



Fact Sheet 01

Woodland

Questions and Answers

What is the *Woodland BushBids* Project?

Woodland BushBids is a project of the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board. *Woodland BushBids* complements investment in biodiversity conservation through projects such as the River Murray Forest (Department for Environment and Heritage) and the activities of the Local Action Planning groups (LAPs).

Is *Woodland BushBids* only interested in management of existing native vegetation?

Woodland BushBids is focused on protecting and managing existing native vegetation across the Murray Plains and into the Rangelands. Supplementary planting in existing patches of native vegetation, and planting of buffer areas around remnant vegetation may be considered as a management service in some circumstances. Block revegetation of areas that currently have no native species will not be supported through *Woodland BushBids*.

How much native vegetation do I have to manage to be eligible?

An eligible site must be at least 5ha in area and be assessed as native vegetation by a *Woodland BushBids* field officer.

I've got more than one area of native vegetation on my property; how is this dealt with?

You can submit separate bids for each area of native vegetation, or you can combine a number of sites on your property into one bid. Each separate successful bid will require an individual management plan to be included under the management agreement.

How will I know what management actions to undertake?

A *Woodland BushBids* officer will visit your property to discuss management options and undertake a site assessment. The *Woodland BushBids* officer will provide advice on current threats to native vegetation on your site and identify potential management actions (including timing and duration) to address these threats. You will also be able to discuss your own ideas for management during this process.

I've got a Heritage Agreement; is this considered as a management service?

Woodland BushBids aims to pay for management services that maintain or improve the quality of native vegetation on private land. An existing Heritage Agreement provides permanent protection and will be considered as a management service for the purpose of assessing bids.

Can I change the management actions in the draft management plan?

If there are any changes that you would like to make, or if you have any questions, please contact a *Woodland BushBids* officer on Tel: **1300 847 450** as soon as possible but within 10 business days of receiving the plan. If changes to the management plan are required, the management services will be reassessed and management plan redrafted. You will have 15 business days to return your bid after receiving your final management plan.

I am leasing the property; can I sign a management agreement?

Lessees will be eligible to sign a management agreement as long as they have the written authority of the owner of the site and the proposed management actions are not already the responsibility of the lessee under the existing lease arrangement. *Woodland BushBids* officers may request a copy of the lease.

How long are the management agreements for?

Management agreements will be for a 5-year period.

Will the management agreements be 'common law' or another type of agreement?

Yes, the management agreements will be contracts under common law.

What will be in the management agreement?

The agreement will be a simple document of around five pages in 'plain English'. It will contain a date of commencement and termination, obligations of the landholder and *Woodland BushBids* and interpretation clauses. The agreement will also contain a number of schedules including the payment schedule, an agreed management plan and a site map.





Who will know the contents of my bid and management agreement?

Bids will remain confidential between the landholder and *Woodland BushBids*, as will cost, payment and management service score details. Information on the geographic location of sites under agreement and the associated management plan will be available through *Woodland BushBids* for public accountability purposes. *Woodland BushBids* may also make general statistics available, in compliance with relevant information privacy legislation.

How will the agreements be monitored?

Landholders will be required to submit an annual report to *Woodland BushBids* detailing the actions undertaken during the preceding 12 months. *Woodland BushBids* will seek to revisit a number of sites annually. These visits will include an assessment of progress in implementing the management plan and may provide additional technical support to landholders. Follow-up assessments of the condition of the native vegetation will also be undertaken on some sites. Any breach of the signed agreement may result in the cessation of annual payments.

Can I change the proposed management actions once I have signed the agreement?

Management agreements can be varied with the written consent of both parties. *Woodland BushBids* will only consider changes that lead to an equal or improved biodiversity outcome. Re-negotiation of payment will not be possible.

Can I withdraw from the process?

You can withdraw from the process without penalty at any time up to signing the final management agreement. If you wish to withdraw from the agreement after this time you should contact *Woodland BushBids* to discuss the options.

Can I sell the property or transfer the lease before the end of the agreement?

The agreements are not registered on title. Sale of the site or transfer of the lease would terminate the agreement.

Woodland BushBids should be notified of any changes and may offer the new landholder the opportunity to sign a new agreement for completion of the actions specified in the original agreement.

What happens at the end of the agreement period?

At the end of the agreement period landholders' management obligations under the agreement cease. Landholders will then be able to manage the vegetation according to their own wishes and in accordance with other responsibilities applying at that time. Landholders will be free to enter into new arrangements for conservation management.

How much money can I apply for?

There is no fixed limit on the amount of money a landholder can bid for; however, bidding will be competitive. *Woodland BushBids* will determine the benefits and costs of each management plan and bid and allocate funds based on value for money.

How will I be paid?

You will receive an up-front payment for the first year of the agreement followed by annual payments by cheque, or other mutually agreed payment system, subject to submitting a report verifying the actions undertaken in the preceding 12 months.

Taxation implications

If you are considering participating in *Woodland BushBids* you should consult your financial adviser or the Australian Taxation Office about the income and tax implications of receiving *Woodland BushBids* funds.

Will I be eligible for public funds from other sources?

Successful bidders who sign *Woodland BushBids* management agreements will not be eligible to receive further funding through any other publicly-funded assistance program for those management actions identified in the management agreement for the period of the agreement.

Call 1300 847 450

for more information or to register an Expression of Interest.

