

**PROJECT APPLICATION**

**Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry**

**National Landcare Programme**

**Sustainable Practices Grants 2008-09**

Office use only  
Project No.

**Applicants must read the 2008-09 Sustainable Practices Grants Guidelines prior to completing this form. Proposals must be submitted as a Microsoft Word document.**

**DO NOT CHANGE THE FORMATTING OF THIS DOCUMENT.**

**Proposals should be submitted to the regional NRM organisation in your state or territory by email. If the file size is larger than 1MB, CD ROM should be used.**

**CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATION IS COB 25/2/2008**

<b>1. NRM Region (&amp; State):</b> Murrumbidgee, NSW	<b>2. Project location</b> (nearest town or towns): Hay, Griffith, Wagga, Yass
--	---

<b>3. Proposal Title</b> (80 characters or less, including spaces): Soil Health in the Murrumbidgee
--

<b>4. Applicant organisation</b> (also include ABN where applicable): Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority ABN: 907 373 531 76 Is your organisation incorporated? <b>Yes / No</b> (remove one)
--

<b>5. Partner organisations</b> (where applicable): Murrumbidgee Landcare Incorporated Eastern Riverina Landcare Network Riverina Highlands Landcare Network Hay/Balranald Landcare Network Murrumbidgee Private Irrigators Inc. Ricegrowers' Association of Australia Inc.
---

<b>6. Delivery agent</b> (who will carry out this project?): Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority
---

<b>7. Other regions involved in the project implementation</b> (if applicable) (evidence of their support/ involvement should be provided/attached):
---

<b>8. Is this activity the subject of any other applications for, or has it previously received Australian Government funding?</b> <b>Yes / No</b> If yes, please provide details
--

<b>9. Project description summary</b> (2-3 sentence paragraph, 50 words maximum): This project will engage various industry groups across the Murrumbidgee catchment, providing opportunities for landholders through on-farm demonstrations and training, to increase their knowledge and skills to allow adoption of current recommended practice in relation to soil health and their enterprise type.
--

<b>10. Project budget summary: (Note: copy these values from the spreadsheet provided)</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2009-10 (if applicable)</b>	<b>2010-11 (if applicable)</b>

<b>NLP funds</b>	\$446,860	\$446,860	\$446,860
<b>Matching</b>	\$474,500	\$474,500	\$474,500

## 11. Project description:

Provide clear description of the proposal, keeping in mind the Assessment Criteria on page 2 of the Guidelines.

### a. What are the objectives of the project (with reference to points 1&2 of the Assessment Criteria on page 2)?

This project builds on previous investment in sustainable agriculture in the Murrumbidgee catchment, and will provide land managers with the knowledge, skills and motivation to increase profitability while maintaining or improving the natural environment. Land managers participating in the project will be equipped with the skill set needed to adapt and prosper in the event of climate change.

The objectives of the project are:

- To increase landholders knowledge and skills in sustainable agriculture practices to ensure long-term sustainability.
- To demonstrate best management practice in sustainable agriculture
- To provide incentives to land managers to enable them to undertake sustainable agriculture practices
- To capture the industry group learnings for the future reference of Landcarers, the wider community and the Murrumbidgee CMA.

### b. How will these objectives be achieved?

The above listed objectives will be achieved through engaging various industry and community groups in the Murrumbidgee catchment, in identifying and prioritising sustainable agriculture and NRM issues that are pertinent to their local area.

Taking a group approach to problem solving, participants will identify local priorities, undertake tailored extension and learning programs, and showcase best management practice through long running on-farm demonstrations, case studies and field days. Transferring experiences and learning at the group level to the farm business level will be supported through incentives and links to other NHT funding via the Murrumbidgee CMA incentive program.

Groups will be strongly supported by an individual, who has technical expertise in the sustainable production issue that each group wishes to address. This approach ensures strong linkages between the science behind the practice, and the application of the practice on-farm. This person will also provide motivation and leadership to group members, fostering engagement and the development of quality outcomes from on-farm demonstrations and learning activities.

The provision of incentive funding will support those willing to make a change without sufficient financial capital to do so. This approach will also allow the land managers a degree of 'trialability' of the new practice, which is important in the adoption of new innovations.

Industry groups within the Murrumbidgee region will be engaged through groups to:

- Prioritise sustainable agriculture and NRM issues within each group
- Develop a group approach to problem solving through participation in action learning programs
- Refine and showcase district best management practices through on-farm demonstration, incentives, case studies, field days and other communications
- Property plans will integrate any existing plans with current best management practices at a property scale, and be the basis of the roll out of incentives and demonstrations

### c. What NLP outcomes will the project deliver (with reference to page 2 of Guidelines)?

NLP Outcomes:

- *Increased skills and knowledge of effective NRM practices amongst primary producers* – the activities under this project including on-farm demonstrations and training will assist primary producers to learn new skills and improve their knowledge of sustainable production practices. The group learning environment allows for farmers to learn from each other, all of which is strongly supported by sound technical advice.
- *Increased landholder engagement and adoption of sustainable and innovative NRM practices by primary producers* – The on-farm demonstrations, designed by primary producers, delivered by primary producers will provide an avenue for innovative NRM practices to be showcased in the local environment. This process will also empower the primary producers and lead to increased engagement. It has been demonstrated that relative advantage (the degree to which an innovation is perceived as being better than the idea it supersedes) and trialability of an innovation are key factors in primary producers adopting new practices, and the on-farm demonstrations are able to validate these key factors.

- *Farms with a more resilient resource base in periods of drought and other adverse natural events* – the combination of training and the on-farm demonstrations will lead to primary producers with increased skills & knowledge to impart practice change on their own farms. The practice change and implementation of best NRM practices will allow farmers to plan, do, check & review their adoptions, which will lead to a more physical resilient resource base. The opportunity for groups to identify their needs will also provide an avenue in which knowledge & skills can be gained regarding the farm business as a whole, which will lead to resilience in other resources such as financial and social.
- *Greater primary industry and community engagement in NRM and landcare activities, including a strong commitment to the landcare ethic* – the targeting of this project to industry and community groups will allow these sectors to become involved in sustainable production and NRM activities, fostering a stewardship of the natural resource base, and either renew or enhance the landcare ethic in the Murrumbidgee catchment.

**d. What is the significance of these outcomes for sustainable production and broader NRM issues?**

The project consists of an assessment of local sustainable agriculture and NRM priorities for each industry group. These groups will then be supported by Murrumbidgee CMA officers and funding for demonstrations, training and communications products to identify best management practices for their chosen issue. While the training and communications activities lift knowledge and skills, the demonstrations and incentives provide resources for the implementation of sustainable agriculture and NRM best practice at the enterprise level.

In addition, the communications products of this project will be available to the Landcare and wider community as a set of resources including best practice NRM and sustainable agriculture information and case studies of the locally tested application of these.

**e. What skills and experience does the group bring to this project?**

The Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority (CMA) is a statutory body responsible for coordinating natural resource management (NRM) in the natural drainage basin of the Murrumbidgee River. The Murrumbidgee CMA is responsible for involving regional communities in the management of NRM issues in the region, and is the primary means for the delivery of funding from the NSW and Commonwealth Governments to assist land managers improve and restore the natural resources of the State. The vision of the Murrumbidgee CMA is a healthy and productive Murrumbidgee catchment and its communities working together. The organisation is achieving this vision through a combination of community engagement and implementation of on-ground works. This approach integrates the management of environmental assets and the financial and social wellbeing of the community within the catchment. The Murrumbidgee CMA is currently managing, integrating and providing seamless delivery of 62 projects. Staff within the organisation have a high level of expertise in the areas of wetland management and agroforestry, together with a diversity of experience within the areas of salinity, biodiversity and community engagement. The Murrumbidgee CMA has successfully managed two previous iterations of this project. The Murrumbidgee CMA hopes to build on this success with this project.

**f. What risks have been identified and how will these be managed?**

A contingency plan in the theme of 'Lessons Learnt' has been developed for NLP projects to manage risks such as:

- drought
- unwilling participants
- funding security
- vacancy of project manager(s)

This plan may be provided upon request.

## **12. Justification/Demonstration of Stakeholder Consultation and Support:**

Demonstrate or describe consultation, including technical advice sought, and support from stakeholders (if applicable). Provide letters of support, where appropriate, to strengthen claim.

This project builds on the previous NLP funded Profitable Farmers, Sustainable Systems, Healthy Landscapes projects and, therefore, also builds on previous consultation and support from stakeholders. In addition, the following organisations have provided letters of support:

- Murrumbidgee Landcare Incorporated
- Meat and Livestock Australia
- Eastern Riverina Landcare Network
- Ricegrowers' Association of Australia Inc.
- Riverina Highlands Landcare Network
- Hay/Balranald Landcare Network
- Murrumbidgee Private Irrigators Inc.

### 13. Links to relevant NRM regional planning process:

How does this project contribute to the regional investment strategy and regional catchment targets, and what priorities does it target?

The Murrumbidgee regional investment strategy provides funding for on-ground works in the asset areas of community, biodiversity, water and land. The proposed project will positively contribute to the existing investment strategy in all asset areas. The process of prioritising locally relevant sustainable agriculture issues and implementation of on-ground works provides an opportunity for the project to contribute to catchment targets in the areas of land, water and biodiversity, and in particular the following community asset catchment targets:

#### **Catchment Resource Condition Target 1**

By 2016 the effectiveness of the Murrumbidgee CMA's engagement & collaboration with identified key stakeholders is increased.

#### **Catchment Management Target 3**

By 2016 the capacity of the community to improve natural resource management will be increased by addressing risks & impediments & capitalising on drivers & opportunities.

#### **Catchment Resource Condition Target 2**

By 2016 increase the engagement of Traditional Owners & Aboriginal people in natural resource management & increase the wider community's understanding of Indigenous values in natural resource management.

#### **Catchment Management Target 4**

By 2007, 100% of Murrumbidgee CMA projects & plans incorporate cultural heritage values as developed by Traditional Owners Local Reference Groups

#### **Catchment Resource Condition Target 3**

By 2016 Catchment Action Plan targets are integrated in the planning frameworks & operations of all levels of government & other key stakeholders

#### **Catchment Management Target 7**

By 2016 the Murrumbidgee CMA is fostering partnerships with private landholders, land managers, Landcare & the community to encourage natural resource management practices that are consistent with the Murrumbidgee Catchment Action Plan & Traditional Owner cultural heritage values.

#### **Catchment Management Target 9**

By 2006 100% of projects are developed & implemented in collaboration with the community, including relevant local stakeholders & technical experts.

#### **Catchment Resource Condition Target 4**

By 2016 an improvement in community capacity to deliver natural resource management outcomes is achieved by increasing skills, knowledge & adoption in natural resource management activities

#### **Catchment Management Target 10**

Annually enhance the knowledge & skills of 300 farm businesses, local government & the wider community

#### **Catchment Management Target 12**

By 2016 the knowledge & skills of land managers & the wider community to protect 7 respect Indigenous natural resource management cultural heritage sites & values across the catchment is increased.

### 14. Contact person for project:

First Name: Tammy \_\_\_\_\_ Last name: Galvin \_\_\_\_\_

Position: Sustainable Farming Systems Facilitator \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No.: (02) 6953 0723 \_\_\_\_\_ Facsimile: (02) 6953 4468 \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: 0427 221 651 \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: tammy.galvin@cma.nsw.gov.au \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Address: PO Box 156, Leeton NSW 2705 \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate above with an asterisk (\*) the preferred method of contact (ie. via your phone, mobile or email).

## 15. Output Schedule:

What are the project outputs, what activities will be undertaken to achieve these outputs? Provide milestones to indicate completion of these activities. Definitions and an example are provided in the guidelines, see page 12.

OBJECTIVES	ACTIVITIES	TIME (Month/Year)	OUTPUTS	MILESTONES
1. To increase landholders knowledge & skills in sustainable agriculture practices to ensure long-term sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess local sustainable agriculture priorities of each industry group</li> <li>Develop industry group action plan, which will identify training, on-farm demonstration opportunities and the nature of the group's incentives</li> <li>Undertake training &amp; extension according to industry group action plan, linking closely to the prioritised sustainable agriculture issue identified</li> </ul>	<p>July - October 2008</p> <p>October - December 2008</p> <p>January 2008 – December 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement with each group regarding the project</li> <li>Priorities set</li> <li>Group action plans</li> <li>Training completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 agreements</li> <li>Priority list from 5 groups</li> <li>5 group action plans</li> <li>5 training activities undertaken/completed</li> </ul>
2. To demonstrate best management practice in sustainable agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify demonstration participants &amp; on-farm demonstration sites per industry group</li> <li>Plan the on-farm demonstration implementation using the focus farm group action plans</li> <li>Implement the on-farm demonstration for each industry group</li> <li>Monitor, evaluate &amp; report (MER) results from all industry group on-farm demonstrations</li> </ul>	<p>September - December 2008</p> <p>September - December 2008</p> <p>January 2009 – December 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On-farm demonstration sites identified &amp; secured</li> <li>On-farm demonstration plans produced</li> <li>On-farm demonstrations conducted</li> <li>Monitoring, evaluation &amp; reporting plans produced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 focus farm groups have demonstration sites secured</li> <li>5 demonstration plans</li> <li>5 demonstrations active</li> <li>5 monitoring, evaluation &amp; reporting plans</li> </ul>
3. To provide incentives to landholders to enable them to undertake sustainable agriculture practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use local identified sustainable agriculture priorities &amp; industry group action plans to identify suite of incentives relevant to each group</li> </ul>	<p>October 2008 – December 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incentives identified</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 groups with approved list of incentives</li> </ul>

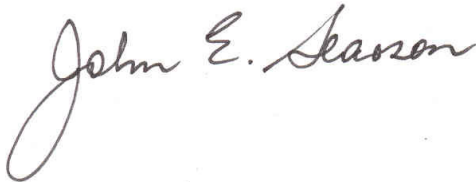
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop individual property plans to map on-ground works</li> <li>• Roll-out of incentive funding as per individual property plans</li> <li>• Provide voluntary monitoring, evaluation &amp; reporting process to individuals</li> </ul>	<p>October 2008 – December 2010</p> <p>October 2008 – December 2010</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual property plans of participants produced</li> <li>• Incentive funding delivered</li> <li>• Voluntary individual monitoring, evaluation &amp; reporting plans produced</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of 5 focus groups have individual property plans produced</li> <li>• Members of 5 focus groups have incentive contracts</li> <li>• 50 monitoring, evaluation &amp; reporting plans provided</li> </ul>
<p>4. To capture the industry group learnings for the future reference of Landcarers, the wider community &amp; the Murrumbidgee CMA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Record industry group progress &amp; activities</li> <li>• Summarise key learnings regarding best management practice at the group level</li> <li>• Communicate key learnings</li> </ul>	<p>July 2008 – May 2011</p> <p>January 2011 – June 2011</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project logs developed</li> <li>• Case studies &amp; fact sheets</li> <li>• Media releases , field days held &amp; website established &amp; maintained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 project logs completed</li> <li>• 5 case studies &amp; 4 project updates produced</li> <li>• 5 media releases completed, 5 field days held, 5 case studies &amp; 5 project updates appear on Murrumbidgee CMA website</li> </ul>

**Note:** Insert more rows where necessary

**16. Applicants/s Declaration & Authority**

- I/we have read and understood the *National Landcare Programme - Sustainable Practices Grants Guidelines* and obtained clarification where needed.
- I/we declare that the information provided in this application including attachments is true and correct and discloses all required and relevant details.
- I/we authorise the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry to seek any additional relevant information it may require to process this application, and I/we hereby request and authorise any parties to supply such information as requested by the Department.
- I/we understand that if the project is approved for funding, information about the project may be publicised by the Department or provided as required or permitted by law.
- If the project is approved for funding, I/we will obtain all necessary and appropriate clearances from the relevant Commonwealth, state or local governments before executing the grant agreement and undertake to manage the proposed project in accordance with relevant laws and regulations.
- If I/we accept an offer of funding then I/we accept (jointly and severally in the case of a group application) responsibility for administering grant funds and liability in the event grant funds are to be repaid.

**Signature of applicant/s**



John Searson  
General Manager  
Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority

Declared before

Greg Bugden

Witness must be over 18 years old and not a party to this application.)

at Wagga Wagga

this Tuesday day of 25 February 2008

Witness to sign:



**OR (where relevant)**

The Common Seal of

..... )  
ACN ..... )  
was duly affixed to this Deed )  
in the presence of: )

*Affix seal*

..... and: .....

*Name*

*Name*

.....

*Position*

*Position*

.....

*Signature*

*Signature*