

TOGETHER FOR THE TARWIN

Prospectus 2026





Together for the
TARWIN

This prospectus outlines a suite of priority projects for potential investment to support the delivery of the Tarwin Catchment Vision. Developed through the Our Catchments, Our Communities program, with the support of DEECA and West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority, it is intended to guide and attract investment into coordinated, catchment-scale initiatives.

The projects identified in the prospectus are designed to leverage the resources, knowledge and expertise of partner organisations. Together, they reflect a shared commitment to catchment stewardship—where individual and collective action delivers long-term environmental, social and economic benefits for people and place.

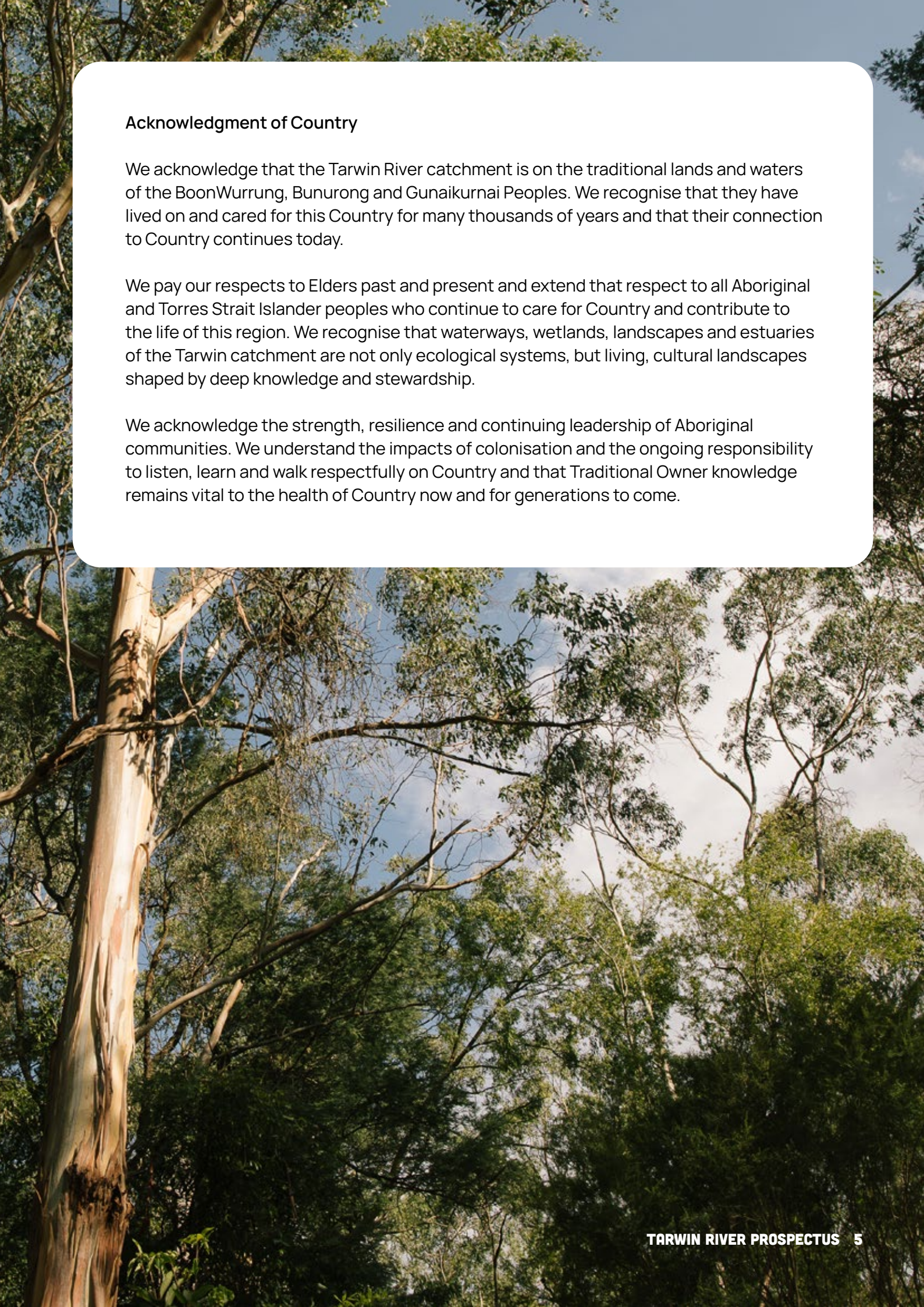
This prospectus is the culmination of multiple workshops which have formed a strong partnership and collated and refined information contributed by all partners, to deliver this prospectus.

CONTENTS

Acknowledgment of Country	5
Who we are	6
Vision for the Tarwin Catchment	8
Case Study 1 - I love the Tarwin	10
Case Study 2 - Putting fish back into Fish Creek	11
Investment Opportunities	12
1- Starting at the source	14
2 - Battery Creek Revegetation	15
3 - Spartina Control	16
4 - Lyrebird Link	17
5 - Reviving the Bluckspur Wetland	18
6 - Protecting Private Property	19
7 - Cultural Competancy	20
8 - Efficient Effluent Planning	21
9 - Lifting the Profile of the Tarwin	22







Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge that the Tarwin River catchment is on the traditional lands and waters of the BoonWurrung, Bunurong and Gunaikurnai Peoples. We recognise that they have lived on and cared for this Country for many thousands of years and that their connection to Country continues today.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who continue to care for Country and contribute to the life of this region. We recognise that waterways, wetlands, landscapes and estuaries of the Tarwin catchment are not only ecological systems, but living, cultural landscapes shaped by deep knowledge and stewardship.

We acknowledge the strength, resilience and continuing leadership of Aboriginal communities. We understand the impacts of colonisation and the ongoing responsibility to listen, learn and walk respectfully on Country and that Traditional Owner knowledge remains vital to the health of Country now and for generations to come.

WHO WE ARE

Together for the Tarwin is a collaborative partnership that brings organisations and community together to care for the Tarwin River catchment as a connected system, supporting a healthy, resilient landscape.

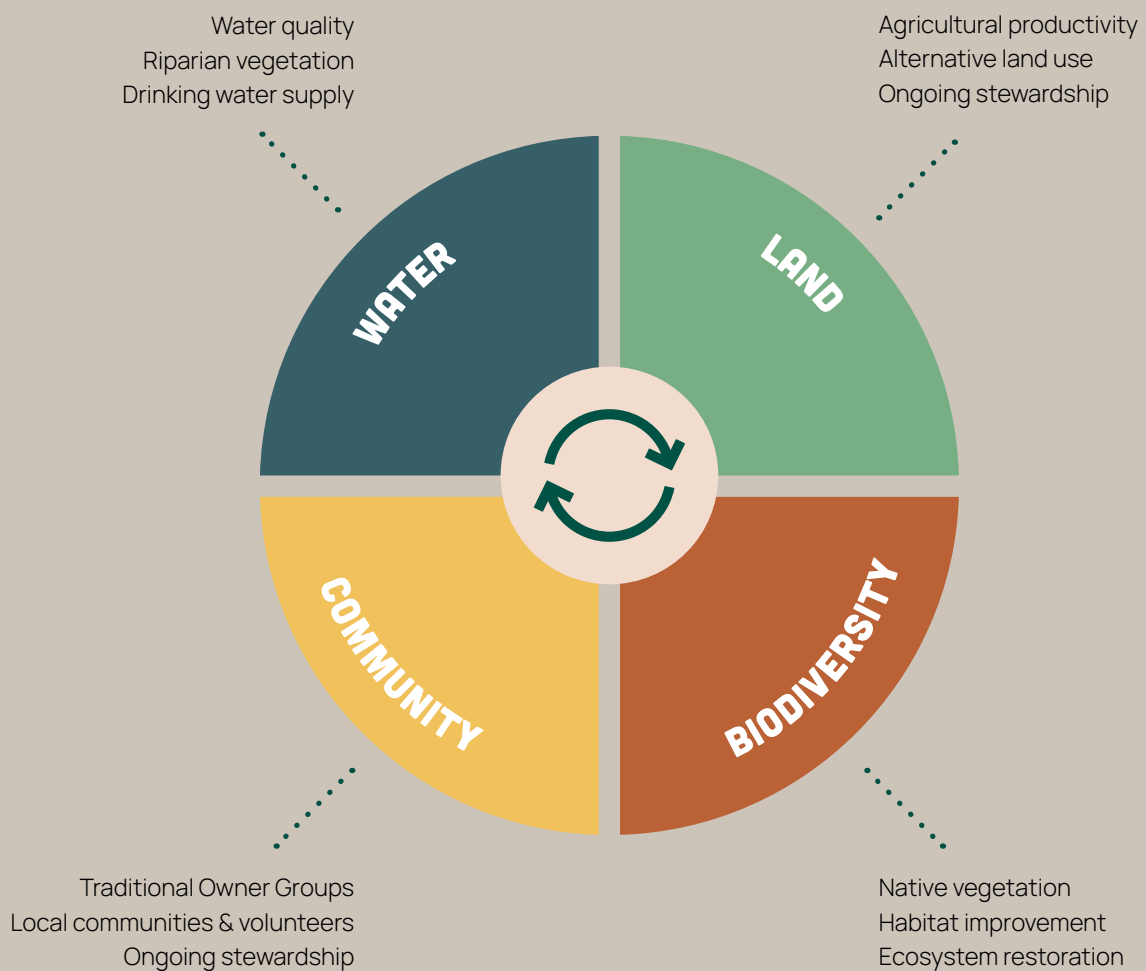
The partnership connects Landcare, the WGCMA, Traditional Owners, government agencies, and community based organisations with a shared commitment to the long term health and resilience of the catchment.

The Tarwin River catchment includes the East and West branches of the Tarwin River, their tributaries, and the connected land, biodiversity, water, and community values that depend on a healthy system.

Partnerships at their best leverage the combined skills, knowledge, and resources of multiple organisations to deliver stronger outcomes than could be achieved individually. Organisations working within the Tarwin River catchment have demonstrated a clear willingness to align efforts, share responsibility, and focus collectively on positive outcomes.

WGCMA is working with representatives from each of the Traditional Owner groups in the catchment to understand their preferences for participation, and how they wish to consider areas where there is currently no formal recognition. It is the intent for Traditional Owner participation to be respectful, meaningful and self-determined.





VISION FOR THE TARWIN RIVER CATCHMENT

In fifty years, the Tarwin River catchment is a healthy, connected and resilient system, from the headwaters through farming landscapes and townships to Anderson Inlet and the sea.

Rivers, wetlands and the estuary function as one living system, supporting native species, clean water and flood resilience. The catchment is cared for through shared stewardship with Traditional Owners, landholders and agencies working together. Productive and sustainable land use supports local livelihoods, and landscapes and communities are prepared for climate change, ensuring people and nature thrive together.



The background of the page is a photograph of a dense forest. In the foreground, there is a shallow stream with water reflecting the surrounding greenery. The banks are covered with large, vibrant green tree ferns and some fallen brown leaves. In the background, tall, moss-covered tree trunks rise up, partially obscured by more ferns and foliage. The lighting is soft and dappled, suggesting sunlight filtering through the canopy.

Together for the Tarwin builds on many years of collaborative effort across community, government and land management organisations within the Tarwin River catchment.



CASE STUDY ONE

I love the Tarwin

A convoy of kayakers, all wearing 'I love the Tarwin' t-shirts, explored the lower reaches of South Gippsland's largest river system. The trip, which was organised by the Tarwin Landcare Group, began at a cattle farm at Middle Tarwin and finished 10km downstream at Tarwin Lower. Some paddlers recalled growing up on nearby farms and swimming, fishing or waterskiing on the Tarwin, while others shared more recent experiences of kayaking, bushwalking and birdwatching. Several spoke about the work they are doing to restore land along the many creeks and gullies that make up the Tarwin Catchment.

Many of the paddlers continued their "I love the Tarwin" conversations over lunch and discussed what they could do to address erosion, habitat loss and poor water quality in and around the Tarwin and its tributaries.

Participants were encouraged to consider applying for Victorian Landcare Grants to carry out smaller projects. In the meantime, Tarwin Landcare Group and South Gippsland Landcare Network (SGLN) resolved to explore opportunities to develop and implement a whole-of-catchment Tarwin Project.

On the back of the day, the Tarwin River Symposium was hosted by SGLN to further explore ideas of catchment wide works and to hear stories about how communities can help build a healthy catchment.



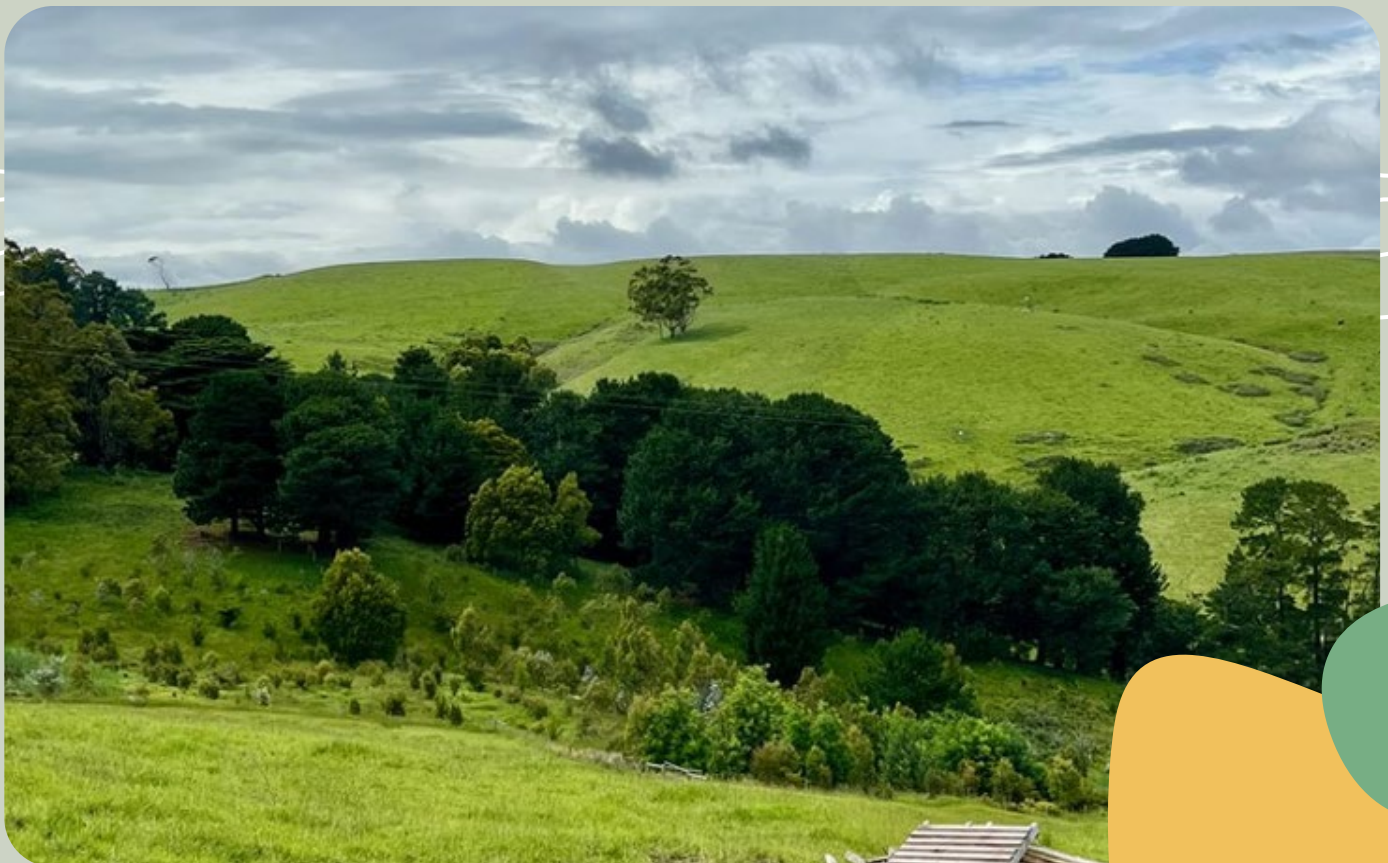
CASE STUDY TWO

Putting fish back into Fish Creek

The Fish Creek Landcare Group was formed in 1992 and strives to provide the community with leadership and education for an ecologically sustainable environment through coordination, cooperation and communication.

Fish Creek Landcare Group has had a strong focus on revegetating along the banks of Fish Creek through its ongoing 'Putting the fish back into Fish Creek' program.

The group introduced the plan to the community and engaged with landowners with creek frontage to join the project. The highly successful project has seen all of Fish Creek from the township to the headwaters fenced off from stock and revegetated. To date 11 km of fencing has been completed, and 20,000 native plants have been planted ensuring better catchment health from the headwaters, all the way through to Anderson Inlet.



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Projects

- 1 Starting at the Source**
Lead - Gippsland Threatened Species Action Group
- 2 Battery Creek Revegetation**
Lead - Prom Coast Ecolink
- 3 Spartina Control**
Lead - Parks Victoria
- 4 Lyrebird Link**
Lead - South Gippsland Landcare Network
- 5 Reviving the Blackspur Wetland**
Lead - South Gippsland Landcare Network
- 6 Private Land Protection**
Lead - Trust for Nature
- 7 Cultural Competancy**
Lead - West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority
- 8 Efficient Effluent Planning**
Lead - West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority
- 9 Lifting the profile of the Tarwin**
Lead - West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority



Project Theme

- Land
- Community
- Water
- Biodiversity

Cost Scale

\$\$\$\$: \$1M+ • \$\$\$: \$500k-\$1M • \$\$: \$101K-\$500K • \$: <\$100K



1 STARTING AT THE SOURCE

This project will restore native vegetation and improve habitat connectivity in the upper West Tarwin River catchment by enhancing remnant vegetation and establishing strategic biolinks. These works will improve catchment health and deliver broader downstream environmental benefits. The project will also help inform the development of a larger, landscape-scale restoration program across the catchment, supported by ongoing stewardship and community engagement to encourage sustainable land management practices. A structured monitoring and evaluation framework will guide adaptive management, measure outcomes, and support the successful expansion of future restoration efforts.

Actions and key outcomes

Actions:

Implementing monitoring, evaluation and assessment processes.

Key outcomes:

Improved understanding of what works, adaptive management and more effective investment over time.

Actions:

Stock exclusion fencing, revegetation and targeted weed control along waterways.

Key outcomes:

Healthier riparian zones, improved water quality, reduced erosion and stronger connections between aquatic and terrestrial habitats.

Actions:

Engaging local community groups in data collection, monitoring and knowledge sharing.

Key outcomes:

Greater community involvement, increased local knowledge and stronger connections between people and place.

Actions:

Enhancing existing native vegetation and connectivity of priority habitats.

Key outcomes:

Healthier riparian zones, improved water quality, reduced erosion and stronger connections between aquatic and terrestrial habitats.

Actions:

Providing expert advice, technical support and extension services for landholders.

Key outcomes:

Improved on ground management, stronger landholder capability and long term care of land and waterways.

Theme

Land

Lead Partner

Gippsland Threatened Species Action Group

Delivery Partners

Arawata Landcare Group, Korumburra Landcare Group, South Gippsland Landcare Network, Bass Coast Landcare Network, Friends of Korumburra Botanic Park, South Gippsland Shire, South Gippsland Water, WGCMA, Traditional Owners

Duration

Scalable up to 5 years

Location

Upper West Branch of the Tarwin River Catchment

Cost

\$\$\$\$

2

BATTERY CREEK REVEGETATION

This project delivers targeted environmental restoration within a strategic biolink corridor in the Battery Creek catchment. It will undertake focused revegetation to stabilise soils, reduce erosion and sedimentation, and improve water quality and catchment resilience. Located alongside a well used walking trail, the project also creates opportunities for community involvement and enhances local biodiversity values. Building on the proven success of previous plantings at the site, the project provides a low risk, scalable model with clear potential for replication by adjoining landholders.

Actions and key outcomes

Actions:
 Stock exclusion fencing, riparian revegetation and targeted weed control to protect waterways.

Key outcomes:
 Improved water quality, reduced nutrient and sediment runoff, healthier aquatic habitats and more resilient waterways.

Actions:
 Enhancing biodiversity values and protecting priority habitats for threatened species.

Key outcomes:
 Improved habitat condition, increased species persistence and stronger ecological connectivity across the catchment.

Actions:
 Community planting days and hands on stewardship activities.

Key outcomes:
 Increased community involvement, strengthened local stewardship and long term care of waterways and landscapes.

Theme	Water
Lead Partner	Prom Coast Ecolink
Delivery Partners	South Gippsland Water, Fish Creek Landcare Group, South Gippsland Landcare Network, WGCMA Traditional Owners
Duration	Scalable up to 5 years
Location	Battery Creek Reservoir
Cost	\$



3

SPARTINA CONTROL

Spartina is a major threat to Anderson Inlet by degrading saltmarsh, mangrove, and seagrass ecosystems that support biodiversity and internationally significant migratory birds. Guided by a 10 year Spartina Management Plan, this project focuses on priority protection zones with the objective of eradication and long term containment. The program will build on current works and break up Spartina meadows, enable native vegetation recovery, and reduce reinfestation risk through ongoing monitoring.

Actions and key outcomes

Actions:
Targeted aerial control of Spartina to address priority infestations within the Inlet.

Key outcomes:
Reduced spread of invasive species, recovery of natural tidal processes, improved condition of inlet habitats and improved ecosystem balance.

Actions:
Restoring and improving habitat for migratory shorebirds of international significance.

Key outcomes:
Improved feeding and roosting habitat, strengthened biodiversity values, and contribution to Australia's international conservation commitments.

Actions:
Ongoing monitoring and assessment to understand past successes and failures and guide future management.

Key outcomes:
Evidence based decision making, improved project effectiveness, and refined approaches over time.

Theme	Biodiversity
Lead Partner	Parks Victoria
Delivery Partners	WGCMA South Gippsland Landcare Network Traditional Owners
Duration	Scalable up to 5 years
Location	Anderson Inlet
Cost	\$\$

4 LYREBIRD LINK

This project will deliver substantial, landscape scale benefits for the Tarwin catchment by significantly increasing riparian vegetation and strengthening wildlife connectivity between two of the region's largest remaining habitat areas. In a highly cleared landscape, improved ecological connectivity will support long term catchment health, healthier waterways, and more resilient native species populations. These outcomes will also encourage stronger stewardship and shared responsibility for the catchment among landholders and the wider community. Designed to scale with investment the project will enable lasting ecological recovery across the Tarwin River catchment.

Actions and key outcomes

Actions:

Riparian revegetation, stock exclusion fencing and targeted weed control to establish and strengthen biolink corridors.

Key outcomes:

Improved habitat connectivity, healthier riparian zones, improved water quality, enhanced aquatic habitats, reduced sediment and nutrient loads, and increased biodiversity.

Actions:

Creating safe movement pathways between remnant habitats to support species such as the Superb Lyrebird.

Key outcomes:

Increased genetic diversity, improved population viability and stronger connections between habitat areas.

Actions:

Community planting activities and citizen science field days.

Key outcomes:

Increased community awareness, stronger local stewardship and long term support for catchment health.

Theme

Biodiversity

Lead Partner	South Gippsland Landcare Network
Delivery Partners	WGCMA, Landcare groups , South Gippsland Shire Council, Parks Victoria , HVP, Friends of Mt Worth, Traditional Owners
Duration	Scalable up to 5 years
Location	Headwaters of Tarwin West Branch
Cost	\$\$\$



5 REVIVING THE BLACKSPUR WETLAND

This project will restore a strategically important section of the Tarwin River catchment, the Blackspur Wetland. By delivering lasting benefits for river health, biodiversity, and community connection. The completion of a paused stage of a long running, proven wetland restoration program, will restore habitat and enhance the scenic and educational value of a highly visited public landscape. Its location alongside the Great Southern Rail Trail creates ongoing opportunities for stewardship, learning, and appreciation of the Tarwin River, making this a high impact, legacy oriented investment in catchment health and community pride.

Actions and key outcomes

Actions:

Revegetation and targeted weed control.

Key outcomes:

Improved ecological function, increased habitat continuity and stronger connectivity across the landscape.

Actions:

Delivering restoration works in a highly visible public area with high foot traffic.

Key outcomes:

Demonstration of best practice restoration, increased public awareness and strong showcase value for future investment.

Actions:

Community planting field days and hands on participation opportunities.

Key outcomes:

Increased community involvement, strengthened stewardship and local ownership of restoration outcomes.

Actions:

Completing a paused stage of an existing project to extend earlier works.

Key outcomes:

Efficient use of prior investment, continuity of outcomes and accelerated delivery of catchment benefits.

Theme

Biodiversity

Lead Partner	South Gippsland Landcare Network
Delivery Partners	DEECA, South Gippsland Shire Council, Nerrena Tarwin Valley Landcare Group, WGCMA, Leongatha Rotary Club, Traditional Owners
Duration	2 years
Location	Blackspur Wetland
Cost	\$\$



PRIVATE LAND PROTECTION

Securing lasting conservation outcomes across the Tarwin catchment by permanently protecting high biodiversity private land and strengthening stewardship of existing conservation covenants. Expanding covenant coverage in priority habitats will safeguard critical flora and fauna while improving landscape connectivity. Support for existing covenantors will enhance vegetation quality and habitat condition delivering cumulative benefits for biodiversity, water quality, and catchment resilience. In a heavily cleared agricultural landscape, the project offers a high impact, legacy driven opportunity to secure nature in perpetuity through partnership with committed private landholders.

Actions and key outcomes

Actions:
Actively seeking new conservation covenants with willing landholders across the Tarwin River catchment.

Key outcomes:
Long term protection of high value habitats on private land and increased security for biodiversity and landscape values.

Actions:
Providing incentives, funding and expert advice to support restoration and management of existing covenant sites.

Key outcomes:
Improved condition of protected land, stronger ecological outcomes from existing covenants, and maximised return on past investment.

Theme	Land
Lead Partner	Trust for Nature
Delivery Partners	South Gippsland Landcare Network WGCMA Traditional Owners
Duration	Scalable up to 10 years
Location	Whole of catchment
Cost	\$\$

7 CULTURAL COMPETENCY

This project will build the cultural competency and cultural safety required for genuine, long term partnerships with Traditional Owners across the Tarwin catchment. By supporting Boonwurrung, Bunurong, and Gunaikurnai Peoples the project will foster trust, shared understanding, and two way learning among catchment partners. By strengthening partner readiness and reducing cultural burden on Traditional Owners, the project enables culturally informed catchment management and more equitable decision making into the future.

Actions and key outcomes

Actions:

Cultural awareness training delivered by each of the three Traditional Owner groups.

Key outcomes:

Improved cultural competency, culturally safe ways of working, and stronger, more respectful relationships between partners and Traditional Owners.

Actions:

On Country days that bring project partners together with Traditional Owner groups in culturally appropriate settings.

Key outcomes:

Deeper shared understanding, strengthened two way learning, and support for self determined involvement of Traditional Owners in caring for Country.

Theme	Community
Lead Partner	WGCMA
Delivery Partners	BLCAC GLaWAC Boonwurrung Land and Sea All delivery partners
Duration	3 years
Location	Activities will take place at sites/areas determined by the respective Traditional Owner group
Cost	\$

8

EFFICIENT EFFLUENT PLANNING

Delivering environmental, economic, and productivity benefits across the Tarwin catchment by improving how dairy effluent nutrients are retained and utilised on farm. In keeping valuable nitrogen and phosphorus out of waterways and in soils, the project will support improved water quality, healthier downstream ecosystems, and reduced nutrient loss in a catchment dominated by grazing enterprises. Participating farmers will benefit through improved soil health, reduced reliance on synthetic fertilisers and lower input costs. Scalable in design to match potential interest from landholders across the entire catchment area.

Actions and key outcomes

Actions:

Developing farm effluent management plans for an initial group of 20 farms.

Key outcomes:

Improved nutrient retention on farm, reduced nutrient losses to waterways, and improved water quality across the catchment.

Actions:

Providing incentives and support to encourage landholder participation in the implementation of effluent management plans.

Key outcomes:

Increased uptake of best practice nutrient management, broader catchment wide impact, and stronger landholder stewardship of land and waterways.

Theme

Land

Lead Partner	WGCMA
Delivery Partners	GippsDairy Fish Creek Landcare Group AgVic South Gippsland Landcare Network
Duration	3 years
Location	Beginning in the Fish Creek area Working towards all of Catchment
Cost	\$\$\$\$



9 LIFTING THE PROFILE OF THE TARWIN

This project will establish the Tarwin River catchment's capacity to attract and sustain long term investment by using a credible engagement and advocacy approach. In presenting a unified partnership voice and a clear, evidence based case for investment, the project will attract government, philanthropic, industry, and community funding aligned with shared catchment priorities and Traditional Owner obligations. The outcomes will include strengthened partnerships, increased community engagement, coordinated funding efforts, and the resources needed to secure multi year investment.

Actions and key outcomes

Actions:

Developing a Strategic Engagement and Advocacy Plan to guide coordinated communication and partner alignment.

Key outcomes:

Clear strategic direction for engagement activities, stronger advocacy capability, and more effective positioning with funders and stakeholders.

Actions:

Developing a suite of communication materials, including maps, infographics, branding, digital and media assets such as a web based story map, short video and social media content.

Key outcomes:

Increased visibility, stronger partner alignment, improved public understanding, and more compelling communication with current and potential investors. Value for future investment.

Actions:

Preparing a funding prospectus to sit alongside the Strategic Directions Statement.

Key outcomes:

Improved investment readiness, clear articulation of project opportunities, and enhanced ability to attract and secure coordinated funding.

Theme

Community

Lead Partner	WGCMA South Gippsland Landcare Network
Delivery Partners	All project partners will provide input into the approach and products
Duration	5 years
Location	Whole of catchment
Cost	\$





Together for the
TARWIN

