

Caring for Catchments Project 2024-2026

Guidelines for Applicants

Closes 5pm Monday 1 July 2024

Overview:

The North Coast Regional Landcare Network (NCRLN) is seeking project proposals from landowners and land stewards in the Brunswick, Clarence, Richmond, and Tweed catchments to participate in the Caring for Catchments (CFC) project. This project aims to improve catchment health, build flood resilience, and enhance biodiversity through riparian revegetation and reforestation.

One of the primary goals of the Caring for Catchments project is to restore and protect waterways by planting up to 240 hectares of native vegetation along 8 kilometres of cleared river and streambanks over the next three years. Funded by the Federal and State Governments through the Northern Rivers Recovery and Resilience Program – NSW Reconstruction Authority, the Caring for Catchment project is the first of its kind and has the potential to be scaled up in the future, creating a lasting impact on the region's environmental health and flood resilience.

Project Goals:

The project aims to build capacity in the Northern Rivers region to implement nature based measures at scale to assist flood mitigation, build resilience to flooding, improve catchment health and contribute to economic and ecological sustainability through:

- Demonstration of best practice for riparian restoration, to restore catchment health and resilience.
- Compilation of data, reports, studies and other relevant information required for riparian and catchment projects to be planned and undertaken at scale, and make this information available to stakeholders.
- Building capacity to utilise and benefit from markets for environmental services, by providing education for land managers about markets for environmental services
- Identify opportunities for education and training in repair and regeneration of the regional environment and contribute to development of this important new industry
- Fostering cultural change around management of the environment and natural resources generally and streams and catchments in particular, in a way that contributes to social cohesion, resilience and optimism regarding our common future.



This project is funded by the Australian Government through the Emergency Response Fund and administered by NSW Reconstruction Authority's Northern Rivers Recovery and Resilience Program 2022-23. Delivered by North Coast Regional Landcare Network.

Benefits of Participating:

- **Receive funding:** Secure grants of \$20,000 to \$160,000 to support your revegetation or educational project.
- **Technical assistance:** Access technical support and guidance
- **Capacity building:** Gain knowledge and skills in riparian restoration and sustainable land management.
- **Contribute to a larger cause:** Be part of a collective effort to improve the health of our waterways and communities.

Who can apply?

Applications are being sought for projects and activities in the Brunswick, Clarence, Richmond and Tweed catchment areas.

This program is open to:

- Private landholders
- Landcare Networks/Groups
- Councils
- Environmental organisations
- Not-for-profit organisations
- First Nations organisations
- Collaborations involving any of the above groups, including government agencies, schools, and educational institutions.

What can you apply for?

- **On-ground, nature-based measures that will assist flood mitigation, build resilience to flooding and improve catchment health.** For example, but not limited to:
 - Planting native trees and shrubs along waterways to improve water quality, stabilise riverbanks, and enhance habitat for wildlife;
 - Fencing of riparian areas and providing off-stream watering points;
 - Weed management
- **Knowledge sharing, education and community engagement programs** promoting awareness and education about riparian restoration, flood resilience and environmental markets within the targeted catchments.

What are Ineligible Project Activities?

- Landslip remediation and hard mitigation projects.



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How much can you apply for?

- **Small Project Grants:** \$20,000 to \$60,000
- **Large Project Grants:** \$60,000 to \$160,000

Application Closing Date and Timeline for Completion of Project:

The project application closing date is **5pm on Monday 1 July 2024**.

To ensure that all projects receive the appropriate support and oversight two timelines have been identified. **It is possible for one applicant to apply for a Small Project Grant and a Large Project Grant as separate projects**

You may propose different project timeframes from the dates below, however, regular project evaluation and monitoring reports need to be provided and the final date for all projects to be finished is August 28, 2026.

Project Milestone	Project Tranche 1	Project Tranche 2
Project evaluation & assessment	July 26, 2024	November 25, 2024
Project workplans approved & contracts signed	August 30, 2024	February 28, 2025
Projects commences on-ground from this date	September 2, 2024	March 28, 2025
Evaluation & reporting milestone 1	December 2, 2024	August 28, 2025
Evaluation & reporting milestone 2	June 27, 2025	February 27, 2026
Reporting & project acquittal	December 2, 2025	August 28, 2026



What criteria are used to assess the proposals?

Applications that have not completed all of the compulsory sections of the form will not be assessed.

Applications will be ranked on their ability to:

- Contribute to the achievement of the Caring for Catchments project goals;
- Enhance project site values and conditions;
- Implement best management practices and actions;
- Demonstrate the maintenance of funded outcomes beyond the initial funding; and
- Provide value for money and/or in-kind or cash contributions from the Applicant and/or Landholders and/or voluntary group.

You can view the detailed evaluation criteria [here](#).

Where can I get help?

We encourage you to contact North Coast Regional Landcare Network. NCRLN staff cannot write your application but can assist you with understanding how your proposal fits in with the Caring for Catchments goals and targets and may also explain the questions on the application form.

A number of information sessions to explain the Caring for Catchments program will be held during May and June 2024. Dates and locations of workshops can be found on the Caring for Catchments webpage, or contact the Caring for Catchments team on the contact details below.

Next Steps:

1. **Review the Project Application Guidelines:** Ensure your project aligns with the project goals, eligibility criteria and timeframes. Project Application Guidelines are available on the North Coast Regional Landcare Network website (link to be provided).
2. **Attend an information session:** Dates and locations will be posted on the website and advertised locally.
3. **Develop your Project Proposal:** The Project Application form will be online. You can download a pdf of the application questions. Your application should include:
 - Project description, goals, and activities
 - Timelines and budget breakdown
 - Demonstrated experience and relevant skills
 - Future use and management of site
 - Evidence of community engagement (if applicable)



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4. **Create a Jotform account:** It is free to create an account. You will need an account to save your application progress if you believe it will take you more than one session to complete your project application.
5. **Submit your Expression of Interest or Project Application:** Submit your completed Project Proposal Application by **5pm Monday July 1, 2024**, [via Jotform].

Contact Us:

If you have any questions about the Caring for Catchments program or the Project Application process, please contact the NCRLN team at 0419593294 or CfC@northcoastlandcare.org.au

We encourage you to propose a project and join us in making a positive impact on the health and resilience of our region's waterways!

PROJECT STANDARDS/CRITERIA (TERMS & CONDITIONS)

- **Project implementation timeframe.** All project works must be completed by **28 August 2026**.
- **Cultural heritage survey.** Cultural heritage sites identified within the project area must be maintained and protected. Project activities and ongoing site management must not cause damage to any known cultural heritage sites. Cultural heritage sites discovered within the project area will be recorded in the Aboriginal Heritage Information Management System.
- **Pest plant and pest animal control.** Pest animals and pest plants must be managed appropriately as relevant to the project. Chemical control must only be with a registered herbicide/pesticide and in accordance with the directions on the label. If spraying along riparian areas, only chemicals registered for use around waterways are permitted.
- **Legislative Requirements.** Applicants must comply with all legislative responsibilities imposed by any other relevant Act in developing and implementing the project.
- **Permissions.** Applicants must have all relevant permissions to access and carry out works on the site.
- **Privacy Statement.** NCRLN will manage the storage and disposal of personal information collected through the program in accordance with the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW). Personal information will be held securely and protected against unauthorised access, use, modification, disclosure, or other misuse. NCRLN will not disclose any personal information without written consent, except as otherwise required or authorised by law.



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- **Organisational Details.** As part of the application and evaluation process, successful applications will be required to provide the following:
 - Australian Business Number (ABN) or Australian Company Number (ACN)
 - Type of organisation or auspice arrangements (if applicable)
 - Proof of Public Liability Insurance
 - Provide a Project risk assessment



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