



# 2018 NATIONAL LANDCARE AWARDS

11 October  
Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

**Nominee: Murrumbidgee Landcare Inc, NSW**

**Category: Australian Government Excellence in Sustainable Farm Practices Award**

The Cross Property Planning project has connected 74 landowners across 56,000 hectares in NSW's central Murrumbidgee region in a bid to implement more sustainable land practices. The six-year project evaluated biodiversity attributes across each property to come up with a tailor-made plan for every farm.

Balancing conservation benefits with the bottom line was key, with some landowners wary of committing for fear of sustainability getting in the way of profitability. Enlisting landowners was also a challenge because the project needed to work across fence lines to preserve and link scattered native vegetation. And the properties themselves differed hugely in size, land condition, and management.

The Cross Property Planning Project leaned into that challenge by partnering with 25 organisations to deliver workshops covering a broad range of sustainable management practices. Landholders were able to implement practices they felt suited them and discard those that didn't. That flexibility allowed farmers new to natural resource management to start small.

Field days on landholder properties (over 60 in total, attended by 1,100 landholders so far) served as opportunities to demonstrate techniques such as pasture cropping, low-cost erosion control, low-input pasture management, paddock subdivision and weed containment via native species. Sustainable practices were also canvassed on individual property visits. Plans were drawn up based on each property's needs, with incentive funding provided to put them into practice.

So far 1,761 hectares of farmland has been fenced for the protection of native vegetation, with more than 86,000 native seedlings planted. Dams and other waterways have been fenced to control livestock access, reducing erosion and enhancing water quality. Paddocks have been subdivided to improve grazing management and regenerate native pastures. Integrated weed management and coordinated pest management has taken place, while revegetation around gullies has sought to prevent dryland salinity impacts. Remnant vegetation on properties, including scattered mature trees, has also been protected.

These undertakings have been recorded online, with 87 web resources now available to all landholders. Information from projects has also been disseminated to 1,200 property holders via regular newsletters mailed to the door, in addition to online updates blasted out to almost 700 people. This easy-access information will support the spread and replication of sustainable farming practices and increase landholder awareness of biodiversity threats. These resources will also assist in the building of a community in which learnings are shared among Landcarers of every generation.

Landcare is a grassroots movement that harnesses individuals and groups to protect, restore and sustainably manage Australia's natural environment and its productivity. Groups that fall under the Landcare umbrella work on a diverse range of environmental projects and include farmers embracing sustainable farm management and any community group that partakes in volunteer environmental activities. To find out how you can become a Landcare volunteer and for full details on all 2018 National Landcare finalists, visit [www.landcareaustralia.org.au](http://www.landcareaustralia.org.au)

This program is supported by Landcare Australia and the National Landcare Network, through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program.





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## Ends

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## Web Summary

The Cross Property Planning project has connected 74 landowners across NSW's central Murrumbidgee region, in a bid to implement more sustainable land practices. The six-year project evaluated biodiversity attributes across each property to come up with a tailor-made plan for every farm, while field days (over 60 in total, attended by 1,100 landholders so far) served as opportunities to demonstrate techniques. This has led to extensive re-fencing: of farmland to protect native vegetation, and of dams and other waterways to control livestock access, reduce erosion and enhance water quality. Paddocks have also been subdivided to improve grazing management and regenerate native pastures. Project information has been disseminated widely, online and via a hard-copy newsletter, with farmers able to share their experiences.

## Pull-out quote:

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