

This project has been assisted by the New South Wales Government through its Environmental Trust.

# Achievements of the Roadside Vegetation Implementation Project 2012-2013

## NAME

Local Government NSW

## WEB ADDRESS

[Roadside Vegetation Implementation Project](#)

## Overview

The NSW Environmental Trust provided funding to Local Government NSW (LGNSW) to deliver a twelve month project to provide grants to NSW councils to assist in undertaking priority roadside vegetation management works. Grants were only available to councils with endorsed Roadside Vegetation Management Plans (RVMP), or other equivalent approved plans. This project is the Roadside Vegetation Implementation Project (RVIP).



## Background

The RVIP has been established with the following objectives:

- to allow for the protection, revegetation and regeneration of large areas of linear reserves across the State;
- to improve environmental condition and enhance ecological corridors in NSW;
- to provide funds to regional councils and help regional economies; and
- to add value to a considerable investment already made by the Environmental Trust which funded councils to prepare RVMPs in 2005.

Roadside vegetation projects which build corridors by linking roads with other linear reserves including Travelling Stock Routes, rail corridors and utility easements were encouraged. Linking with vegetation on other public land, including national parks, nature reserves and Crown reserves, and with vegetation on private land (including wildlife refuges) were also supported as the creation of broader corridors can assist in ensuring roadside environments are more sustainable in the longer term.

## Implementation

### Funding

A total of \$1.3 million in funding was available to NSW local councils, for grants of up to \$50,000. Two or more councils were eligible to apply for a regional project with grants of up to \$100,000 available for such projects. Projects were for a duration of up to 12 months and were completed by 30 June 2013, however a few projects have been granted extensions due to delays as a result of climatic conditions, or other issues out of their control.

**Grant assessment**

Grant applications were assessed against applications from similar sized councils (based on LGA population) to ensure that projects only compete against other similar sized councils. These categories were:

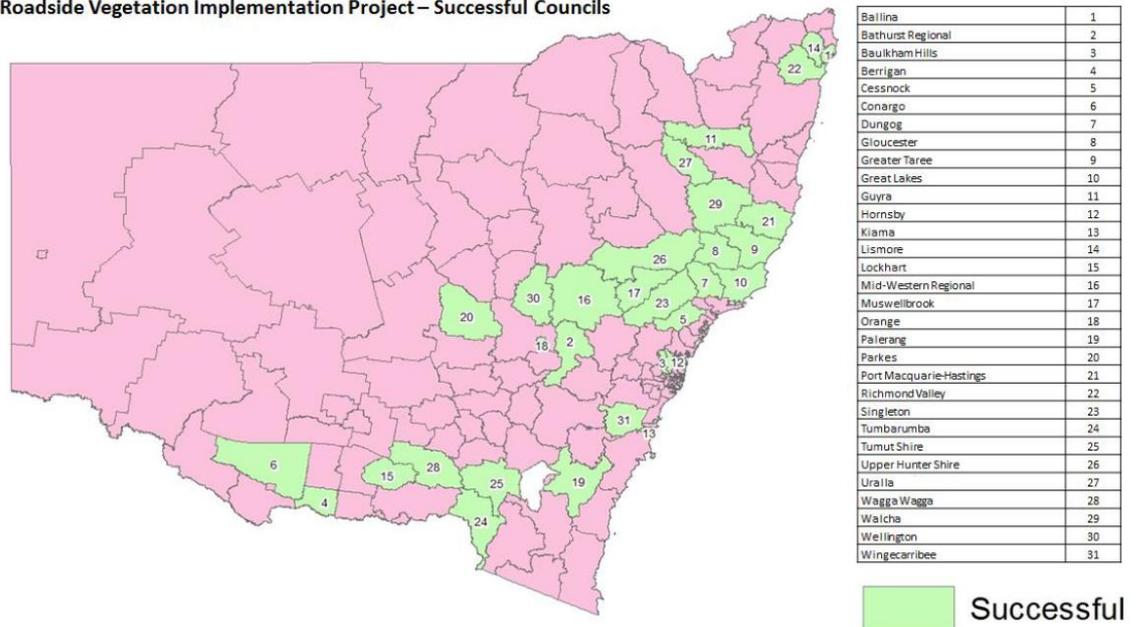
- Less than 20,000 people
- 20,000 – 60,000 people
- Over 60,000 people

**Successful projects**

Successful projects were announced in February 2012 with 28 projects being funded to a total value of \$1,286,428, including 4 regional scale projects. In total, 31 NSW councils received funding.

The map below details the council areas with funded projects.

**Roadside Vegetation Implementation Project – Successful Councils**



Types of projects funded include:

- rehabilitation and restoration, including weeding, regeneration and revegetation
- signage to identify high conservation areas
- actions to protect threatened species
- erosion and sediment control activities
- training of staff
- community engagement on the values of roadside vegetation
- connectivity of roadside corridors and associated works

**Significant Roadside Environment Area (SREA) signage**

The RVIP also updated the template for SREA signage developed by the Roadside Environment Committee (REC). The template was provided to all projects and resulted in 225 SREA signs being installed across NSW.

**Significant Roadside Environment Area**

Call (XX) XXXX XXXX before commencing works in this area  
Local Council Name contact Name Here  
Site reference number XXXXX  
[www.localcouncilwebsites.nsw.gov.au](http://www.localcouncilwebsites.nsw.gov.au)

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## Outcomes

The project has been extremely well received by councils. The opportunity to implement key priority activities identified through their roadside vegetation management plans was keenly sought.

The project set a high standard of eligibility as all councils applying for funding needed to demonstrate how their project was consistent with their RVMP, and further that their RVMP must be endorsed by their council. Some RVMPs have remained as operational documents, and the intent to elevate their status to a council-endorsed plan was to ensure that higher level council staff/managers and councillors were both aware of the plan, and committed to its implementation.

Much of the work funded has been environmental weed control, with follow up regeneration and/or revegetation activities. Councils have demonstrated a commitment to the ongoing management of these sites, to ensure their success.

The achievements of the RVIP are significant. Across NSW the RVIP has undertaken:

- Regeneration of an area of 3,714,357 square metres of linear reserves across NSW
- Revegetation activities achieved across 453,467 square metres including the establishment of 10,610 individual plants
- Weeds removed from an area of 15,365,378 square metres from across project sites
- 29 training sessions on roadside environmental management have been held, with 426 people participating in these sessions
- The development of 1340 educational products across the projects with an estimated reach of 83,000 people

## Key Learnings

The project has generated a renewed interest in preparing and updating RVMPs, as councils seek the best available information to manage their roadside areas.

Many councils have indicated a need for improved vegetation assessment information to support and update their plans, or in some cases prepare a plan where one has not existed. The RVIP could not fund such work given its focus on on-ground works, however there is a need to support councils to update their RVMPs, and more detailed and recent vegetation assessment data is required to enable this.

Many RVMPs were developed using a small grant from the REC in 2005, however a significant number of plans have not been updated despite more recent information being available. Changes to legislation, including in relation to the management of threatened species, should also be reflected in plans.

Many smaller rural shires rely on grants to undertake projects such as this. The LGNSW will continue to seek the support of the NSW Environmental Trust to invest resources in encouraging councils to engage in the management of roadside environment areas, particularly for councils with limited existing capacity. This includes:

- supporting the further development and update of RVMPs
- implementing training programs
- the delivery of on-ground works

## Contact

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