

Rural Land Management Grant

2022/23





ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, which includes the Gunung Willam Balluk clan, as the Traditional Custodians of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander living cultures as a vital part of Australia’s identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to the existing family members of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and to Elders past, present and future.

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1. GRANT OVERVIEW

1.1 Program Purpose

Council values healthy rural green wedges within Hume and encourages landowners to implement sustainable land management practices in accordance with the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*. The aim of the Rural Land Management Grant (RLMG) is to provide landowners and managers with the support and incentive to conduct sustainable land management activities across their property. This includes noxious weed control, pest animal control, erosion control and protection and enhancement of native vegetation (if present) and developing habitat/conservation assets by planting indigenous vegetation.

1.2 Rural Land Management Grant

The RLMG is provided in the form of a reimbursement to the landowner or manager via cheque following submission and approval of an annual application form. The grant program is offered on a competitive basis and has a limited pool of funding; as a result some eligible applicants may not receive the grant. There is cap of \$2,000 grant funding per property per year.

The grant is offered at \$300 per property plus \$20 per hectare. Example:

- Five-hectare property - landowner would receive \$400 (\$300 base grant plus \$20 x 5 hectares = \$400).
- 40-hectare property - landowner would receive \$1,100 (\$300 base grant plus \$20 x 40 hectares = \$800).

1.3 Who can apply?

Landowners or occupiers with property larger than 0.4 hectares that is zoned: Green Wedge, Green Wedge A, Rural Living and Farming.

2. GRANT ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The following criteria will be used to assess each property for the grant:

2.1 Property size

The property must be 0.4 hectares or more in size. Properties that are smaller than 0.4 hectares will not be eligible to receive a grant. For further information contact Council's Sustainable Environment Department on 9205 2200.

2.2 Sustainable Land Management

Sustainable Land Management refers to the use of land resources, including soils, water, animals and plants, for the production of goods while simultaneously ensuring the long-term productive potential of the land and its environmental functions. Land managers must seek to manage their land sustainably, including the control of noxious weeds and preventing their spread to neighbouring properties, protecting soils, native vegetation and creeks and managing pest animals.

The Victorian *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CaLP Act) legislates several requirements to ensure land is managed sustainably. This includes preventing the spread of and, as far as possible, eradicating noxious weeds such as Serrated Tussock and Artichoke Thistle and declared pest animals such as rabbits, feral cats and foxes, protecting soils and protecting water resources. Further information about the CaLP Act is included in section 4.1.

To be considered eligible, a Council Officer must see evidence during their property inspection that the property is being satisfactorily managed in accordance with the objectives of this program.



3. RURAL LAND MANAGEMENT GRANT APPLICATION

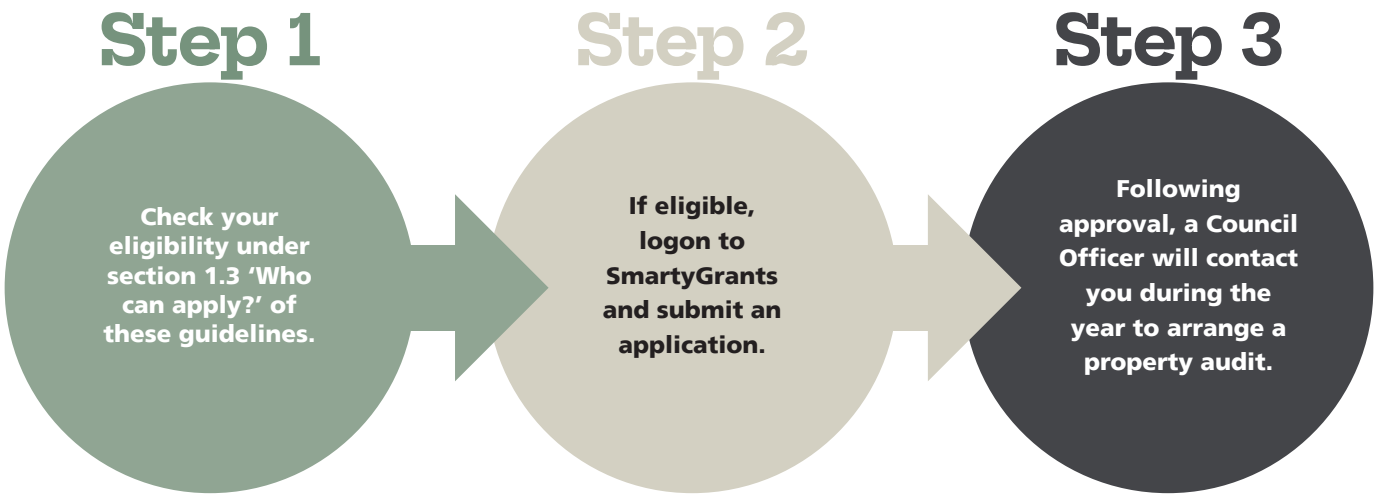
3.1 How can I apply?

Applicants must complete an annual application form by the due date to be eligible for the grant. All applicants who submit a fully completed application form will be considered for the grant. Council may also conduct a property visit with the applicant to discuss their land management works. It is a requirement of the grant application that applicants agree to a site visit by a Council Officer. This is an opportunity for landowners to seek any advice or guidance they may need.

To apply:

- Complete an application via SmartyGrants, an online grant management portal, from the 1 July 2022 to the 30 June 2023.
- From 1 July 2022 applicants will receive an email containing a link to the application form. SmartyGrants users must log in, then draft, submit and manage their applications.
- Approval of the application form will occur in accordance with the eligibly criteria. This may include a property visit from a Council Officer.
- Payment via cheque or EFT will occur after approval of the application form and will be provided to the landowner within two months of applying.

3.2 Application steps:



3.3 Time-frames

Time-frame	Activity
1 July 2022	Applications open.
1 July 2022-30 June 2023	Applications assessed, property visits organised and conducted.
30 June 2022	Applications close.

3.4 Application approval

Council reserves the right to not approve applications due to insufficient land management works on the property.

4. INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

4.1 Legislation:

Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994

The main legislation covering noxious weed and pest animal management in Victoria is the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* (CaLP Act). Under this Act species of plants and animals can be declared as noxious weeds and pest animals.

One of the main objectives of the CaLP Act is to protect primary production, Crown land, the environment and community health from the effects of noxious weeds and pest animals. The CaLP Act defines roles and responsibilities and regulates the management of noxious weeds and pest animals.

In relation to their land, a landowner must take all reasonable steps to:

- avoid causing or contributing to land degradation which causes or may cause damage to land of another land owner
- conserve soil
- protect water resources
- eradicate regionally prohibited weeds
- prevent the growth and spread of regionally controlled weeds
- prevent the spread of, and as far as possible eradicate, established pest animals.





Planning and Environment Act 1987

This Act sets up a system of planning schemes to regulate the use and development of land in Victoria. Clause 52.17 outlines the requirement for a permit to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation, unless the removal is exempt under the planning scheme that applies to the land.

4.2 Council resources

A range of resources and information is available to assist applicants. Information can be found on Council's page at hume.vic.gov.au For all enquires contact the Sustainable Environment Department on 9205 2200 or email ruralenvironment@hume.vic.gov.au

Land & Biodiversity Guidelines

Council's Land & Biodiversity Guidelines is a resource to assist in the management of rural land and the conservation and protection of natural environmental values. It includes such topics as:

- weed and pest animal management
- effective grazing
- managing soil erosion
- fire management
- managing native vegetation, revegetating and establishing windbreaks.

Directory of Service Providers

Council's Directory of Service Providers is an up to date list of local contractors and suppliers that service the Hume area. Contractor services include such things as weed control, pest animal control, fencing, revegetation, slashing and farming maintenance/assistance. Suppliers include farm supply stores and plant nurseries.

Priority weeds and pest animals

Council's WEEDeck is a waterproof durable weed identification guide that covers the priority weeds in the Hume area.

HumeLink

Hume City Council's
multilingual telephone information service.
General enquiries: Telephone 9205 2200

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Rural Land Management Grant Guidelines 2022/23

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