



Lower Blackwood Catchment
Land Conservation District Committee

PARTNERSHIP PROSPECTUS

A healthy Lower Blackwood starts with sustainable agriculture



Visioning the Lower Blackwood - a future landscape

The Lower Blackwood catchment is a connected story of natural living and sustainable food production.

The community is the caretaker of the land, river and sea with a strong sense of place and a healthy ethos.

The rivers and streams are as robust and healthy as in the Dreamtime and are the lifeblood of the region.

Bushland and fauna are valued as unique and are adaptively managed to perpetuate a flourishing environment.

Soils are healthy, productive and beneficial to agricultural and natural systems.

The district is a cornucopia of diverse and varied production that is sustainable and complements the landscape.



Legend

- LBLCDC Boundaries
- Localities
- Waterways

Lower Blackwood LCDC Boundaries



Our Catchment

Our district is bounded by the south west coast from Redgate beach to Augusta, and eastwards into the Shire of Nannup and including all of the Scott River and bounded in the east by the Donnelly River.

The majority of our district is made of the "Lower Blackwood Catchment", a group of tributaries which drain into the lower reaches of the Blackwood River.

Just before the Blackwood River drains into the Southern Ocean at Augusta, the water pools in what's known as the Hardy Inlet. This estuarine system is highly valued, ecologically as a breeding habitat for freshwater fish species and migratory birds, and socially as a summertime recreation area for holiday makers.

From the undulating hills of Rosa Glen, to the Scott Coastal Plain with unique wetland environments, to southern section of the Leeuwin coastal ridge from Augusta to Redgate beach, this lower south west corner has a variety of landscapes which are home to a number of unique species of plant and animals.

Agriculture also plays a key role in this beautiful part of the world, with grazing for beef and dairy, sheep and wool, horticulture and viticulture contributing to the local economy.

This combination of unique natural treasures and a diverse & bountiful landscape make the Lower Blackwood catchment a truly special place.

A Global Biodiversity Hotspot

The Southwest Australia Ecoregion, of which the Lower Blackwood Catchment forms part of, is globally recognised as one of the planet's major biodiversity hotspots.

The region, also known as Kwongan, harbours an astonishing 7,239 vascular plant species, almost 80% of which are found nowhere else in the world. The Kwongan is also home to some of Australia's most iconic fauna such as the Western Ringtail Possum (*Pseudocheirus occidentalis*) or Ngwayir, and Carnaby's Black-Cockatoo (*Calyptorhynchus latirostris*) or Ngoolark.

Like most of Australia, the South West has been inhabited by humans for well over 40,000 years, so that a rich cultural heritage adds to the biological and geological value of the region.

European settlement has a relatively recent history within the Ecoregion, dating back to 1826, but many people depend on the natural resources of the Southwest Australia Ecoregion for their livelihoods. Natural resources such as water, biodiversity and soil are under threat from a range of factors including soil salinity, altered hydrology, climate change, and degradation due to unmanaged grazing by domestic stock, diseases such as Phytophthora dieback, and invasions by weeds and feral animals. (Source: 2006 The Southwest Australia Ecoregion, Jewel of the Australian Continent)



An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. In the center, there is a large, rectangular pond with a dark blue-green surface. Surrounding the pond are several large, rectangular plots of land. Some plots are planted with rows of green crops, likely a vineyard. Other plots are brown and appear to be fallow or recently harvested. The landscape is interspersed with green trees and shrubs. In the background, there are more fields and a distant horizon under a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds.

Working towards a healthy & sustainable agricultural community - environmentally, socially & economically.

Our Story

We are a not-for-profit, community managed, constituted and independent land care organisation with a membership representative of landholders and an interest in sustainable agriculture, catchment management, the broader environment and river health in the Lower Blackwood catchment.

We work with farmers, land managers, local government, business and traditional owners to promote our vision of sustainable & productive agriculture, in a healthy & vibrant community.

We are working to achieve our vision:

- developing and enhancing the profile of the LCDC
- coordinating and providing expert and independent advice to farmers, land managers and other NRM stakeholders on sustainable land use.
- identifying future needs for productive and sustainable agriculture.
- improving the health of the environment and waterways through sustainable farming by minimizing pollution and providing support for ecosystem management.
- identifying and supporting value adding elements of farming through improved economic and marketing support.



Why Work With Us?

Because we are a neutral not-for-profit organisation we are in an ideal position to bring diverse groups – landholders, government, industry, Indigenous people and communities – to work together collaboratively.

We are:

- well connected to people and ideas
- focused on the land and people
- committed to building a regenerative future agriculture
- well versed in understanding the problems and opportunities that face the catchment
- experienced & have the skills to deliver coordinated results

We have proven experience:

Over the last 24 years, the Lower Blackwood LCDC has successfully initiated, championed and completed many projects that have promoted sustainable agriculture in the region, and protected the health of the iconic Blackwood River, Hardy Inlet and surrounding catchment.

These include:

- Royalties for Regions **Healthy Estuaries WA project** (for the Hardy Inlet). A State Government initiative to support the long-term health of south-west estuaries
- State NRM **Raising Capabilities Project**
- National Landcare **Biodiversity Linkages Project**
- State NRM **Plantations to Pasture Project**
- **Administrative services for the Lower Blackwood Vertebrate Pest Management Group** (funded by State NRM Office & the Augusta Margaret River Shire).
- Augusta Margaret River Environmental Management Fund **Regenerative Agriculture in Practice Project**

What we do brings benefits to all:

Beyond the environmental benefits, In dollar terms our projects have bought over \$3 million in outside investment to the catchment. We aim to double this investment over the next 5 to 10 years.



Connect , Coordinate, Deliver

How we help:

- We **connect** people and resources to help make things happen.
- We **coordinate** projects, events & activities to support change
- We work with local people and organisations to **deliver** on-ground results

On-ground works:

Current funding & funded services available to eligible landholders for a range of on-ground works include:

- Weed control in waterways
- Soil testing for better fertiliser decisions
- Stock exclusion fencing & revegetation of riparian zones
- Fertiliser trials to improve confidence in fertiliser recommendations
- Regenerative agriculture in practice- planned grazing & soil health
- Feral pig control

Events:

We are great at getting people together to talk about issues that are important to them. Seminars, Workshops, Demonstration Days, Field Walks, Social Networking events are all in the mix to provide a place & time to share knowledge, information & experience.

Our own **Talkin' After Hours** is all about filling the information gap on sustainable agriculture for our landholders. Whether it's via a face to face workshop, a webinar or a sound bite, we deliver interesting and informative presentations with an expert on a sustainable farming or landcare topic.

The Information Hub:

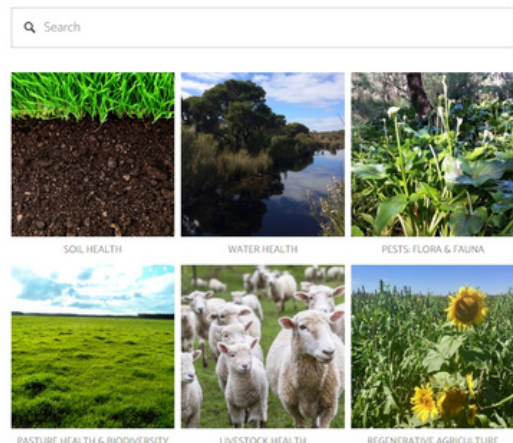
Our website is an invaluable resource and go to space for landholders wanting information on landcare issues. In this information toolbox visitors will find **Case Studies** on current & past projects, the **Knowledge Bank** - housing a wide collection of practical content on sustainable agriculture & landcare topics, and our popular **Talkin' After Hours** presentations, webinars & podcasts.



Information Hub

- CASE STUDIES
- THE KNOWLEDGE BANK
- FLORA & FAUNA PEST REGISTER
- TALKIN' AFTER HOURS - READ / WATCH / LISTEN
- CONSULTANTS & SUPPLIERS

THE KNOWLEDGE BANK



Our Current Projects

Healthy Estuaries WA

Working with landholders to improve the health of the iconic Hardy Inlet through a range of works including:

- **Fencing and revegetation** of riparian zones
- **Soil testing** program that provides Lower Blackwood Catchment Landholders with the knowledge and confidence to tailor their fertiliser practices based on the specific needs of their soil and pasture.
- The **Scott River Action Plan** aims to provide feasible, farm-scale and land-use specific management practice recommendations developed in collaboration with the Scott River farming community for improving the health of the Scott River and its waterways that focus on nutrient reduction and improved water quality and to achieve further implementation of the 2012 Hardy Inlet Water Quality Improvement Plan.
- The **Lower Blackwood Values Study** aims to understand drivers and barriers to riparian restoration on private property within the Lower Blackwood LCDC District

These programs are part of Royalties for Region's Healthy Estuaries WA and Revitalising Geopraphe Waterways programs. These State Government initiatives aim to support the long-term health of our south-west estuaries.

uPtake

Led by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, uPtake is a partnership project designed to improve nutrient use efficiency on grazing farms in South West Western Australia by improving farmer and industry knowledge, confidence and uptake of the science supporting fertiliser recommendations.

The project focuses on fertiliser trials that aim to improve confidence in fertiliser recommendations for local soils and conditions are underway in the Lower Blackwood Catchment. We have supported the project through farmer engagement and support, communication and extension of results through workshops, field days and through our networks.



Trials - Innovation - Partnerships
Delivering better fertiliser outcomes

Regenerative Agriculture in Practice 2020/2021 - Building Resilience

This project sees the continuation and further development of the 2019/2020 Regenerative Grazing program, with an important additional focus on building soil health and resilience.

Soil is the lifeblood of agriculture and is fundamental to our survival. By providing farmers with a deeper understanding of how soils function & providing them with the ability to identify the limiting (or enabling) factors within their soils, as well as learning how to incorporate animals effectively into the farming system, farmers can take a first step towards regenerating their soils, restoring water cycles, and bringing vitality back to ecosystems.

Riparian Rescue

Funded by the State NRM Community Stewardship Grants program this project is working with landholders to protect waterways by controlling weeds in important riparian zones that would otherwise out compete native species.

With a focus on the key riparian weeds, Arum Lily and Blackberry, in addition to access free control chemicals, eligible Lower Blackwood landholders are able to access funding (50%) of a weed contractor to implement a control program.

Lower Blackwood Vertebrate Pest Management Group (Feral Pigs)

Funded by the Augusta-Margaret River Shire, the Shire of Nannup and DBCA, the project is facilitated through a continuing partnership with the Lower Blackwood LCDC the Lower Blackwood Vertebrate Pest Management Group (LVPMG).

The project funding directly contributes to a very significant threat to both the environment and sustainable agriculture land right here in the Lower Blackwood. Our office and resources assist to financially administer this vitally important project.



This project has been enabled through the Augusta Margaret River Environmental Management Fund.



natural resource management program



Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions

Our Key Partners



Australian Government



Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development



south west catchments council



Government of Western Australia
Department of Water and Environmental Regulation



Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



Lower Blackwood Vertebrate Pest Management Group

New Partnerships



Our partnership with the **Lower South West Growers Group** reinforces the work we are doing in sustainable agriculture and will offer our producer landholders (large & small) opportunities in the future to participate in projects, trials and demonstrations in agricultural research and development in the region.



Our exciting new partnership with the **Margaret River Wine Association** is a collaboration that aims to highlight and celebrate the agriculture (incl. Viticulture) industry in the region. It will provide a framework to provide information and opportunities to producers and to attract project funding to the region to progress the industry in a sustainable manner.



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Are you interested in making a difference?

A partnership with the Lower Blackwood LCDC means you are contributing to a healthier and more sustainable future for our catchment.

You can partner with us by helping to build our capacity to make change, or by sponsoring an event, field day or a specific project.

Talk to us about how you want to get involved.

We are an independent and neutral non-profit organisation. We partner with land users, business, government, and community groups. Join us in promoting sustainable agriculture to the Lower Blackwood Region.

Contact Joanna Wren, Executive Officer
T: (08) 9758 4021 | M: 0408 584 006 |
joanna.wren@lowerblackwood.com.au

Partner With Us





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PO Box 42, Karridale, WA 6288 | (08) 9758 4021 | info@lowerblackwood.com.au |
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