

NSW Flying Fox Grant Program – Stream 3 Grants Awarded

The NSW Flying Fox Grant Program 2016-17 assisted councils manage flying fox camps, consistent with the NSW Flying Fox Camp Management Policy 2015. Local Government NSW was engaged by the Office of Environment and Heritage to deliver the Program. The Program objectives sought to assist councils:

- Implement emergency flying fox camp management measures where there are significant community impacts (Stream 1)
- Prepare flying fox camp management plans (Stream 2)
- Implement approved actions in flying fox camp management plans (Stream 3)

A total of \$1 million in funding has been made available to NSW councils under the flying foxes Grants Program. LGNSW awarded the following local government organisations Stream 3 funding to deliver flying fox camp management plans actions.

| Applicant | Grant | Project Description |
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| Bellingen Shire Council | \$43,675 | Implementing the Bellingen Island Flying Fox Camp Management Plan. The project included education and awareness to improve the perception of flying foxes, reduce complaints, reduce negative interactions between adjacent landholders and flying foxes and provide training for people working in and around the camp. A restoration plan was developed, including high priority weed management actions to assist restoring flying fox habitat. Education and awareness raising actions addressing negative perceptions and a lack of knowledge of the importance of flying foxes and their habitats, were included in the project. The project also contributed to the safety of volunteers, community members, and Council staff working and living in and around the camp. |
| Cessnock City Council | \$50,000 | Implementing the East Cessnock Flying Fox Camp Management Plan. Management approaches outlined in the camp management plan were implemented. Actions included property modification assistance for residents, such as the provision of car, pool and clothesline covers, air conditioners, and double-glazed windows. Community education to increase community understanding of how to manage living with flying foxes were part of the project. Weed removal, trimming and clearing of the understory, removal of tree limbs and whole trees that posed a health risk – were also undertaken. General landscape maintenance and the cleaning of excrement from public assets adjoining the camp took place. Buffers were created by clearing or trimming trees, particularly canopy trees, around the boundary of the site to develop space between the camp and residents / primary school. |

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| Clarence Valley Council | \$34,000 | <i>Maclean flying fox Management.</i> Council undertook activities to improve the buffer and the condition of the Maclean Flying Fox camp. This involved removal of overhanging limbs above houses to address the concerns of residents. Removal of dead and dangerous trees to address safety concerns was also carried out. Weed control and follow up replanting with native species occurred in critical habitat areas. Buffers of up to 10 m were created and maintained beside residential housing. Limb removal and weed control work was carried out in winter, ensuring flying fox numbers were low and out of breeding season, and to minimise harm to flying foxes. Suitable native trees for flying fox habitat were replanted where weeds such as camphor laurel were removed, significantly improving the camp and conditions for flying foxes over time. This project enabled Council to carry out actions assisting the Maclean community conserve and co-exist with flying fox populations. Improvements to the buffer zone around the camp enhanced community amenity and perceptions of living with the camp. Weed control and revegetation in the camp improved conditions for the bats, by extending the area of suitable native habitat. |
| Coffs Harbour City Council | \$35,000 | <i>Implementation of the LGA wide flying fox Camp Management Plan.</i> The project rehabilitated 26 hectares of potential flying fox habitat at 3 permanent camp locations, through weed control and planting to improve the quality of the habitat and to assist natural regeneration. Focussed on the Coffs Creek and Woolgoolga camps, the project strengthened and improved the quality of vegetation within core camp areas. This aimed to encourage flying foxes to remain in camp locations - to reduce the spread of noise and odour impacts over residential areas. The project ensured buffer areas to camps are maintained with lower growing vegetation - to discourage flying fox habitation. Works in the core areas of camps occurred outside of the breeding season to minimise disturbance to the animals. The works occurred at the recommended rate to prevent unacceptable changes to microclimates within the camps. The project developed vegetation management plans for camps and erected information and interpretive signage to educate residents on the value of flying foxes to the ecosystem. |
| Ku-ring-gai Council | \$50,000 | <i>Implementation of 'Ku-ring-gai Flying Fox Reserve Management Plan 2013' and '10 Year Habitat and Roost Management Plan 2018'.</i> The 10 Year Habitat and Roost Management Plan guides the actions of Council and Bushcare within the reserve and outlines monitoring reporting requirements. These focus on how management actions impact the roosting habits of bats and microclimate. The Project entailed bush regeneration works, interpretive signage and ongoing monitoring to inform the Plan. Following selective tree removal in the reserve in 2015, the residual and most direct impact upon adjoining residents is noise. Double glazing of windows, identified by impacted residents as a desired solution, was proposed as an effective mitigation measure against noise impacts. Double glazing windows on selected properties adjacent to the camp was trialled, with monitoring to evaluate success. |

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| Lake Macquarie City Council | \$45,000 | Blackalls Park Flying Fox Camp Management Plan Implementation. The Draft Blackalls Park Flying Fox Camp Management Plan was prepared to manage the impacts of the camp on the surrounding community. An extensive community survey and review of options available for site management was undertaken. The Plan guides longer term solutions to minimise conflicts between the camp and surrounding residents, with objectives being to avoid dispersal of the camp, preventing harm to flying foxes, improving the natural habitat values of the site, and reducing and minimising conflicts between flying foxes and people. Actions undertaken included habitat restoration and vegetation management, a community engagement and information program, a community assistance program, establishment of an on-site residential buffer and flying fox monitoring. Improved flying fox habitat in the centre of the site is intended to concentrate camp occupation away from surrounding residential areas and the road. Reduced conflict between people and flying foxes in this location was the aim of the project. |
| Nambucca Shire Council | \$15,400 | Gordon Park flying fox Camp - Education, Restoration and Revegetation Program. This project provided educational material and signage about the biology, habit and conservation status of flying foxes, aiming to build empathy, understanding and interest toward the species. As well as the general community, information was directed towards local schools to combat intergenerational misunderstanding of the species. Other activities helped restore the significant littoral rainforest in the area. To develop the restoration plan, Council consulted with the Rainforest Committee, and worked collaboratively to create a plan to restore the rainforest whilst not harming the flying foxes. |
| Singleton Council | \$12,100 | Burdekin Park Tree Management. Council carried out approved tree safety management works in Burdekin Park, initiated by the resident flying fox camp. Pruning park trees removed dead wood that was a safety hazard to park users. The community were informed of the proposed works and a bat carer was engaged to be onsite and to continually assess the welfare of flying fox during the works. The pruning works helped to meet community expectations of council park management. |
| Sutherland Shire Council | \$50,000 | Kareela Flying Fox Camp Management. Ongoing dispersal activities were conducted to prevent the permanent re-colonisation of the Kareela flying fox camp, following initial dispersal actions in winter 2015. Maintenance dispersal actions were generally limited to staff using torches and walking around the camp observing the flying foxes. Noise and/or smoke were considered as a last resort. Consideration of the welfare of flying foxes was foremost in the dispersal activities. Welfare triggers are included in the S95(2) certificate and were adhered to. Dispersal activities were supervised by an OEH approved ecologist. The intended outcome - for no flying foxes roosting during the day at the Kareela flying fox camp - was achieved. |

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| Sutherland Shire Council | \$27,780 | Kareela Flying Fox Camp Management. This grant provided opportunities for residents and schools to get pressure-washers, covers, double-glazing, air-conditioning and tree removal. The project aimed to provide the opportunity for residential and school properties within 50m of the flying fox camp boundary to participate. |
| Sutherland Shire Council | \$50,000 | Kareela Flying Fox Camp Management. This project included targeted actions to reduce the impacts of the Kareela flying fox camp on adjacent residential and school properties. Vegetation modification was undertaken to create greater distance between the camp and adjacent properties. The vegetation removal works made a buffer between the schools, residents and the flying fox camp. To minimise the impacts on the GHFF, vegetation removal was carried out during winter, following a successful dispersal or after GHFF have flown out for the night to feed. The buffer between adjacent properties and the camp minimises the noise, faecal drop and odour issues. Vegetation was cleared and replanted with suitable low growing vegetation. |
| Sutherland Shire Council | \$37,500 | Camellia Gardens Flying Fox Camp Management – roosting habitat management. The project included installation of canopy-mounted sprinklers and lights in select trees within the Gardens to deter flying foxes from roosting and allow depleted vegetation time to rest and regenerate. The project also created alternative flying fox habitat by planting more suitable and resilient vegetation in areas within and adjacent to the gardens. The work was supported by educational events to garner acceptance of flying fox presence and dispel myths surrounding flying foxes. |
| Tamworth Regional Council | \$50,000 | Implementation of the Tamworth Region flying fox Camp Management Plan. The project developed web pages, social media campaigns, educational/warning signage and an education campaign. The project also provided subsidised clothes line and car covers and pressure-washers. Pruning and tree and weed removal in properties immediately adjacent to camps thinned out habitat along King George Avenue. The removal of noxious weeds was undertaken during periods of no flying fox occupation or when flying foxes were not expecting to give birth. Intended outcomes include: a reduction in fear-driven complaints; reduction in impact-related complaints from residents adjacent to camps (or under flight paths); reduction in numbers of flying foxes in the King George Avenue location and encouraging flying foxes to move to the Bicentennial Park portion of the camp. |