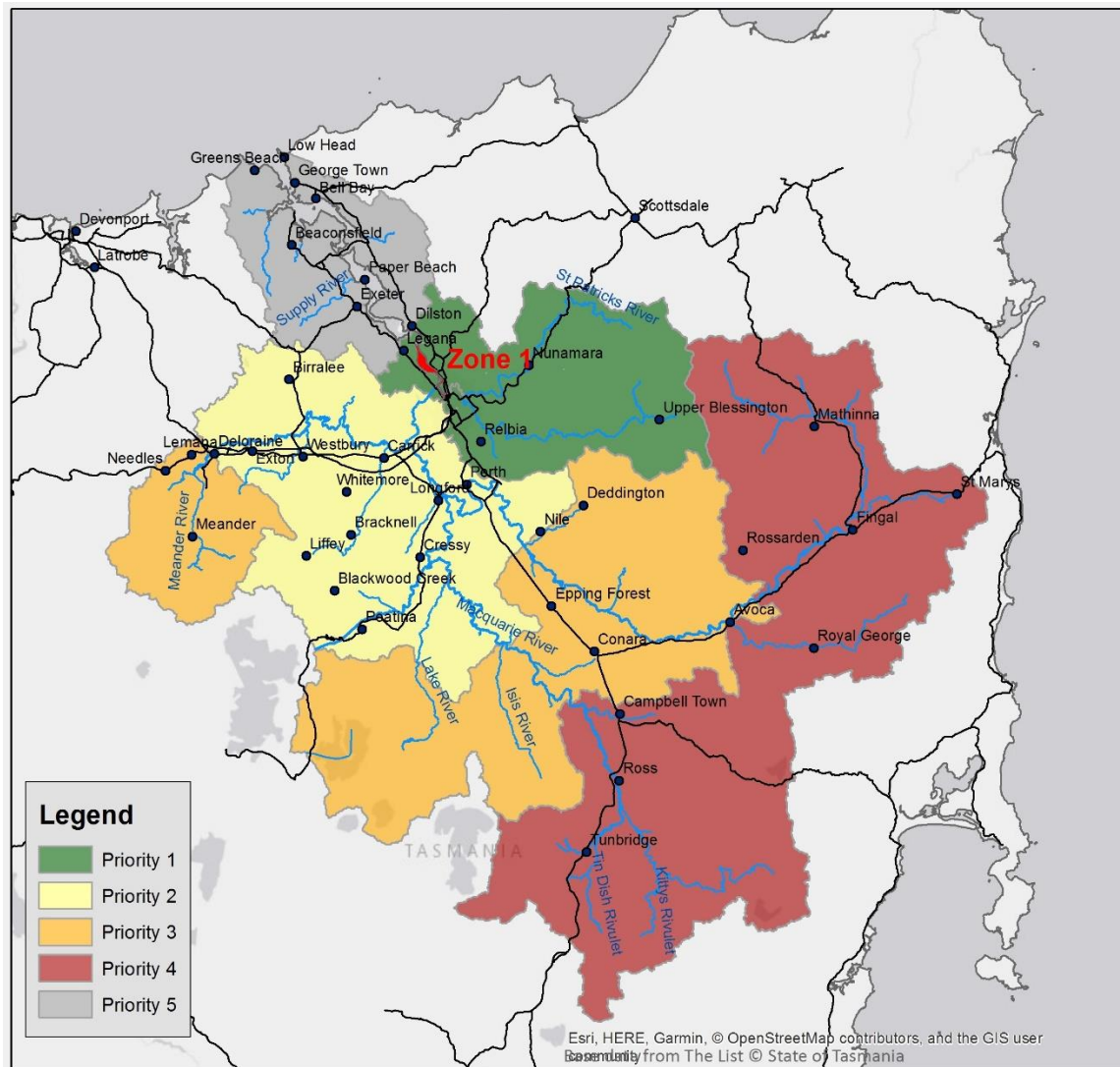


Figure 1. Priority areas in the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) catchments

**Table 1. Description of catchment priority areas**

Priority	General description	Detail
1	North Esk and Upper Tamar Catchments	All North Esk Upper Tamar foreshore catchment to Legana
2	Above Trevallyn dam extending to approx. 80 km above the dam wall by river	Meander River to Deloraine Liffey River South Esk River to below Nile River confluence Brumbys Creek Lake River (agricultural areas) Macquarie River to the confluence with the Isis River
3	Mid to Upper catchment areas above the dam extending approximately 80-130km from dam wall	Meander River above Deloraine South Esk River from Nile River confluence to upstream of Avoca Macquarie River from confluence Isis River to downstream of confluence with Elizabeth River
4	The upper South Esk and Macquarie catchments	South Esk River above Avoca Macquarie River above Elizabeth River confluence
5	Mid and Lower Tamar foreshore catchment	Tamar foreshore catchment below Legana

### 3 Applications and evaluation

The application period will be open from April **2019** until **June 2024**. Eligible applications will be assessed using a benefit cost ratio from data collected during the application process. Any unsuccessful applications can be modified and resubmitted in future evaluation rounds throughout the life of the program. Assessment round dates can be found on the NRM North website at: <https://nrmnorth.org.au/water/tamar-action-grants/>.

## 4 Who can apply for works?

Funding is available for landholders in the kanamaluka/Tamar estuary, Brumbys-Lake, Meander, Macquarie and Esk Rivers Catchments, see Figure 1.

### Applicants must be:

- Individual landowners or landowner groups; or
- Companies, Partnerships or Trusts who are landowners or partner investors in the project.

### To be eligible for funding, applicants must:

- have stock on the property where the works are proposed at the time of application; and
- install a minimum of 500 m of watercourse fencing as part of the project.

## 5 How much money is available?

There is no specified funding cap on individual project proposals. However, the overall program has limited funds, and nominations will be assessed and prioritised competitively using a benefit cost ratio. Not every application that meets the eligibility criteria will necessarily receive funding.

Projects can be staged over several years, or as multiple projects, until the end of the program to develop better long-term outcomes (e.g. starting a project by fencing out stock and managing the weeds in the first 12 months, then revegetating in following years).

Landholders are expected to make a minimum co-contribution towards the project. Applications which demonstrate a higher level of co-contribution will generate a better benefit cost ratio and have a greater likelihood of approval. Co-contributions may be made in the form of cash, materials and/or labour.

Offered funds will be exclusive of GST. If the applicant has an ABN and is registered for GST, the funding amount will be increased by 10%.

## 6 Proposal Development and Technical Support

A Catchment Coordinator will be available to provide advice on project development through a property visit.

It is the applicant's responsibility to seek quotes for goods and services, including contractors to estimate the costs of works proposed.

**It is the applicant's responsibility to seek any regulatory approvals for works should their project be approved for funding. This includes contacting local government in relation to any proposed works.**

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure a minimum 5 m buffer from the watercourse for all fencing works.

There is an expectation that all revegetation works should achieve a 70% survival rate after the first year. Some infill planting maybe required to achieve this rate, which should be factored into a long-term maintenance plan and budget.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure any works undertaken are not in breach of the Tasmanian *Aboriginal Relics Act 1975*. Please search the property address where proposed works are taking place using the online search tool which provides information on whether there are registered Aboriginal relics in an area or a risk of impacting Aboriginal relics. To access the website follow the link: <https://www.aboriginalheritage.tas.gov.au/propertysearch/>.

If nominated works are on Crown Land it is the landholder's responsibility to contact staff at *Crown Land Services* for advice on works via their General Enquiries Message Service on (03) 6169 9015 or by email at [cls.enquiries@dpipwe.tas.gov.au](mailto:cls.enquiries@dpipwe.tas.gov.au)

*The Working Near Waterways Guide: Understanding Your Legal Obligations* document can be downloaded through the NRM North website under 'Preparing you application' dot point 4. <https://nrmnorth.org.au/water/tamar-action-grants/> The guide is designed to help landholders work out what legal obligations may apply to proposed activities, how to meet those obligations, and where to find out more information.

**Working in Wetlands and Waterways Works Manual** provides environmental best practice guidelines for undertaking works in these sensitive areas. To download the manual, go to: <https://dpipwe.tas.gov.au/conservation/flora-of-tasmania/tasmanias-wetlands/wetlands-waterways-works-manual>

## 7 What can the funding be used for?

The program is intended to provide funding for projects to restrict stock access to waterways in the TEER catchment. Funding is available for grazing properties to install livestock exclusion watercourse fencing and associated infrastructure and riparian management works.

### **The funding is for actual financial expenditure incurred for activities such as:**

- The purchase of fencing materials to protect waterways.
- Purchase of plants, stakes and guards for revegetation activities along waterways.
- Herbicides for treatment of weeds along the riverbanks and adjoining areas.
- Purchase of water troughs, water tanks, poly pipe and fittings for stock water purposes.
- Payment for labour/contractor for fencing, revegetation, weed management, and/or installation of water trough/s.
- Purchase of materials directly related to the installation and/or upgrade of stock crossing/s.
- Payment for labour/contractor for the installation and/or upgrade of stock crossing/s.
- Other works and activities may be considered based on project merit and subject to technical advice and approvals.

### **The following are NOT eligible for funding:**

- The purchase of tools, machinery and/or fuel.
- Purchase of crop or pasture seed.
- Purchase of herbicide for crops and/or pasture.
- Gravel for laneways.
- Activities considered to have a purely commercial or private benefit or for fundraising.
- Any general operating expenses - funding will not cover expenses such as electricity, lease/rent payments, telephone, wages, uniforms, etc. that are part of the ongoing expenses of the landowner.
- Projects or activities which are the individual or group's legal responsibility to maintain, or which provide significant or purely private benefit.
- Mechanical removal of willow trees.
- Hard or soft engineering solutions instream to mitigate erosion\*.
- Retrospective funding for previous work undertaken.

\* Can be included as part of the overall project, however, cannot be funded through the program.

NOTE: The funding scheme will be reviewed over the life of the program and may be modified. Therefore, updated guidelines maybe released.



## 8 What information is used to calculate the Pathogen Reduction Score?

The amount of pathogen entering a stream from a grazing or dairy property is affected by a range of factors which are listed below;

- Type of livestock.
- Number of livestock that currently have access to the waterway.
- Amount of manure defecated per animal in a day.
- The concentration of pathogens in the faeces of the livestock type.
- The amount of time each animal spends in and around the stream.

The amount of pathogen which survives in the water to reach the estuary is influenced by:

- the distance of the property from the estuary; and
- the flow rate of the associated waterway.

Stock type and numbers are recorded in the application form along with the estimated time in stream and combined with the calculated stream distance from Zone 1 of the kanamaluka/Tamar estuary. This information is used to calculate the '*Pathogen Reduction Score*' which is used as the '*benefit*' component in the cost benefit ratio.

## 9 Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be assessed and prioritised competitively using a cost benefit ratio, then evaluated by an independent assessment panel for site risk using the first four criteria below which are incorporated into the final cost benefit ratio. An environmental values score is also calculated and used to demonstrate the secondary benefits of a project but may also be used as a tool to prioritise projects.

**There are five evaluation criteria:**

### 1. Landholder Capacity

This is the ability of the applicant to demonstrate their capacity to deliver the proposed project, including any previous experience delivering similar size projects.

### 2. Project Planning and Management

The RHAP is a multi-year program to improve public health by reducing pathogens from entering Zone 1 of the kanamaluka/Tamar estuary. Project applications must detail activities to support this outcome. Where appropriate, activities can be scheduled over a multi-year or staged

implementation plan (e.g. site fencing and managing weeds in the year prior to revegetation, along with maintenance planning).

NRM North Catchment Coordinators are available to assist in the planning and preparation of the application however, applicants need to fully understand and be able to describe the approach to the proposed works and have sought appropriate advice from contractors and/or service providers to identify best practice methods and provide accurate costing and timing. The project design should also be appropriate for the type of livestock and the characteristics of the landscape. Management of the restricted streamside area on an ongoing basis must also be well considered.

### **3. Erosion Risk**

Projects will be evaluated on existing or potential erosion issues, and the appropriateness of proposed mitigation actions. This includes: appropriate riparian buffer widths, revegetation to suit the location designed to reduce erosion impacts and potential hard or soft engineering solutions instream supplementary to project funding.

### **4. Flood Risk**

Projects will be evaluated on potential flood related issues and the appropriateness of mitigation actions. This includes: appropriate riparian buffer widths, revegetation to suit the location designed to reduce flood impacts to the funded infrastructure and appropriate design and location of infrastructure (i.e. fencing and water infrastructure).

### **5. Environmental Values**

Proposals will be evaluated on their enhancement of environmental values of the waterway. This includes: the connectivity of the riparian vegetation at a local and landscape level, improving stream health for aquatic fauna, improving water quality by reducing other pollutants from reaching the stream (e.g. nutrients, pesticides, herbicides & sediment), and improving the biodiversity and habitat conditions for native flora and fauna through revegetation.

Successful projects may be showcased to promote best practice approaches to river rehabilitation and stock exclusion.

## 10 How to apply?

Expression of Interest process:

1. **Register Interest** - Please call or email NRM North to register interest in the program on phone: (03) 6333 7777 or email: [admin@nrmnorth.org.au](mailto:admin@nrmnorth.org.au)
2. **Development of proposal with a Catchment Coordinator** – After registering your interest, a Catchment Coordinator will be in contact to organise a meeting and site visit to assist in the preparation and submission of the project application form.
3. **Application submission** - Approval for application submission is given by the landholder via email. A declaration confirming that all of the information in the submission is true and correct accompanies the application.

For more information go to: <https://nrmnorth.org.au/water/tamar-action-grants/>

## 11 What happens after the application is submitted?

- An email confirming receipt of the application will be sent to the primary email address. If the confirmation email is not received within two business days, please contact NRM North directly.
- Applications will be reviewed by a Catchment Coordinator to check for appropriate attachments.
- Applications will be evaluated by an independent assessment panel and prioritised competitively, using the cost benefit ratio. Applicants will be advised on assessment panel meeting dates through their associated Catchment Coordinator.
- Applications will be ranked according to their cost benefit ratio, then assessed against the evaluation criteria which identifies risk related to the long-term success of each project.
- The amount of funding provided may be adjusted, subject to conditions and/or modifications resulting from the assessment panel review.
- Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified via phone within ten business days of assessment.
- Successful applicants will be contacted by a Catchment Coordinator who will then negotiate a ***Management Agreement***. The Management Agreement is a contract between the landowner and NRM North which stipulates the proposed works, budget and a timeframe for works to be completed, reporting milestones and signoff requirements.
- Successful applicants must provide a '***Certificate of Currency***' stating the type of liability insurance cover and expiry date for the property. **All landholders must have current and**

**adequate liability insurance appropriate to the project funded.** This is stipulated by the Australian and Tasmanian Governments.

- Before commencing works, the landowner needs to review and understand NRM North's *Statement of Expenditure* and reporting requirements.

### **Financial arrangements**

The program is an incentive scheme, with landowners paying up front for goods and services then submitting an *NRM North Tax Invoice* and *Statement of Expenditure* to receive payment. Supporting evidence including a *Statutory Declaration* will also need to be submitted and a site visit from a Catchment Coordinator before payment is released.

All the required paperwork for reimbursement can be obtained through your nominated Catchment Coordinator.

Note: Completing the *Statement of Expenditure* document as the project works are completed maybe an easier way of tracking expenditure.

There is an expectation that all revegetation works should achieve a 70% survival rate after the first year. Some infill planting maybe required to achieve this rate and should be included in the maintenance plan and budget. If a 70% survival rate is not met, then on-going funding may be withheld. However, if all practical and reasonable measures have been taken to achieve a 70% survival rate and unavoidable or unpredictable weather conditions have influenced survival, ongoing funding will not be withheld.

Upon negotiation and under certain circumstances, NRM North may be able to pay for goods and services directly. However, this needs to be agreed upon by both parties and arranged prior to receiving an invoice.

Funds will be paid within 30 calendar days of receiving a valid invoice.

### **GST**

The Australian Taxation Office considers grant funded projects to be a taxable supply under the GST act. If the applicant is registered for GST, the grant amount will be increased by 10%. If the applicant is not registered for GST, no additional amount is payable beyond the amount awarded.

It is recommended that applicants seek professional advice on their tax obligations or contact the Australian Taxation Office on 13 24 78 or via their website on [www.ato.gov.au](http://www.ato.gov.au)

## **ABN**

If the applicant does not have an ABN or is not registered for GST, then a *Statement by a Supplier* form will need to be submitted. This can be downloaded from the Australian Tax Office website:

<https://www.ato.gov.au/forms/statement-by-a-supplier-not-quoting-an-abn/>

## **Liability Insurance**

All landholders must have current and adequate liability insurance appropriate to the project funded. The Landowner must provide a *Certificate of Currency* for the insurance and/or a warranty from the insurer that the policy extends to and will cover potential liability arising under the proposed project. Applicants must have current and adequate insurance for the life of the proposed project. This is stipulated by the Australian and Tasmanian Governments.

It is the responsibility of the landholder to ensure that all contractors and/or service providers used in the project have appropriate and current insurance.

## **12 Who can provide assistance?**

For assistance in developing a project plan and completing an application form please contact NRM North directly by phone: 03 6333 777 or by email: [admin@nrmnorth.org.au](mailto:admin@nrmnorth.org.au)

### **For more information about the Tamar Estuary River Health Action Plan**

Visit the NRM North website <https://nrmnorth.org.au/water/tamar-estuary-river-health-action-plan/> or go to the Department of State Growth website <https://tamarestuary.com.au/>

### **The Launceston City Deal**

For more information regarding the kanamaluka/Tamar estuary and the Launceston City deal, please visit their website

[https://www.launcestoncitydeal.com.au/projects/tamar\\_estuary](https://www.launcestoncitydeal.com.au/projects/tamar_estuary)



**Australian Government**



**City of  
LAUNCESTON**



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