

Image: Angus Spencer



Interested in having your say on where investments in land and water projects in the south coast region are made? Investment into the regions land and water is guided by a group of community representatives and industry experts.

Regional Context

Our region covers approximately 8.6 million ha, much of which is classified agricultural. Healthy soils support the region’s biodiversity and its primary industries, including agriculture and forestry and contribute to sustainable waterways and marine environments by avoiding erosion, nutrient export and sedimentation. Primary production contributes strongly to the region’s economy and social fabric but faces significant threats if major efforts are not made to develop and manage more sustainable farming systems. Without effective management, soil and water will suffer accelerated decline, which in turn will have huge flow on economic, environmental and social consequences.

What does a reference group do?

Reference groups provide a critical link between our work and our community by identifying local community issues, concerns and activities related to sustainable agriculture, water and natural resource management.

South Coast NRM utilises reference groups to provide recommendations and advice to Program Areas and the Board on the development, implementation and review of programs contributing to the South Coast Regional Strategy for natural resource management (Southern Prospects 2019 – 2024).

What are the goals of the Land and Water Reference Group?

Guided by Southern Prospect 2019 –2024, the Land and Water Reference Group will focus on improving and protecting land resources through sustainable land use, and ensuring South Coast rivers, estuaries, wetlands and water resources are recognised as precious and are maintained, protected and/or restored.

How will the Land and Water Reference Group achieve this?

This group will play an important role in providing technical and strategic recommendations in the following areas:

- * Improving knowledge and understanding of priority land assets;
- * Improving climate change adaptation and mitigation responses;
- * Reducing land degradation;
- * Reducing impact of invasive species;
- * Integrating land use planning with NRM;
- * Developing sustainable industries for food, fibre and energy;
- * Improving the condition of impacted and degraded waterways;
- * Protecting pristine waterways;
- * Protecting Ramsar wetlands; and
- * Helping to ensure sustainable urban and rural water resource management and use.

What's involved?

Reference Groups are made up of 5 to 10 members, and will meet at least 3 times per year to:

- * Provide technical advice on new and existing projects, and suggest innovative and efficient approaches to delivery;
- * Provide a community perspective;
- * Develop activities for funding by the NRM Investment Plan (aligned to Southern Prospects 2019-2024);
- * Help review and monitor program activities; and
- * Provide strategic direction and insight to our Board.

Membership is for two years, and sitting fees are paid for each meeting attended. Each group will elect a Chair who will work with our team to organise and prepare for each meeting, including designing the agenda, chairing the reference group meetings and disseminating relevant reports to members prior to the meeting. If you are unable to attend a meeting you can nominate a proxy, and from time to time your feedback on certain items might be sought out of session.

Who can be apply to be part of a Reference Group?

Anyone in our local community who has an understanding and knowledge that they can contribute to the Land and Water Reference Group. Membership is also open to staff from any relevant agency, authority, commission or non-government organisation that can bring expertise to the group. As a reference group member, you should bring an understanding of the social, ecological, cultural and economic complexities to land and water management.

We are currently holding an expression of interest process closing Sunday 19th February 2019. For information on how to apply to be a part of the South Coast NRM Land and Water Reference Group, head to our website:

<https://southcoastnrm.com.au/who-we-are/vacancies>

For further information about this Reference Group or the expression of interest process, please contact:

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Image: Graeme Smith

