



BushTender Newsletter

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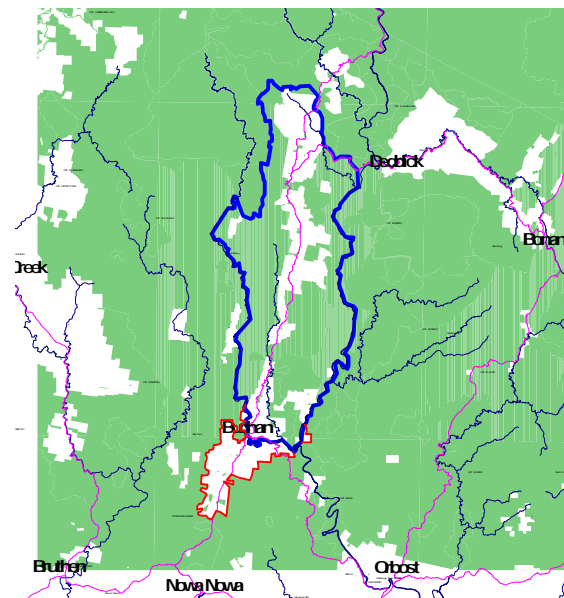
Expressions of Interest

To date there have been over 80 expressions of interest registered by landholders within the Gippsland trial areas.

Interested landholders still have time to register an expression of interest. Call the NRE Customer Service Centre on **136 186** or contact your local field officer to register your interest before it's too late.

Buchan-Snowy trial area expanded

The Buchan-Snowy trial area has been expanded to include land in the Buchan South area (see below). This expansion recognises the small number of landholders in the original Buchan-Snowy trial area relative to the Bairnsdale and Trafalgar trial areas and will provide the opportunity for greater landholder participation from this region.



— Original trial area boundary

— Expanded trial area boundary

For further information contact

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Introducing the BushTender field officers

Trafalgar trial area - Bruce Atkin



Bruce Atkin is a former Land for Wildlife officer based at the NRE Yarram office. Bruce says that the BushTender trial is about recognising the fact that landowners managing native vegetation beyond current obligations are providing a service to the rest of the community, a biodiversity service.

"BushTender offers landholders the opportunity to receive some economic return for the provision of this service and is a way of encouraging landholders to better manage bush on their property," he says.

Contact Bruce on 5183 9116

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Buchan – Snowy trial area – Nathan Oliver



Nathan is based at the Bairnsdale NRE office in Service Street. Nathan says he hopes to encourage landholders in the Buchan-Snowy region of East Gippsland region to participate in the Bush Tender Trial.

“This approach provides the benefit of conserving and increasing the ecological values of an area through appropriate land use. It also offers landholders the opportunity to be financially rewarded for costs incurred,” he says.

“Hopefully by the end of the project, an increased number of landholders will view remnant patches of vegetation on their property as more of an asset than a liability.”

Contact Nathan on 5152 0418

Bairnsdale trial area – Sheri MacFarlane



Sheri MacFarlane spent six months working for NRE in Ballarat as a Flora and Fauna Officer, involved in various projects before she was offered the position of BushTender Project Officer, at the Bairnsdale office.

“I have had a very long interest in conservation and biodiversity management, having been raised on a large farm in the Mallee. My dad had a keen interest in the environment, which I guess rubbed off on me,” Sheri said.

Sheri says that it is fantastic to see that conservation on private land is now being acknowledged as not being the sole responsibility of farmers.

“It also gives landholders the opportunity to contribute their knowledge and experience of the land to the management process and offers them the chance to obtain some financial assistance to follow through on that,” she says.

Contact Sheri on 5152 0413

Site assessments underway

Site assessments commenced in October in all trial areas and are expected to continue through to February 2003.

When will I be contacted?

All landholders who have registered an expression of interest in the trial will receive the offer of a site visit from a BushTender field officer.

If you have not yet had a call from a field officer, **don't panic!** You will be contacted over the coming months to arrange a site assessment on your property.

When do I put in a bid?

All participating landholders will have the opportunity to submit a bid for their agreed management plan following the site assessment by the BushTender field officer.

When will bids be assessed?

All bids will be assessed following receipt of the final landholder bid. This is likely to occur in February 2003 and successful bidders will be notified in March 2003.

What is the BushTender process?

1. Expression of Interest – landholders located in the trial areas can register an expression of interest through the NRE Customer Service Centre (Ph: **136 186**) or their local BushTender field officer.
2. Site Assessment – a BushTender field officer contacts each registered landholder to arrange a site visit. The field officer assesses the significance and quality of the native vegetation and discusses management options with the landholder.
3. Development of Management Plan – landholders identify the actions they are prepared to undertake and the field officer prepares a management plan as the basis for a bid. Landholders may choose 3 or 6-year agreements and may also choose from either a 10-year or permanent protection option.
4. Submission of Bid – the landholder submits a sealed bid that nominates the amount of payment being sought by them to undertake the agreed management plan.
5. Bid Assessment – all bids are assessed objectively on the basis of:
 - current conservation value of the site;
 - amount of service offered; and
 - costFunds will be allocated on the basis of 'best value for money', subject to maintaining acceptable value based on previous BushTender results.
6. Management Agreements – successful bidders will be able to sign final agreements based on the previously agreed management plan.
7. Reporting and Payments – periodic payments and reporting will occur as specified in the agreement.