

Want to connect with us?

For site assessments and help with on-ground work

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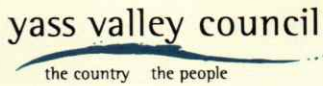


BUSH CONNECT PROGRAM

Yass Habitat Linkages

This exciting project will enable landholders to enhance biodiversity and improve sustainable farming in the Yass region by helping to create corridors of native vegetation across the landscape. Landholders in the project area interested in taking part in the project, are invited to contact Greening Australia.

PROJECT SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS



Commencing 2016



A 10-year project funded by the NSW Environmental Trust through a partnership between the Yass Area Network of Landcare Groups and Greening Australia



The importance of linkages

Creating habitat linkages for native plants and animals, means working with communities to find solutions that are practical, and possible, not just from the perspective of science, but also residents, farmers and industry.

Yass Habitat Linkages is a new project focusing on restoring wildlife habitat and vegetation across a valued productive agricultural landscape. Fragmentation of remnant vegetation is recognised by the Yass community as a significant issue, with the corresponding loss of biodiversity, wildlife habitat and reduced agricultural productivity associated with salinity, erosion and decline in soil health, driving the need for action.

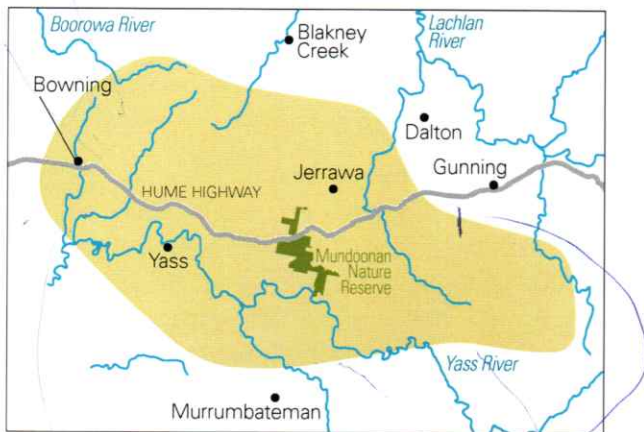
We know that by returning areas to native vegetation and linking them to older, remnant stands across both public and private land, we can improve biodiversity and productivity. This is because connecting fragments of native vegetation increases habitat for plants and animals to maintain viable population sizes and genetic diversity. It also helps to successfully disperse young native birds and animals into an environment that will support them to maturity, maintain seasonal foraging movements, and recolonise after events such as fire. An additional benefit is that connected vegetation creates 'thermal' refuges from the negative impacts of climate change.

Making our rural landscapes ecologically resilient requires thinking beyond individual farm borders. This project builds on previous work in the region and will invest in strategic revegetation to create conservation corridors within a working agricultural landscape.



We are looking forward to working with land managers who want to boost both productivity and biodiversity outcomes on their farm. Overall we are aiming for improvements in both conservation and productivity.

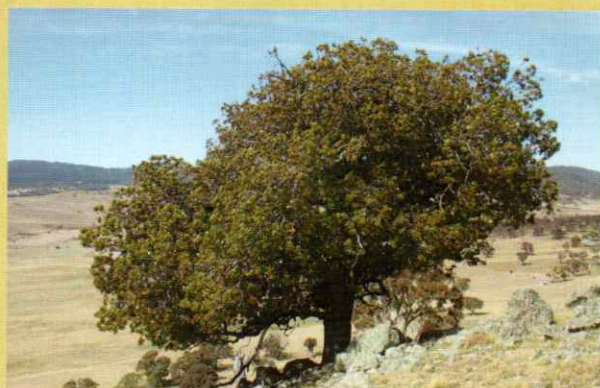
The area we will be working in lies within the New South Wales Great Eastern Ranges corridor, around Yass between Murrumbateman, Jerrawa and Bowning.



What does 'connectivity' require?

Our research and work with landholders has given us knowledge about what we need to create in our landscapes for them to become 'connected', we want to:

- Link remnants that are at least 10 hectares (25 acres) in size. If patches in your area are not that big, revegetating to enlarge them may be considered depending on their proximity to other remnant vegetation.
- Link remnants that are no more than 1 kilometre apart by:
 - revegetating corridors—ideally corridors of 20–25 metres as they provide habitat and facilitate movement between patches,
 - protecting and restoring scattered paddock trees over whole paddocks. These trees are important as they act as 'stepping stones' when no more than 100 metres apart. Many of our birds and native wildlife use these trees for travelling across open paddocks and for insects, one tree is a complete ecosystem,
 - creating patches and groves for trees and shrubs,
 - creating diversity in grassland with management such as rotational grazing.
- Enhance links by adding fallen timber, shrubs etc. to existing corridors and paddocks.
- Protect rocky areas for both reptiles and plants.



The Yass Habitat Linkages Project is fortunate to be part of other initiatives in the ACT and surrounding region such as the Greater Goorooyarroo, Murrumbateman Landcare Linking Biodiversity and Yass Rivers of Carbon projects. The work with landholders through these projects has already made a remarkable start in achieving a diverse, connected and sustainable landscape to be enjoyed by all well into the future.

Yass Habitat Linkages shares the vision of these projects to link the Cooma–Monaro region through to the Yass region, including significant areas like Mulligans Flat Reserve and the Mondoonen Ranges. These large-scale landscape connectivity projects will create corridors for wildlife and people alike, and it is exciting to be part of this ambitious community and government partnership.

Partnering with the Yass Area Network and Greening Australia are the Australian River Restoration Centre, the Community Environment Network–Land for Wildlife, the Yass Valley Council, South East Local Land Services, and local landholders.

The project is supported by the NSW Environmental Trust through the Bush Connect Program, with funding over the 10-year life of the project. Environmental Trust funding is matched by in-kind contributions from landholders and landcarers.



Are you interested?

If you are a landholder in the project target area, please contact Greening Australia and we can arrange for a site visit to discuss options for your property. We will work with you to identify the best places to protect and revegetate, within your overall farming or grazing system.

Assessments are made on the connectivity requirements outlined earlier, as these guide the project and are central to our work with you. Ongoing management and monitoring arrangements for each site are made through a 10-year landholder agreement with Greening Australia.

Land for Wildlife is also assisting with free property assessments. Subject to the landholder agreement, Land for Wildlife may undertake their own formal voluntary conservation agreements with landholders.

Funding is available, with \$4000 per kilometre of fencing assistance, and tubestock and direct seeding provided through Greening Australia. Local indigenous tubestock species suitable for the area will be supplied and, where appropriate, direct seeding may also be used.

