

# Marine Estate Management Strategy

## Wagonga Inlet Living Shoreline Grant

### Guideline

Last update: 31 March 2023

#### Purpose of this document

The *Marine Estate Management Strategy Wagonga Inlet Living Shoreline Grant Guideline* provides essential information for the potential Grantee of the one-off Marine Estate Management Strategy Wagonga Inlet Living Shoreline Grant (the Grant) to understand the purpose, outcomes and objectives of the Grant; the application and assessment process; the governance arrangements and the operation of the Grant.

#### Background

The *NSW Marine Estate Management Strategy 2018 - 2028 (MEMS)* is a key commitment of the NSW Government which sets the overarching framework to coordinate the management of the NSW marine estate and achieve the broad vision of a *healthy coast and sea, managed for the greatest wellbeing of the community, now and into the future*.

Nine management initiatives and a suite of associated management actions have been determined by:

- the range of values people have for the marine estate – social, cultural, environmental and economic.
- how to address the most significant threats to these values (identified in the statewide Threat and Risk Assessment).
- widespread stakeholder and community feedback.

Under **Initiative 1**, *To improve water quality and reduce marine litter for the benefit of marine habitats, wildlife and the community*, **Action 1.3** *Facilitate and deliver on-ground activities that reduce diffuse source water pollution through investigation and provision of funding programs and financial incentives*, supports a range of works programs to deliver on-ground outcomes.

The Wagonga Inlet Living Shoreline (WILS) project is a high priority MEMS project under Action 1.3. This multi-faceted project provides multiple benefits to the marine estate through a suite of integrated activities. WILS is a partnership between the Department (DPI Fisheries), The Nature Conservancy, Australia (TNC) and Eurobodalla Shire Council (ESC).

The WILS project is delivering innovative environmental and social improvements to the estuary through on-ground works at a priority section of the Wagonga Inlet foreshore at Narooma, in Batemans Marine Park. The living shoreline works are providing a natural approach to foreshore protection through the construction of the first subtidal native flat oyster reef in NSW and the first intertidal Sydney rock oyster reef restoration project on the NSW south coast (delivered in June 2022), enhanced saltmarsh habitat and natural foreshore protection. WILS also includes construction

of complementary community infrastructure including consolidated pathways through sensitive saltmarsh habitat replacing current ad hoc access, and an elevated boardwalk. An additional jetty and pontoon will be delivered by ESC to further enhance public accessibility and useability, along with interpretive signage and Aboriginal artwork related to coastal habitats and Connection to Sea Country. The project is also directly employing local Aboriginal people in a number of its construction and monitoring activities.

WILS aligns to several MEMS Initiatives and benefits the marine estate and coastal communities by:

- improving water quality (Initiative 1)
- improving foreshore protection (Initiative 2)
- reviving lost oyster reefs (Initiative 1 & 2)
- enriching estuarine habitats and improving habitat for fish (Initiative 2)
- providing the capability of storing blue carbon (Initiative 3)
- increasing Aboriginal employment and engagement opportunities (Initiative 4)
- reducing impacts to threatened and protected species (Initiative 5)
- enhancing safe and sustainable boating access (Initiative 7)
- enhancing community access and recreation opportunities (Initiative 8)

WILS partner co-funding includes:

- TNC \$1,017,679 (through the Australian Government Reef Builder program)
- ESC \$140,000 + \$310,000 + \$150,000 (NSW Environmental Trust + Commonwealth Government Recreational Fishing and Camping Facilities Grants + Commonwealth Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Grants).

All project partners have assisted to deliver the overall WILS project through detailed project planning, complimentary competitive procurement processes for different components of the works and implementation of the works. The Department managed the oyster reef construction component of the WILS build. Project partners TNC and ESC are contracting the remaining works, including the delivery of the shoreline earthworks (TNC) and infrastructure construction (ESC). All partners work collaboratively in stakeholder and community engagement efforts.

## Purpose and Objectives of the Marine Estate Management Strategy Wagonga Inlet Living Shoreline Grant

The purpose of the Grant is to assist in the collaborative implementation of WILS, a key deliverable under the NSW Government's MEMS to help bring socio-economic, environmental and cultural benefits to the Wagonga Inlet estuary and the ecosystems it supports, the Narooma community and regional visitors.

The objective of the Grant is to provide 2022/23 Financial Year MEMS funding assistance allocated to the WILS project to the construction contract manager (Grantee) to facilitate the management and delivery of the remaining infrastructure components of the WILS project, by November 2023.

## Eligibility and Assessment Process

The Grant is a non-competitive one-off devolved grant.

### To be eligible for the Grant:

#### **The Grantee must be an existing project partner in the WILS project**

WILS is a partnership between the Department, and TNC and ESC. Only these external organisations are eligible to receive the Grant.

#### **The Grantee must have the capacity to deliver the WILS project and enter into a Funding Deed arrangement with the Department**

The remaining infrastructure components of the WILS project are due for completion by November 2023. The successful Grantee will be required to enter into a Funding Deed with the Department that documents the delivery of the remaining WILS on-ground works.

### **The Grantee's proposed works must directly contribute to activities in the WILS Project Plan**

A Project Plan and detailed site construction plans have been developed and approved by the WILS steering committee and endorsed by the WILS Technical Advisory Group for the WILS project. Extensive community consultation has occurred on the project. The Project Plan outlines the major on-ground habitat restoration and infrastructure components that contribute to the overall project and deliver the multiple benefits provided by the project to the NSW community and the marine estate.

Only activities or works that deliver the works and infrastructure included in the Project Plan are eligible for funding under the Grant.

### **The Grantee must have processes in place to appoint the WILS Contractor**

Several external competitive procurement processes were undertaken by respective project partners to select the successful construction contractors for each component of the works (oyster reef construction, foreshore construction, jetty and pontoon construction) with project partners participating in the tender assessment panels.

A Grantee must provide evidence that they have the capacity, and mechanisms in place to appoint contractor(s) selected through competitive procurement processes associated with the WILS to be eligible for funding under the Grant.

### **Assessment Process**

Provision of the **Grant** will be assessed by considering the:

- if the proposed Grantee meets the eligibility criteria
- consistency of the proposed works with the objectives of the WILS project plan
- capability, experience and skills of the proposed Grantee
- deliverability of the project, including demonstrating that the proposed Grantee has the capacity and expertise to deliver the works within budget and timeframes
- financial arrangements
- economic benefit
- ability of the proposed Grantee to demonstrate community support.

## **What is the value of the Marine Estate Management Strategy Wagonga Inlet Living Shoreline Grant?**

\$450,000 (ex GST)

## **Where do the funds come from?**

The Grant funding is managed by the Department (NSW DPI Fisheries) with funds sourced from the MEMS 2022-23 financial year budget, only.

## **Opening and Closing Dates**

There are no opening and closing dates for this Grant. The Grant is available on a one-off basis to eligible WILS project partners only and only for delivery of activities outlined in the approved WILS Project Plan.

## **How will the Marine Estate Management Strategy Wagonga Inlet Living Shoreline Grant be managed?**

The Grant will be managed by a dedicated Grant Administrator in the Department. The Grant Administrator will ensure:

- that the Grant is administered in accordance with this Grant Guideline.
- that all decisions in the decision-making process are officially documented.
- activities funded will provide benefit to the planned WILS project, and through WILS, assist in the delivery of environmental, economic, social and cultural benefits for the marine estate.
- the Grants is processed in a transparent and objective manner.
- the Grant is processed in a timely and professional manner to ensure Funding Deeds are developed, milestones are met, milestone reports are received from the Grantee and

associated milestone payments are provided, and project variations agreed and documented, where appropriate.

## Who decides how the Marine Estate Management Strategy Wagonga Inlet Living Shoreline Grant will be spent?

Where the intended Grantee meets the eligibility and evidence requirements of the Grant and has been suitably assessed as willing and able to deliver the activities outlined in the Project Plan, a Funding Deed is prepared and an internal Briefing Note is provided for approval by the Decision Maker. The Decision Maker is a Departmental official at the appropriate financial delegation (i.e. has the authority to approve expenditure or enter into financial commitments on behalf of the Department) for the Grant.

The Briefing Note documents the eligibility of the potential Grantee and outlines the purpose and objectives of the Grant, its alignment to the broader MEMS program, and the efficiency and effectiveness of the Grant's investment to the people of NSW.

The Decision Maker for this Grant rests at Level 3 (Director Marine Estate Management).

## What happens if I am successful?

The successful Grantee will be required to:

- Enter into a Funding Deed which outlines the responsibilities of both parties, time frames for project delivery, milestone payment schedules, risks and indemnities and reporting requirements of the Grant.
- As a condition of funding, comply with the reporting requirements set out in Schedule B of the Funding Deed. You must provide to the Department an Activity Progress report associated with Payment Milestones indicating the status of all on-going and completed activities for the period to which the report relates.
- Acknowledge the NSW Marine Estate Management Strategy in project publications, media (including social media) and signage.

## Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interests is where there is a conflict between a person's private interests and the performance of their official duties and responsibilities.

Any actual, reasonably perceived, or potential conflicts that arise during the delivery of the WILS Project Plan must be declared as soon as a potential conflict is recognised.

The responsibility for managing a conflict of interest is shared between the Grantee and the Department. The conflicted party must firstly identify their conflict of interest and notify the other party in writing, as soon as practicable. Remedial action may then be progressed in accordance with Clause 21.4 of the Funding Deed.

## Application Outcome Date

There is no application outcome date for this funding program, however as funding is only available for the 2022-23 financial year, decisions regarding provision of the **Grant** should occur as early as possible in the financial year.

## Publication of grant information and data

Notification of the award of the Grant to the Grantee will be published on the NSW Government Grants and Funding Finder [nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding](https://nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding) or other publicly accessible website no later than 45 calendar days after the grant agreement takes effect.

## Grant Payment Processing

Payments are made with reference to the Project Plan and are linked to project Milestones. Once a Milestone report has been provided to the satisfaction of the Program Administrator, the invoice relating to that milestone can be processed for payment.

## Applicant Reporting

The Grant Administrator will liaise with the Grantee throughout the project lifespan to ensure timely submission of actions and reports or to provide an extension as necessary.

Once a report has been provided to the satisfaction of the Grant Administrator, the invoice relating to that milestone can be processed for payment.

### Where can I get more information?

Further information on the Marine Estate Management Strategy can be found at:  
[marine.nsw.gov.au/marine-estate-programs/marine-estate-management-strategy](https://marine.nsw.gov.au/marine-estate-programs/marine-estate-management-strategy)

For assistance with the Grant please contact [kylie.russell@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:kylie.russell@dpi.nsw.gov.au).