Working with you to care for the natural resources of our island home.

We live in one of the most unique places in the world. NRM North aims to help you keep it that way by continuing to: provide leadership to ensure that sound management of the region’s natural resources continues; develop programs that recognise the need to balance the environmental, economic and social needs of the people of the region; and work in partnership with all stakeholders to determine appropriate investment and cost-sharing strategies in the management of natural resources.
About Northern Tasmania

The area defined as the northern region of Tasmania covers 25,200 square kilometres and is bounded by some of Tasmania’s most outstanding and picturesque landscapes. From Bass Strait, along the craggy peaks of the Western Tiers to the head waters of the Macquarie River, across to the stunning beaches of the Bay of Fires and the unspoilt islands of the Furneaux and Kent Groups.

More than 143,000 people live in the region, with the major urban areas based around Launceston and the Tamar Valley. The valley is dissected by the iconic Tamar River or kanamaluka, Australia’s longest navigable estuary at 70km carrying the combined flows from over 10,000km² including the waters from the North Esk, South Esk, Meander and Macquarie Rivers.

We are fortunate to have such a large number of people eager to improve their natural resource assets, whether that be individually or through community groups.

About NRM North

NRM North is one of three formally recognised regional natural resource management bodies in Tasmania and one of 56 across Australia.


NRM North’s vision is to be the leading non-government organisation in natural resource management across northern Tasmania.

Our vision is supported by the following principles;

Whilst the government provides the majority of funding for the activities of the organisation, NRM North is independent in its decision making and seeking alternative funding sources.

We aim to change people’s attitudes and actions towards managing the natural resources of our region and get relevant activities happening on the ground.

We recognize that northern Tasmania is made up of the sub-regions of the Dorset, Break O’Day, Tamar, Meander Valley, Flinders Island and Northern Midlands communities.

The constitution of NRM North ensures a balance of the region’s NRM interests are represented within the Northern Tasmania Natural Resource Management Association, therefore reflecting the principles outlined in the state natural resource management framework.

The Association includes representatives from a diverse group of people from the Aboriginal community, industry, local government, conservation groups, public and private land managers and others who have an interest or expertise in the region’s natural resources.

The membership of the NRM North Management Committee is skills based (including NRM related skills) to ensure the affairs of the organisation are managed to achieve both the functions of the NRM Act and the aspirations of the Association and broader community as set out in the regional NRM strategy in accordance with good governance principles.
Northern Tasmania Natural Resource Management Strategy 2015-2020

The Natural Resource Management Strategy for Northern Tasmania 2015-2020 has been developed to establish an integrated framework to facilitate sustainable management of northern Tasmania's natural resources. The strategy is one of three in Tasmania and is complemented by the strategies for Southern Tasmania and the Cradle Coast region.

As a whole-of-community strategy, it aims to balance economic, social and environmental objectives and encourage partnerships between community, industry and government for the betterment of the region's natural resources.

The strategy does not have statutory power or replace any current mechanism or policy relating to natural resource management, but seeks to build partnerships between stakeholders and develop synergies between planning and management processes.

The aim of the strategy is to focus the actions of all stakeholders, groups and individuals on delivering the desired community outcomes.

NRM North Strategic Plan 2017-2020

To direct the operations of NRM North, the Management Committee has adopted the NRM North Strategic Plan (2017-2020) which includes five program pillars:

- Biodiversity
- Water
- Land
- Aboriginal NRM
- Corporate Services

The NRM North Strategic Plan identifies the key outcomes from the Northern Tasmania Natural Resource Management Strategy 2015-2020 that the organisation will deliver programs in over the next three years.

Some of our key achievements are outlined in the program summaries that follow.
The NRM North region’s water assets include our surface water, ground water, freshwater lakes, wetlands and estuaries. These assets provide essential clean water for drinking, provide amenity for recreation, are used for industry and support diverse and unique aquatic biodiversity values and ecosystems. The Tamar River estuary is a focal point for the city of Launceston and underpins the region’s social and economic value. The health of the Tamar River estuary has been a long-standing issue of contention in the community. The upper reaches of the Tamar estuary are under pressure from high loads of both diffuse and point source pollutants including nutrients, sediments, metals and pathogens which has resulted in poor health for many years. Other key catchments in the region which support townships and face similar water quality pressures include the Brid and the George catchments. There is an opportunity to work with key partners, landholders and the community to address these pressures facing our rivers and estuaries and reduce pollutants entering our waterways from urban and diffuse (catchment) sources.

The Water Program focuses on improving water quality and enhancing the ecological, social and economic value of the region’s waterways by reducing the load of diffuse (catchment) and point source (industry and sewage treatment plants) pollutants entering waterways.

The target catchments and issues that NRM North will focus on between 2015-2025 include:

- Building the capacity and knowledge of the community and management agencies to understand and manage stormwater quality, sewage treatment plant discharges and overflows and recreational water quality; and
- On-ground actions to reduce the load of diffuse pollutants entering waterways from dairy areas in the Meander, Brid and George catchments and grazing areas in the Brid, George, North Esk, Macquarie, and Brumbys-Lake catchments.

NRM North has developed and published Water Quality Improvement Plans (WQIPs) for the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) area, the Brid catchment and the George catchment. Implementation of the Water Program will focus on implementation of the recommended actions in each of these plans and will include a range of delivery mechanisms including:

- Providing funding incentives to landholders to undertake on-ground actions;
- Providing training and knowledge sharing events; monitoring recreational water quality and ecosystem health to inform management objectives and strategies; and
- Supporting appropriate planning and policy at a local, regional or state-wide scale.

The delivery of the Water Program is supported by the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program which is a regional partnership between the statutory agencies responsible for the management of the TEER waterways.

TEER Program

- Develop WQIP investment plan for TEER and seek investment through partners and TEMT (Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce);
- Review TEER governance arrangements;
- Publish 2018 Tamar estuary report card every two years;
- Review TEER Strategic Framework 2019-2022; and
- Continue implementation of the TEER WQIP.

Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme

- Support implementation of statewide flood recovery and resilience projects by May 2018; and
- Project completion by June 2018.

Water Program

Continue to leverage and target investment for implementation of the WQIPs for the Tamar, Brid and George catchments.

2017/18 FOCUS
Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program

The Tamar catchment comprises one fifth of Tasmania’s land mass or 10,000 square kilometres. Our estuaries are, in many ways, an indicator of catchment health as land use in the catchments directly affects the health of our waterways. Pollutants in our waterways come from a variety of sources such as stormwater run-off from urban areas, diffuse sources from agriculture and point sources from industry or sewage treatment plants.

The Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program is a regional partnership between the agencies responsible for managing waterways in the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers area.

The aim of the program is to ensure that science and evidence-based decision making underpins future management strategies to improve or maintain the health of our waterways.

NRM North Water Program Manager, Andrew Baldwin, said TEER worked with many partners ranging from local and state government to industry, research institutions and the community, usually in the form of joint projects.

“These partnerships are the foundation of the TEER Program and ensure we engage with those responsible for managing our waterways and develop a sense of ownership and understanding of the outcomes of projects,” Mr Baldwin said.

The 2016-2017 financial year saw $392,000 invested in on-ground incentives leveraging an additional $500,000 from project participants.

A key initiative has been on-ground works to exclude stock from waterways and establish riparian buffers to help prevent pollutants entering our rivers and streams.

“Our achievements in the Meander catchment to date include fencing out 95% of the dairy herd and engaging 97% of dairy businesses in NRM activities,” Mr Baldwin said.

In January 2017, TEER launched a new project to track the source of faecal bacteria in the upper Tamar estuary with the aim of identifying and managing the risks of water contact for recreational users.

TEER Program Scientific and Technical Coordinator, Dr Toni Furlonge, said the project aimed to detect whether the Enterococci bacteria found in water samples taken monthly from key sites in the estuary has come from cattle, horses, sheep, septic tank systems or sewage treatment plants at Ti Tree Bend, Riverside, Newnham and Legana.

“The project will give us preliminary results of the sources of Enterococci bacteria from key locations in the upper Tamar estuary,” Ms Furlonge said.

“This information will help inform decisions to target infrastructure investment and catchment management to improve the health of the Tamar estuary.”

The TEER Program also works with local councils to help manage threats to water quality and ecological health that are linked to stormwater pollution.
Dairy Partnerships for Water Quality

NRM North has been working with dairy farmers over the last five years to improve the industry’s environmental performance and profitability. This has been achieved with funding from the Australian Government and by working directly with farmers and in partnerships with DairyTas and Fonterra.

Every major catchment in the northern NRM region has dairy farms that have improved environmental outcomes with help from NRM North and investment from the National Landcare Programme (NLP).

The former Chief Executive Officer of DairyTas, Mark Smith, said support from the NRM bodies had allowed the industry to achieve much more than anticipated.

“The Clean Rivers funding incentives are the catalysts for farmers to make significant time, labour and financial commitments,” Mr Smith said.

“The farmers are getting out there and doing something to protect and improve water quality.”

The Meander catchment, which is part of the Tamar estuary system, is the region’s most dairy-intensive area. NRM North’s partnership with DairyTas, investment from the NLP and in-kind contributions from dairy farmers, have resulted in around 95% of dairy cows in the catchment being excluded from waterways, which means less pollutants entering rivers.

Brian and Michelle Lawrence milk around 1000 cows in the Meander catchment on a farm they purchased and redeveloped only a few years ago. With the help of NLP incentive funding, they have fenced off remnant bush vegetation, fenced all stock out of creeks and drains and upgraded their effluent system to irrigate effluent over much of the farm.

More recently, Brian and Michelle purchased an adjacent block of land covered in pulpwood plantation for redevelopment into dairy pasture. They contacted NRM North for advice and funding support to fence off creeks and remnant bush on the new block. These activities minimise the impacts on biodiversity and water quality from agricultural intensification and increasing cow numbers.

Mr Lawrence said the works had improved water quality in their creeks.

“In the past, we were finding times during the year where water quality would deteriorate, but with the support of dairy NRM specialist Rachel Brown and NRM North, new procedures and infrastructure, we now have better water quality throughout the year,” Mr Lawrence said.

“We have established fencing, shelterbelts, improved fertiliser application, and extended the area effluent can be spread, and most recently captured runoff from our calving pad.

“We’d like to be valued in the community for what we do and show that dairy farming can be considered a worthwhile career and pursuit. We want to be good environmental managers along with that and show we can work as part of the whole system,” Mr Lawrence said.

Work to fence stock out of waterways is continuing as the industry gradually expands. Modelling based on the Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP) produced by NRM North’s Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program, indicates that when the current round of work finishes in June 2018, there will be a 45% reduction in Enterococci bacteria loads entering the Meander river as a result of improved stock management.

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Helping Flood-Affected Communities in Tasmania

The June 2016 Tasmanian floods resulted in significant loss and damage to local communities, agricultural land and streams. In response, the Tasmanian Government, in partnership with the NRM regional bodies, announced the Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme (ALRS).

The Tasmanian Government allocated four million dollars to implement the scheme which was open to landholders and communities in 20 local government areas.

The Minister for Primary Industries and Water, Jeremy Rockliff, said the Hodgman Liberal Government was committed to continuing to work and support those impacted by the flood events of 2016.

“The Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme assists flood-affected landholders and communities to fund projects and services aimed at the rehabilitation of land and stream systems damaged as a result of the floods,” Mr Rockliff said.

“The target is private property and adjacent areas that have suffered physical damage as a result of the floods or areas where future flooding may present a risk to primary production or public infrastructure.”

NRM North Chief Executive Officer, Rosanna Coombes, said the three NRM bodies in Tasmania were pleased to be able to assist communities through the scheme.

“We have seen the devastation left by the floods and spoken to many landholders about the daunting task ahead to rehabilitate the landscape and we are happy to do whatever we can to help them through this process,” Mrs Coombes said.

“Our role is to deliver the program and be the primary point of contact for information about the scheme. We are offering services such as workshops and on-ground consultation and coordinating technical expertise on large scale projects to assist landholders and community groups with their nominations.”

News of the scheme quickly generated interest, with more than 100 people attending workshops in Ouse, Deloraine, Burnie, and Ulverstone.

The workshops were a great opportunity for people to come together to find out more about the scheme, the application process and how to access technical advice.

All those who expressed an interest were provided with the opportunity to receive an onsite visit from a qualified Fluvial Geomorphologist to assess the technical aspects of the project. Geomorphologists conducted 235 landholder site visits and a preliminary technical report was later provided to each landholder detailing the recommendations.

Flowerdale landholder, Greg McDonald, said the quality of the information provided by the Geomorphologist was very useful when constructing a nomination.

“I was very happy with the consultant visit and was surprised by the great level of advice provided to me,” Mr McDonald said.

A total of 172 nominations were received through the scheme, comprising 170 individual nominations and two group nominations. Of these, 20 were funded through additional funds available from the Mersey Dasher Riparian Recovery Project.

In early July, the Tasmanian Government announced that 156 nominations had been successful for funding through the ALRS. Only 16 Nominations were determined to be ineligible.

ALRS Project Officer, Russell Currie, said the next steps were for successful nominees to implement their works and claim funds by May 2018.

“NRM North, NRM South and Cradle Coast NRM are now ramping up to deliver the funding and will offer services such as group workshops and on-ground consultation support for projects requiring management agreements,” Mr Currie said.

“The ALRS team now looks forward to helping landholders and groups implement on-ground works to help restore and protect the agricultural potential of areas damaged in the floods.”
Land Program

Program Aim

Improve soil health, groundcover and minimise soil erosion in productive landscapes for improved profitability and sustainability.

The Big Picture

Agriculture in the NRM North region has significant economic value with the gross value of agricultural production in the region estimated at $468.9M representing 38% of the state’s total in 2011/12. The sector is facing several emerging issues such as climate change, irrigation expansion and agricultural intensification, which are likely to change the agricultural sector over the next decade. There is an opportunity to work with the region’s farmers to improve their capacity to meet opportunities and threats from these emerging issues and to achieve higher levels of agricultural production and profitability through adoption of best practice environmental management.

Strategic Focus

The strategic focus of the Land Program is to build the skills and capacity of the region’s farmers to manage soil health and maintain ground cover. Soil health has been selected as a strategic focus area as it is one of the foundations of productive and profitable agricultural enterprises and poor management can lead to both environmental degradation as well as less profitable enterprises. Maintaining ground cover on farm is a strategic focus as it provides significant environmental benefits through reduction in erosion and farm runoff and increases profitability on farm. The focus on soil health and ground cover are considered good investments that will help buffer the impact of the emerging issues that will face the agricultural sector over the next decade.

The target issues and assets that NRM North will focus on between 2015-2025 include:

- Improving soil health in broadacre cropping soils, dairy and intensive beef production soils, and intensive horticulture soils; and
- Improving vegetation cover to reduce erosion.

Program Delivery

The primary delivery method for the Land Program is through extension of advice and information to the region’s farmers on agricultural best practice. The program conducts extension through training, awareness-raising events, operating farm trials and by maintaining support relationships with farm discussion groups.

Key partners in program delivery include; farm discussion groups, the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, Southern Farming Systems, DairyTas, consultants and agribusiness.

2017/18 Focus

- Five events planned for soil health on cropping soils over spring and winter;
- Two events for strip tillage and state-wide event planned for cropping soils;
- ReGenerative agricultural forum focused on low input and organic agriculture;
- Three events with a focus on confinement feeding, soils and pastures on Flinders Island;
- North East Discussion group projects - facilitated discussion on pasture optimisation;
- Business of Trees on Farms - production and biodiversity field day with Private Forests Tasmania.
More Mileage from Silage

2015-2016 was a very poor growing season for pasture and fodder crops in Tasmania, with a cold and dry winter followed by a very dry spring. Hay and silage production was well down from the previous years and Tasmania experienced a fodder shortage.

The following Spring brought plenty of rain and NRM North recognised the opportunity to help landholders capitalise on a fodder glut, by improving their knowledge on how to get the best quality hay and silage.

NRM North contacted leading silage and hay specialist, Frank Mickan, from the Victorian Department of Primary Industries, and invited him to Tasmania to discuss fodder production.

NRM North’s Regional Landcare Facilitator, Peter Heading, said it was a real coup to be able to attract Mr Mickan to Tasmania.

“Frank had been invited to Tasmania a few times in the past, mainly through the dairy industry, so some change in focus to include more sheep and beef operations was something different and interesting for him,” Mr Heading said.

“Frank is one of the most entertaining and informative speakers I have seen. He is an encyclopaedia of knowledge on fodder production.”

In August, prior to the growing season, NRM North and Mr Mickan delivered five information sessions to around 70 landholders at Deloraine, Pipers River, Winnaleah-Ringarooma, Fingal Valley and Flinders Island.

During the sessions, Mr Mickan regularly emphasised the importance of producing quality fodder.

“Improving your silage by 1 ME (unit of energy) makes a big difference to quality and livestock performance.”

After the information sessions, most participants were keen to change practices on their farms and some have already reported increased quality and economic outcomes.

Farmer and hay/silage contractor on Flinders Island, Peter Guichelaar, said since the workshops, he had been in regular contact with Mr Mickan asking for advice.

“Previously, I used two bales of oats to feed stock but after attending the workshop and improving my harvesting techniques, I now only have to feed out one bale of sorghum to get the same result,” Mr Guichelaar said.

“I’m also cutting five feet bales instead of four feet which has helped in reducing handling costs and I am placing bales on fine mesh for rodent control.”

Pipers River farmer, Brian Baxter, said the message from Mr Mickan was clear.

“Cut it early, dry it properly and it’s money in your pocket,” Mr Baxter said.

“Because of the season, we cut more silage than ever. We cut some of it early and got it to dry well. There was more regrowth for our cattle and with the dry start this year, having lots of quality silage has been very handy.

“The ewes love it and chase the ute around and have been scanned at 170% pregnancy rate.”

Deloraine farmer, Tim Schmidt, said the information session prompted him to act quickly on his farm.

“The timing of tedding is essential. As a result of the session with Mr Mickan, I have since constructed a silage pit on the farm for long term storage. The silage tested at 11.3 megajoules, that’s pretty good for grass silage.”

Farmers also heard how cutting locked-up paddocks earlier harvests less fodder bulk, but the fodder has higher energy and palatability, while also allowing for quicker rebound of the pastures.

Depending on the season, this could lead to further grazing opportunities and can improve groundcover which reduces erosion.

Increasing quality but reducing quantity also results in less cost in energy inputs, wear and tear on machinery and less time in the paddock.
Crop and Soil Health Field Days

NRM North organised two field days in Autumn 2017 to help vegetable producers improve soil health and increase profitability.

Experts on soil and cropping, Dr Bill Cotching from the Tasmanian Institute of Agriculture, Dr Doris Blaesing from RMCG and Frank Mulcahy from Simplot, were the drawcards for the events at Scottsdale and Deloraine.

NRM North’s Land Program Manager, Adrian James, said the field days aimed to help growers achieve better long-term returns by giving them a refresher in soil and crop health principles and practices, specifically for red soils and intensive cropping.

“The red volcanic soils around Deloraine and Scottsdale are a great natural resource and farmers want to protect it. That’s not easy with financial and other pressures on farms, so we put these events together as a way of making expert advice directly available to the producers,” Mr James said.

The field days started with brief presentations from each expert, followed by an open questions and answers session. Then participants visited nearby paddocks to dig holes, test pH, measure compaction and investigate other issues hands-on with more open discussion.

Dr Cotching felt the hands-on sessions were valuable.

“I hope that by encouraging farmers to get more intimate with their soil through smelling its aroma, that they are now on a journey of self-discovery about soil that will lead to active management,” Dr Cotching said.

“Soil is a living, dynamic, diverse and complex ecosystem that can be assessed for its health by using our senses of careful observation, touch and smell. This seemed to engage those at the workshops in a way that I hope leads to improved management of soil health.”

Feedback on the field days indicated many participants had gained a better understanding of the issues at hand, and when asked what they would change on farm as a result, responses included installing drainage, using cover crops, not fallowing, assessing soil health more often, and not grazing during irrigation.

Also, some of the participating agronomists said they would change aspects of the advice they provide to their clients to better take soil health into account. This was a great outcome as agronomists can easily take the messages further.

Mr Mulcahy and Dr Blaesing said it was satisfying to be able to pass on their knowledge through the field days.

“We tend to forget the knowledge accumulated and how important it is to be able to download, especially with the younger agriculturalists, so eager to learn,” Mr Mulcahy said.

“For me, the best aspect of the days was the interaction with and questions from the audience which helps us as presenters to make the content relevant to the region,” Dr Blaesing said.
Biodiversity Program

**Program Aim**

Maintain and enhance landscape function for biodiversity, with a focus on protecting habitat for threatened species and communities and Ramsar wetland values in northern Tasmania.

**The Big Picture**

The NRM North region comprises approximately 60% natural landscapes which support native species, communities and ecosystems that have experienced minimal human impacts. These biodiversity-rich natural landscapes are highly valued by the community for their intrinsic value and the way that they characterise Tasmania and the sense of place for our communities. They also underpin much of our economy and are of high value to Tasmania’s growing tourism industry. The biodiversity values within our natural landscapes are under increasing threat from habitat loss and modification from changing land use and development pressures, weeds, pests and diseases, climate change and natural disasters such as floods, drought and fire. There is an opportunity to work with both public and private land managers to implement on-ground action and to support policy and planning initiatives to buffer the impacts of these threats and pressures on our biodiversity.

**Strategic Focus**

The Biodiversity Program aims to protect and enhance native habitat and landscape function, with a focus on high value natural assets including threatened species and ecological communities, endemic species and Ramsar (internationally recognised) wetland sites. The priority natural assets and associated actions have been selected based on NRM North’s capacity to achieve long term positive outcomes by increasing community awareness and involvement and working with a range of partners across land tenures.

The target biodiversity assets NRM North will focus on between 2015-2025 include:

- Tasmanian endemic species such as Black Gum forest (Eucalyptus ovata-Callitris oblonga), Davies Wax Flower and the Golfer’s Leek Orchid;
- Nationally listed species and communities including Coastal Temperate Saltmarsh, Spotted Tailed Quoll, Giant Freshwater Lobster and Eastern Barred Bandicoot; and
- Ramsar sites including Little Waterhouse Lake, Flood Plain Lower Ringarooma River and Logan Lagoon.

**Program Delivery**

The Biodiversity Program is delivered through a range of mechanisms. These include a mix of providing funding incentives to landholders to protect areas of remnant vegetation and to enhance connectivity, managing the threat of habitat-altering weeds, informing or participating in policy and planning at a local, regional and state-wide level, and working in partnership with community groups and government bodies to monitor target species and invest in on-ground activities for biodiversity outcomes. Key partners in program delivery include landholders, The Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment, community groups and local councils.

**2017/18 Focus**

- **Green Army**
  - 4 teams to coordinate (3 Bass / 1 Lyons)

- **20 Million Trees**
  - Project completion (in-fill planting)

- **Biodiversity Program**
  - On-ground investment for habitat (Giant Freshwater Lobster, Eastern Barred Bandicoot, Spotted Tail Quoll, Saltmarsh);
  - Extending saltmarsh monitoring to Dorset municipality;
  - Cat Tracker project - identifying impacts of domestic and feral cats on biodiversity and raising awareness of responsible cat ownership;
  - Community engagement and monitoring for the Giant Freshwater Lobster;
  - Small Farm Living Field Day, Oct 2017; and
  - Weed management to protect Ramsar sites and habitat for threatened species and communities.
Following the success of NRM North’s Biodiversity Fund project ‘Biodiversity in an Irrigated Landscape’ in 2012-14, there was still significant demand from landholders to incorporate plantings of mixed native species into farm layouts. Fortunately, much of this demand is being met by the Australian Government’s 20 Million Trees Program.

NRM North has so far secured three grants as part of 20 Million Trees and will apply for more in the third and final round of the program in late 2017. By the end of the 2017 planting season, 83,000 seedlings will have been established across 70 hectares in the Northern Midlands and Waterhouse areas under NRM North’s 20 Million Trees projects.

NRM North’s Biodiversity and Coastal Program Manager, Kate Thorn, said the projects provided excellent value for money.

“The contribution and commitment of landholders cannot be over-stated. It allows us to achieve these outcomes in a cost-efficient way,” Ms Thorn said.

“The use of bulk orders and re-use of materials also makes the funding go a lot further. Technical support from Private Forests Tasmania gives us confidence in the methodology, and their interaction with farmers has the added bonus of upskilling those land managers in revegetation methods.”

Landholders have contributed significant resources to the projects, including undertaking thorough site preparation and fencing sites to exclude stock. Work crews from Green Army and Devonfield Enterprises have assisted with planting and maintenance, including removal of guards from earlier projects for re-use in 2017. Within a few years, these plantings will provide production benefits to farmers – including shelter for stock and crops and habitat for beneficial organisms. They also add to the matrix of habitat available for native species across areas substantially cleared for agriculture.

At Waterhouse, this means helping to bridge the gap between coastal reserves and large remnant areas of forest and reserves inland.

In the Northern Midlands, where more than 70% of native vegetation has been cleared, the contribution to habitat connectivity is even more critical.

Species such as small woodland birds will not cross large tracts of cleared land, so a matrix of vegetation which includes large remnants, watercourse corridors and smaller patches gives us the best chance of maintaining native biodiversity in agricultural landscapes. Providing for migration of individuals and species is particularly important in the face of climate change.

The Youl family of Elsdon, near Symmons Plains, have planted 12 hectares of native shelterbelts over four years with help from NRM North.

Alex Youl wished they had started decades ago.

“The production benefits are clear; our farm is pretty exposed and the paddocks with more shelter have much better lamb survival. Crops also benefit and plantings on our boundary provide a biosecurity buffer for our stock,” Mr Youl said.

“These days, production efficiency is everything and we believe that a farm layout that includes native vegetation is critical to that.

“The progress we’ve made in just a few years is fantastic and we just want to keep going with it. It’s great to know we can contribute to biodiversity on the farm and in the landscape as well.”
Community Grants Partnerships

Over the past year, NRM North has awarded nine community grants to local groups and schools and developed strong partnerships through the delivery of these projects.

The grants, funded through the Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme, are an important mechanism for ensuring local groups are supported to achieve their goals, whilst also delivering some significant environmental, social and educational outcomes.

NRM North’s Biodiversity Coordinator, Alison Hugo, said community and school groups played an important role in managing our natural resources.

“Their work helps build community capacity and includes activities that protect, rehabilitate and enhance the local environment,” Ms Hugo said.

A partnership between two northern schools, with funding support from NRM North’s Community Grants Program, is one example of a project that has achieved some positive social and environmental outcomes.

In 2015, Hagley Farm Primary School removed two areas of radiata pine plantations on the school property. One area was next to the farm dam and another situated as a shelter belt in between the farm paddocks.

The school wanted to replace the pines with native species and successfully applied for funding through NRM North’s Community Grants program to purchase the plants required.

NRM North saw an opportunity to foster collaboration between Hagley Farm Primary School and the Northern Support School’s Off-Shoots Program. Off-shoots is a unique partnership between the Northern Support School, Ravenswood Community Garden, Inspirations Garden Centre and NRM North which provides hands-on learning opportunities for children with a disability.

“The Hagley Farm School project was an opportunity for students from both schools to work together to propagate, grow and plant more than 1000 native species for the rehabilitation project,” Ms Hugo said.

“The project had some significant environmental outcomes, in particular, it improved habitat values for the threatened Eastern Barred Bandicoot and the Spotted-tailed Quoll, which are priority species for NRM North in the Meander Valley area.

“One of the main threats to these species is the loss and degradation of habitat, so projects like this make an important contribution to conserving our biodiversity.”

The project also brought many social benefits. Northern Support School teacher, Sue Jacobs, said her students gained valuable skills.

“The project is an ideal opportunity for the Northern Support School students to gain worthwhile skills, get involved in on-ground projects and make strong community connections from start to finish,” Mr Harris said.

Hagley Farm School teacher, Andrew Harris, said the 5000 school-aged and adult visitors to the farm each year would benefit from the project.

“The rehabilitation of the former radiata pine plantation into a native species arboretum will add another valuable learning experience to the school,” Mr Harris said.

“This experience will focus on the importance of sustainable farm environments and increase students’ understanding of native flora and fauna.

“Establishing the arboretum and the shelterbelt has been an exciting and collaborative effort including students, staff, parents and volunteers from across the Hagley Farm School community, along with valuable contributions from the Northern Support School, the Green Army and key NRM North staff,” Mr Harris said.
Aboriginal NRM

PROGRAM AIM

Build knowledge and capacity within the Aboriginal community to manage natural values on country and enhance awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage in natural resource management.

The Big Picture

The NRM North region encompasses the lands of several traditional owner groups. NRM North acknowledges and respects the traditional custodians and their deep spiritual attachment to country and values the knowledge and contribution that Aboriginal people make towards natural resource management. NRM North recognises that Aboriginal cultural values and land management practices are critical to the management of the region’s natural resources.

Strategic Focus

The focus of the Aboriginal NRM Program is to work in collaboration with the Aboriginal community to facilitate natural resource management on country and improve awareness and consideration of Aboriginal cultural heritage in natural resource management planning, use and development.

The strategic outcomes that NRM North will focus on between 2015-2025 include:

- Increasing Aboriginal community capacity to implement Healthy Country Plans and provide opportunities for continuation of tunapri and cultural knowledge;
- Supporting the Aboriginal community to implement priority actions for the management of cultural and natural values and Healthy Country Plans;
- Supporting the Aboriginal community to protect heritage sites and landscapes outside of Land Management Plans; and
- Supporting the Aboriginal community to raise awareness with land managers, planners and recreational users to increase knowledge and recognition of Aboriginal cultural heritage values in natural resource management.

Program Delivery

NRM North’s Aboriginal NRM Program is delivered through a range of mechanisms including:

- Provision of training and capacity building for Aboriginal people and communities;
- Providing funding and incentives for implementing the Health Country Plans; and
- Facilitating the Aboriginal community to engage with land managers, planners and recreational users to raise awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Key partners in delivery of the Aboriginal NRM Program include the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania (ALCT), The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC), melythina tiakana warrana Aboriginal Corporation, The Flinders Island Aboriginal Association Incorporated (FIAAI) and other members of the Aboriginal community not affiliated with an Aboriginal organisation.

2017/18 FOCUS

- Aboriginal Fire Project – working with the TAC to develop Aboriginal cultural knowledge on the use of fire;
- Weed treatment;
- To support management of cultural/natural values on Aboriginal land and the implementation of actions from Healthy Country Plans;
- Training and skills; and

- Weed identification and control, water monitoring practices targeting truwana Rangers and Aboriginal communities working on country and Healthy Country Plans.
NRM North has a long-standing involvement with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community in the north of the state, implementing on-ground projects, promoting knowledge sharing and gaining a more defined understanding of Aboriginal culture.

Our focus is to increase engagement with the Aboriginal community, provide training opportunities in natural resource management and ensure an incorporation of Aboriginal knowledge into NRM activities and planning.

NRM North’s Engagement and Communications Manager, Melissa Lewarn, said Aboriginal cultural values and land management practices were critical to the management of the region’s natural resources.

“NRM North acknowledges the past and present Aboriginal connection to the land and values the knowledge and contribution that Aboriginal people make towards natural resource management,” Mrs Lewarn said.

“We want to ensure Aboriginal people have the opportunities to implement NRM actions on country which, in turn, will help reduce threats to culturally significant sites.”

NRM North also aims to improve Aboriginal community capacity to provide opportunities for continuation of cultural knowledge and build broader community awareness of Aboriginal values, culture and heritage.

NRM North is particularly proud of the partnership developed with the truwana Rangers. The truwana Rangers program began in October 2015 with funding from the Australian Government’s Indigenous Advancement Strategy and is focussing on land conservation and weed management.

truwana is the local palawa kani Aboriginal language word for Cape Barren Island which is part of the Furneaux Group and has a population of around 80. When truwana was returned to Aboriginal ownership in 2005, locals were determined to take the lead in caring for their country.

The truwana Rangers program is managed by the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania (ALCT).

ALCT Manager, Graeme Gardner said the rangers were passionate about land management and had already achieved positive results on the island.

“Five locals, all Aboriginal, who are taking care of their land and in doing so, they are really bringing awareness to all those on the island,” Mr Gardner said.

The truwana Ranger’s work closely with the island’s community and Elders to ensure traditional cultural and environmental practices are used in the remediation work around the island.

NRM North’s Aboriginal NRM Coordinator, Greg Stewart, said NRM North had been working closely with the ALCT and the truwana Rangers to ensure they had access to advice and information on all aspects of land management.

“They have participated in plant identification and weed management training and are already working towards eliminating gorse, African boxthorn and blackberry from the island,” Mr Stewart said.

The truwana Ranger’s Supervisor, Terry Maynard, said he could not think of a better job.

“It’s vitally important that we look after the island and what we’ve got on here so it’s there for our community and our younger ones that are growing up and to be able to learn the real stories, to be told the real stories and have a connection with it,” Mr Maynard said.

NRM North is also working with the Aboriginal community to manage weeds at the culturally significant site larapuna (Eddystone Point) in Tasmania’s north east.

The area is managed by the ALCT and is regularly used for events and cultural gatherings by the Aboriginal community.

Three years ago, NRM North funded the development of ‘Healthy Country Plans’ for
several Aboriginal land parcels, including larapuna. The plans were developed through extensive consultation with the Aboriginal community.

In the larapuna Plan, weeds were identified as having an impact on the natural vegetation of the area and it lists the goal as: ‘by 2018 all major weeds are being actively managed on larapuna’.

The main weed species present at larapuna are Vinca major (blue periwinkle); Delairea odorata (cape ivy); Coprosma repens (mirror bush) and Lycium ferocissimum (African boxthorn).

“Due to the high density of weeds in the area, initial control by the Aboriginal community was seen as very daunting and likely to take a long time to achieve,” Mr Stewart said.

“Last year, NRM North funded a weed management contractor to undertake some primary control works for the main weed species. The results of the work will be used by the Aboriginal community as a demonstration site, to learn about effective weed management so that the follow-up can be completed by them in conjunction with cultural events.”

Since then, several Aboriginal people have participated in weed control training to assist them to maintain the site.

During late 2016, NRM North funded a project with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC) to undertake a feasibility study into whether feral cats could be eradicated from lungtalanana (Clarke Island).

lungtalanana is part of the Furneaux Group and is around 8,230 hectares. It is managed by the TAC on behalf of the ALCT.

Scientists that had carried out studies on the island had noted that small mammals were scarce and that this was most likely due to predation from feral cats.

“John Parkes, a scientist and feral cat expert from New Zealand, was engaged to undertake the feasibility study for cat eradication and provide a report of the outcomes,” Mr Stewart said.

“The completed report concluded that eradication of cats from lungtalanana was feasible and suggested a number of alternative strategies and control options.”

The TAC is now planning the next phase of the project.

Mannalargenna Day is another exciting project that NRM North is privileged to be involved with.

Mannalargenna Day is an annual gathering in early December that celebrates and honours the life of Aboriginal clan-leader and warrior, Mannalargenna, who belonged to the north-east country.

Aboriginal Elder, Auntie Patsy Cameron, said it was a significant cultural event for Aboriginal people in Tasmania’s north east.

“Mannalargenna Day is a time where we celebrate our continuing culture, our connections to Mannalargenna and celebrate our survival.”

The event is held at the Tebrakunna Visitor Centre, located at the Musselroe Wind Farm, Cape Portland.

The open-to-all, family event is organised by the Directors of melythina tiakana warrana Aboriginal Corporation and partners, and Tasmania’s Governor, Professor Kate Warner AM is the Mannalargenna Day Patron.

A number of cultural workshops are held over the two days including women and girls making shell jewellery, men and boys working with wood, fibre and paper-bark and children learning dance, painting with ochre and story-telling with Elders.

“Since the last gathering in December 2016, NRM North has been working with local Elders to establish a garden of culturally significant plants that were traditionally used for fibre, food and medicine,” Mr Stewart said.

“Containing about 25 different species of plants, the area will form an integral part of Mannalargenna Day in 2017 and be used by Elders to demonstrate cultural practices and pass on traditional knowledge for many years to come.”
Our Activities

**Community Engagement**

- **69** Aboriginal people engaged in NRM projects
- **1,300** members of NRM North ‘Friends of’ network
- **1,400** subscribers to the NRM North eNewsletter
- **170** community engagement events & activities, attracting more than 4,100 participants
- **12** small community grants awarded to local groups and schools – a total of $65,000
- **39** Aboriginal people involved in NRM training and skills development
Our Activities

Water and Land Management

- 145 farming entities engaged
- 51 grants awarded to farm businesses (total of $448,374)
- 230 site visits for flood management advice
- 348,900 ha covered by 426 property management plans since 2006 (more than 70% of the productive landscape)
- 95% of the dairy herd fenced out of the rivers and tributaries of the Meander catchment
- 116 km of river erosion management
- 16 farming & land management extension events attracting more than 365 participants
- 10 dairy farm management plans with a focus on reducing effluent entering our waterways
- 4 green army teams deployed to support implementation of on-ground NRM activities
- 175 ha of revegetation undertaken
- 227 ha weed management undertaken
- 2016-17

Habitat Protection

- 17 km riparian fencing to protect river reaches and water quality
- 227 ha
- 175 ha of revegetation undertaken
- 50,200 trees planted
- 16 ongoing farm trials
Once again, it has been a challenging but rewarding year for NRM North. Under the capable guidance of Rosanna, our team has achieved some outstanding results throughout the past year.

Our operational review centred on “Strategy to Action”, has prioritised and concentrated our focus and this has permeated through the whole organisation. From the Management Committee and its strategic deliberations through to all staff and their programs and workplans. Strategy to Action is something the whole organisation understands and works to. It even underpins our engagement with major stakeholders and partners. A great example is our engagement with the Australian Government and its new emphasis on reporting on outcomes. Our Strategy to Action aligns with this outcome focus and has aided the transition to this style of reporting.

Last year, I commented that it is often difficult for an organisation such as ours to answer the simple questions: What is it that we do? What are we trying to achieve? The Strategy to Action aligns with this outcome focus and has aided the transition to this style of reporting.

Governments at all levels need to realise that funding is at a critical low level and unless it is urgently addressed, then the ability of organisations in the NRM space to deliver meaningful outcomes will be severely inhibited. The climate change issue saw large amounts of money become available as some politicians believed it was an easy way to gain votes. Luckily NRM bodies were able to access these funds. If we are going to truly be sustainable and influence sustainable outcomes, we need substantial ongoing funding that is not reliant on the whims of politicians. Common sense dictates that looking after the environment in which we live is as important as health and education for the community.

Tasmania trades on its clean green image. The NRM and landcare bodies are the organisations that carry the bulk of the heavy lifting to ensure that this perceived image reflects the condition of our environmental assets. We need to value our natural assets - these assets will not maintain themselves. With the passage of time, human influence will impact these assets. It is a question of managing these impacts and prioritising and managing the assets we want to preserve. Everyone needs to understand that a lock the gate mentality will not guarantee their preservation. The environmental landscape has been managed by humans for more than 40,000 years. Granted, since European settlement, the impacts have been more rapid and substantial, with
little understanding or regard for the environment. If we want to maintain these assets, then the degree of management will now be greater. We need to lead the world in the management of these assets across the whole landscape and that will not happen without substantial sustainable funding. Ongoing sustainable funding needs to address both core funding of NRM organisations to maintain capacity and program funding to deliver environmental outcomes. Sustainable funding is only one piece of the puzzle. One of the other major impediments is people, but it is also the area of greatest opportunity.

For me the answer is simple. We need to work together from the ground up with a common purpose and goal which guides the NRM regions and other bodies in a collaborative approach. Nothing frustrates me more than the perceived rift between NRM regions and landcare organisations. Like all politics, the average punter couldn’t care less. All they want is some help and input to achieve their environmental goals. Now more than ever we need to unite. There is a role and a place for all of these organisations in Tasmania and we will be so much stronger if we work together. We need to partner with the state government to leverage the most from the federal government.

The federal government has an expectation that all state governments will step up to the plate and provide funding in the NRM space. Tasmania needs to satisfy and preferably exceed the federal expectation. We need to address the federal government’s guiding principles and deliver on these at every turn.

The principles driving NLP2 are being telegraphed by the review of NLP1 to all those engaged in natural resource management. These principles are underpinned by the concepts of effective and efficient delivery in a competitive procurement environment. Elements of this will challenge all organisations. NRM North is well placed to take on this challenge. I believe we already provide an efficient and highly effective delivery model. We are also well positioned to compete if necessary for limited funds to deliver outcomes across the breadth of the NLP2 programs. Our position will only be stronger if we work with other organisations and all levels of government to achieve our goals.

Finally, I would thank Rosanna for her fantastic leadership and dedication to NRM North. I would like to thank all staff for their contribution and unwavering passion for NRM. Last but not least, I must thank Management Committee members for their ongoing support and input. Together all these people form the team that are NRM North.

James Walch
Chairman NRM North
The focus for NRM North this year has been on strong delivery and ensuring we are strategically placed to meet our vision of being “The leading non-government organisation in natural resource management across northern Tasmania”.

The NRM North team has worked hard to ensure quality delivery on programs funded by the federal government through the National Landcare Programme, the state government through the Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme, or locally funded activities through the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program. The yearbook recounts outcomes in each of our four key operational programs: Land, Water, Biodiversity and Aboriginal NRM.

Strategic Planning

In addition to ensuring a focus on effective delivery of current programs, the team has worked with the Management Committee to focus our activities on priority areas of the Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Strategy 2015 – 2020 where NRM North has a capacity to make a difference. The northern Tasmanian strategy was adopted by the Association at the 2016 annual general meeting and outlines a range of desired outcomes based on community consultation and stakeholder feedback. The aim of the strategy is to ensure all organisations, groups and individuals have a blueprint for effective resource management in our region. The expectation is that together we will deliver on the strategy. With limited resources, it was imperative that NRM North review the strategy and identify the areas where we can leverage our expertise and funding opportunities to achieve real outcomes.

The Management Committee and staff embarked on an organisational strategic planning journey during the 16/17 financial year to identify NRM North’s priorities for delivery. The process is referred to as “Strategy to Action” and includes identification of priorities, program planning, implementation planning, identification of monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement activities (MERI), and work planning for staff. The product is the NRM North Strategic Plan 2017-2020 and includes four operational programs and a corporate services program, with the following aims:

- Land – To improve soil health, groundcover and minimise soil erosion in productive landscapes for improved profitability and sustainability;
- Water – To maintain and enhance ecosystem health of the Tamar River estuary and Brid and Georges catchments through water quality improvement;
- Biodiversity – To maintain and enhance landscape function for biodiversity with a focus on protecting habitat for EPBC species and communities and Ramsar wetland values in northern Tasmania;
- Aboriginal NRM – To build knowledge and capacity within the Aboriginal community to manage natural values on country and enhance awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage in natural resource management; and
- Corporate Services – To maintain a sustainable organisation that delivers strategic NRM results for the community and demonstrates best practice business management and governance.

The NRM North Strategic Plan 2017 - 2020 will be available on the NRM North website following the Association annual general meeting in September 2017.

Flood Recovery and Resilience

A key initiative from FY16/17 that extends into next year, is the partnership between the state government and the three NRM bodies in the delivery of the Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme (ALRS). The aim of the program is to provide funding to community groups, local government and landowners to enable them to undertake works that will help to improve the resilience of flood affected waterways as well as restoring the capacity of agricultural land affected by the 2016 floods. The state government committed $4 million to the program. NRM North is the lead agency (on behalf of the three NRMs) to deliver the program state wide.

In support of the ALRS, from January to March 2017, NRM North responded to inquiries from approximately 280 landholders, provided site visits (with external geomorphological consulting support) and reports to 234 landholders, and received 170 nominations for assistance from the program. The nominations were provided to the state government in April and the state government finalised its funding decisions at the end of July. During FY17/18, the three NRMs will provide support to landholders to implement on-ground works. The program concludes on June 30, 2018.
Organisational Excellence
Over the past year, NRM North has been through several audits and reviews to evaluate the level of best practice the organisation employs and identify any areas of continuous improvement.

In November 2016, two external consultants spent a week interviewing staff, Management Committee representatives and partners, and reviewing the organisation’s policies and practices. The review was undertaken through the national Organisational Performance Excellence (OPE) program. The program is open to all 56 NRMs around the country and is a voluntary review to identify strengths and areas of continuous improvement. The review covers seven areas including: Leadership, Corporate Strategy and Planning, Client Focus and Community Engagement, Information and Knowledge, People, Process Management and Business Results. A summary of the review is included in the annual report. The full OPE review is available on the NRM North website.

Through the strategic planning process, the organisation is leveraging strengths and addressing areas of improvement identified in the review.

In 2017, the Australian Government also conducted a performance audit of all NRMs against a performance framework including Governance, Financial Management, Strategic Planning, Community Engagement, and Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) practices. Ten areas of performance were audited by Australian Government staff; NRM North provided sufficient evident to confirm that it meets the expected practices.

These are only a few organisational highlights of a very busy year. I encourage you to read the yearbook and the annual report for great examples of NRM North’s program activities and outcomes this year.

Looking Forward
The year ahead has a number of significant activities and events that the staff and Management Committee are participating in and responding to.

While continuing to deliver on the current National Landcare Programme (NLP), due to conclude in June 2018, the organisation has an eye on the future. The federal government’s approach to regional delivery of natural resource management funding will be different beginning with NLP2 in FY18/19. Funding will be reduced, focused on very specific outcomes, and will be based on a competitive procurement model. The details of the program are not yet released, but we do know that our current strong partnerships will be critical. We also know that focussed delivery will be key. As the program unfolds, staff will work with the Management Committee to ensure NRM North puts forward a credible funding application.

There are many opportunities for NRM North to partner with the state government to deliver targeted programs. The ALRS is a great example of this partnership. NRM North staff will work with senior staff in the state government (i.e. DPIPWE) to identify opportunities for collaboration.

At the regional level, the announcement of the Launceston City Deal provides opportunities for NRM North to work with partners to address Tamar estuary water quality improvements. The Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program is central to providing the science to support decision making for the investment plan and to assist in implementation of urban and catchment management activities to address diffuse sources of pollutants.

It Takes a Village
I’d like to thank the NRM North team who continue to demonstrate their passion and commitment to our work and to the community. You are all a pleasure to work with. I’d also like to thank Management Committee members for their support over the past year, particularly in their commitment to strategically positioning the organisation for success now and into the future.

Thank you.

Rosanna Coombes
CEO NRM North
Corporate Services Program

The fifth pillar of the NRM North Strategic Plan 2017-2020, is the Corporate Services Program. The program aims to:

*maintain a sustainable organisation that delivers strategic NRM results for the community and demonstrates best practice business management and governance.*

For the next three years, the Corporate Services Program will focus on these eight (8) key objectives:

**O1.**
The Northern Tasmania Natural Resource Management Strategy 2015-2020 remains relevant and reflects the needs of the community.
- Develop and publish the 2020-2025 Northern Tasmania Natural Resource Management Strategy;
- Work with Tasmanian NRM regions to develop a broader NRM data coordination function to assist with monitoring and improving regional delivery of the NRM strategy; and
- Monitor satisfaction and feedback from the community and partner organisations on the implementation of the NRM strategy.

**O2.**
Partners recognise the value proposition of NRM North and seek to partner on program delivery.
- Review and manage the operations and relationships with partner local government organisations;
- Foster collaborative relationships with state government agencies specifically focused on strategic planning, knowledge and data sharing and joint program delivery; and
- Ensure an efficient contracting process with all stakeholders.

**O3.**
Business results and NRM outcomes are demonstrated through the implementation of the NRM North Strategic Plan (“Strategy to Action”).
- Implement an increased range of performance monitoring to clearly demonstrate business results across the full range of business activity areas;
- Develop a MERI framework and process map, guidelines and other necessary documents;
- Identify and monitor indicators for organisational performance;
- Review and implement a corporate communication and engagement strategy and implementation plan; and
- Develop and integrate program communication strategies in program plans.

**O4.**
NRM North Management Committee is recognised as an effective governing body which has best practice governance, structure, policy and skills.
- Ensure relevance of the structure and function of the Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association;
- Implement a process of performance review, evaluation of effectiveness and improvement strategies for the Management Committee and its members; and
- Develop a succession planning framework that includes the identification of required skills.
05.
NRM North has a culture of innovation and business excellence through continuous business improvement, process mapping and performance measurement.
- Identify areas for organisational efficiency improvement;
- Maintain best practice standards and processes for financial management, corporate compliance, risk management and human resources; and
- Ensure best practice in organisational change management.

06.
NRM North has a secure information management system that allows the organisation to monitor performance against outcomes and supports engagement and partnerships.
- Implement a secure information and data management system; and
- Develop or enhance information systems that allows the organisation to monitor performance against outcomes, tracks implementation of program plans and supports engagement and partnerships in program delivery.

07.
NRM North has a viable, long-term and sustainable organisational funding model.
- Develop strategic investment relationships with all levels of government (local, state, federal);
- Develop collaborative investment partnerships with key stakeholder groups; and
- Work more closely with neighbouring NRM regions to improve funding efficiency and leverage.

08.
NRM North has a staff performance management system that includes individual work plans, performance assessment, professional development and reward and recognition.
- Develop and implement a formal performance assessment process that links to rewards and recognition;
- Establish a formal approach to training and development in conjunction with the performance assessment process;
- Develop individual work plans that relate to achieving the strategic goals of the organisation linked to the performance assessment process; and
- Develop a formal approach to organisational workforce planning incorporating internal capacity and skill needs analysis.

The 2017 Annual Report provides a summary of actions taken during FY16-17 to address the key objectives in the Corporate Services Program.
The Northern Tasmania Natural Resource Management Strategy 2015-2020

The Northern Tasmania Natural Resource Management Strategy 2015-2020 was approved by Minister Groom in February 2016. During the past 12 months, the NRM North Management Committee and staff have reviewed the plan, identified the key areas of investment for the organisation and developed program plans to focus activities to deliver outcomes against the strategy.

In addition, staff have worked with other organisations, such as subregional NRM committees, local and state government organisations and industry groups, to encourage implementation of policy, programs and investment in on-ground works to support the implementation of the northern strategy.

NRM North staff are also working with the other NRM bodies (NRM South and Cradle Coast NRM) and the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment (DPIPWE) to build and share data through tools such as ListMap or AdaptNRM. The three Tasmanian NRM regions collectively purchased AdaptNRM data sets to support climate change adaptation planning. This information was shared broadly through the Healthy Landscapes Group, an informal working group that includes: Greening Australia, the Tasmanian Land Conservancy, DPIPWE, Forestry Tasmania, Parks and Wildlife Service, the University of Tasmania, Hydro Tasmania, Bush Heritage Australia and the Tasmanian Landcare Association.

Partnerships

NRM North partners with government, industry and individual businesses to deliver natural resource management outcomes through policy, capacity building, scientific investigation and on-ground works.

NRM North’s primary investing partners in delivering NRM activities remain all three levels of government (local, state, federal). The federal government continues to partner with NRM North in delivering national priorities through the National Landcare Programme. Regionally, the team works closely with state government staff on the delivery of programs that are significant at the state level. NRM partners with local governments in funding NRM facilitators or specific projects that work at the community level to implement on-ground activities and build community partnerships.

NRM North also partners with a range of organisations, industry bodies, schools, individual landholders and businesses, including, but not limited to: Hydro Tasmania, the Australian Maritime College, Landcare Tasmania, the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association, Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania, the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, Launceston Chamber of Commerce, Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the University of Tasmania, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston Flood Authority, TasWater, City of Launceston, Meander Valley Council, Break O’Day Council, Dorset Council, Flinders Council, Northern Midlands Council, West Tamar Council, George Town Council, Tamar NRM, sub-regional NRM committees, the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, the Department of Justice, the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment and the Department of Health and Human Services.

In 2017, NRM North established new partnership agreements, grant deeds, or Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with a range of key organisational stakeholders to support program delivery. These partnerships include:

• MOU with the Launceston City Deal partners;
• Membership of the Tamar Estuary Management Taskforce;
• MOU with Dairy Tasmania;
• 2017-2020 Partnership Agreement for the Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program;
• Partnership agreement for a Tamar Estuary Faecal Source Tracking Pilot Project;
• Collaboration Agreement with the Lake Trevallyn Algal Bloom Monitoring Working Group;
• Partnership agreement with Conservation Landholders Tasmania;
• Grant deed with the state government to support the implementation of the Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme (ALRS); and
• Local government agreements to co-invest in the NRM Facilitator network within local communities.
Business Results

NRM North reports to the Australian Government on projects funded through the National Landcare Programme, Green Army and $20 Million Trees programs against agreed targets. NRM North is meeting or exceeding all program delivery targets to-date for these projects and is on track to meet or exceed the three-year June 2018 outcome targets for the National Landcare Programme.

In addition, the NRM North TEER Program has met all of the key outcomes and deliverables identified under the TEER Partnership Agreement 2014-2017 and has secured an increased level of financial and in-kind support from partners for a new three-year Partnership Agreement from 2017-2020.

The organisation uses a monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) framework to identify targets and report results. With a focus on continuous improvement, NRM North has:

- Reviewed and amended NRM North’s MERI Plans for the Australian Government’s investment thought the National Landcare Programme to establish clear outcomes and alignment with NRM North’s strategic planning outcomes for program areas across Biodiversity, Land, Water and Aboriginal NRM;
- Reviewed and updated NRM North’s enQuire project management system to align with new reporting outcomes and targets;
- Reviewed and improved processes, workflows and accountability for NRM North’s reporting to the Australian Government;
- Developed program plans and implementation schedules for the five strategic program pillars for NRM North including; Biodiversity, Water, Land, Aboriginal NRM and Corporate Services; and
- Engaged independent consultants to evaluate the Small Farm Living Program in 2017 and will undertake an external evaluation of the Land Program in 2017/18. The outcomes and recommendations from these evaluations will drive continuous improvement across program areas.
The NRM North Management Committee is a skill based board, comprising 9 – 11 members of the northern Tasmanian community, with an interest in natural resource management. To support the committee, three subcommittees focus on the key operational areas: audit and finance, governance and policy and review of the organisation’s CEO. The Management Committee holds a minimum of six (6) meetings per calendar year.

Key governance topics in FY16-17 included: policy development, review and updates (see Business Excellence); review and amendments to the Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association Rules (Constitution), completion of a Management Committee skills audit; completion of an external Organisational Performance Excellence review; and an audit of expected practices by the Australian Government.

Constitution Review
At the 2016 Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Association, members voted to direct the Management Committee to conduct a review of the Association constitution with a primary focus on membership of the Association. The Management Committee was authorised to propose other amendments as necessary and to recommend any clean-up amendments related to spelling, grammar or section references.

In December 2016, the Governance and Policy Subcommittee initiated the review process that included an initial staff review, followed by activities to receive input from the subcommittee, Management Committee and the Association membership. Following the input phase, staff worked with the subcommittee and legal counsel to draft recommended amendments for review by the Management Committee in August 2017 with final recommendations being considered by the Association at the 2017 AGM.

Proposed amendments include:
- Amendments to Association membership;
- Addition of enabling language to support an application for deductible gift recipient status; and
- General clean up amendments (spelling, reference corrections).

Skills Audit
In 2016-17, two members of the 11-member Management Committee resigned. Tim Holder resigned to take on additional responsibilities with the Launceston Chamber of Commerce and John Carswell resigned to take up a new position with a company in South Africa.

Prior to initiating a recruitment process to fill the two open seats on the committee, members agreed to conduct an independent (3rd party) skills audit. The skills audit was completed by Excellent Outcomes in June 2017 and provided to the Management Committee Selection Panel to inform recommendations to the Association membership on new Management Committee members.

Organisational Performance Excellence
In November 2016, NRM North participated in its second Organisational Performance Excellence (OPE) review. This review was conducted as an independent evaluation of NRM North performance against the national
The organisation participated in a similar review in 2012. The review involved a semi-structured approach to the collection of information through discussions with members of the Management Committee, senior management team, staff and a cross-section of external stakeholders. A review of internal policy, communication and planning documents provided additional information that was drawn upon to prepare the final report.

The objectives and benefits of the review to NRM North and its stakeholders include:

- Identification of key strengths and opportunities for improvement;
- Providing a basis for prioritisation of strategies for improving organisational capability and performance;
- Providing a reference for monitoring progress over time;
- Facilitating exchange of information and benchmarking of management practices across the NRM sector; and
- Providing a commentary on progress made since the previous OPE review.

The above graphic provides a summary of the review results in 2016 as compared to 2012 results. In most categories, the 2016 results showed improvements since 2012. The lack of improvement in strategic planning results between 2012 and 2016 led to the decision by the Management Committee to focus attention on establishing organisational priorities and developing a robust strategic planning framework with outcome targets.

Australian Government Audit

In August 2016, the Australian Government initiated a self-assessment review of all NRM regional bodies across the country. The self-assessment was followed by performance audits of all NRMs against a Performance Framework including governance, financial management, strategic planning, community engagement and monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) practices. NRM North received its audit in April 2017 against ten areas of performance. The audit was conducted by Australian Government staff; NRM North provided sufficient evidence to confirm that it meets the expected practices.
During FY16-17, the Senior Management Team worked closely with the Management Committee and staff to review existing policy and procedures and to develop new policy and process maps to ensure best practice organisational management.

Senior staff also identified several areas for cost savings in the organisational budget. These savings were identified by reviewing existing contracts and service provider arrangements and facilitating new discussions with other organisations on possible cohabitation and shared services arrangements.

The organisation continued to invest in staff skills training for program delivery enhancement, specifically focusing on facilitation training and ensuring safe work practices with required occupational health and safety training.

The following are examples of enhancements to business excellence during FY16-17:

**Policy Development, Review and Updates:**
During FY16-17, the Management Committee adopted one new policy and four (4) new process documents including the:
- NRM North Privacy and Personal Information Policy;
- Volunteer engagement process map;
- Service provider engagement process map;
- Contractor induction checklist; and,
- Sponsorship process map.

In addition, as part of the ongoing review of governance documentation, the Management Committee reviewed and updated the NRM North:
- Information Management Policy;
- Procurement Policy;
- Sponsorship Policy;
- Terms of Reference for the Governance and Policy Subcommittee;
- Risk Register;
- Fraud Policy; and
- Employee Handbook.

**Cost Savings**
Staff continue to review expenditure with an eye on value for money. During the past 12 months staff have:
- Negotiated reductions in work place health and safety insurance premiums;
- Reduced printing costs by converting to electronic distribution of NRM North newsletters and streamlining the yearbook/annual report;
- Reduced vehicle expenses by renegotiating vehicle leases and seeking exemption from stamp duty; and
- Explored cohabitation/shared resources options with other entities with the aim of reducing office rental costs and sharing back-office services at a regional level. These discussions are ongoing.

**Training**
NRM North aims to provide professional development to staff to support growth in skills and capabilities that enhance program delivery and ensure a safe working environment. The organisation made a significant investment in facilitation training in the past 12 months to ensure all operational staff have undergone this training. The other priority area is an ongoing commitment to a safe working environment. As such, all operational staff were required to complete first-aid training and driver safety training. The Corporate Services Manager completed a Workplace Health and Safety Representative Training – Cert IV.

Ongoing professional development needs are identified through the newly implemented performance management process.
Secure Information Management System

Over the past 12 months, the organisation has experienced several cyber breaches. These breaches have resulted in some loss of staff time to address the threat, but there was no financial or data loss or impact to organisational reputation. The mitigation of potential impact is directly related to the redundancy of internal controls and management systems.

The types of breaches included: spam email, false requests for payment and crypto-lock (data encryption threat). Staff worked with the organisation’s information technology provider to address the threats and put in place new procedures to further secure the organisation including password policies, implementation of behavioural pattern recognition software (Intercept X) and staff training.

In February 2017, staff submitted a successful grant application to the Myer Foundation to fund a two-year project to address the cyber security issues noted above and to enhance how we store and access data and information with the aim of:

- Increasing productivity and efficiency for staff by reducing manual processes to compile data and information and reduce wasted time searching for documents;
- Enhancing reporting of outcomes to our investors, stakeholders and the community;
- Enhancing data integrity and greater analytical capabilities;
- Enhancing relationship management with clients and the community through efficient use of CRM software; and
- Providing greater protection of information and data including the ability to meet state and federal government data privacy standards.

During FY16-17, operational staff revised the organisation’s project and contract management system (enQuire) to support improvements in reporting of business results. Changes to the Australian Government monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement plans (MERI plans) have been incorporated into enQuire. This allows staff to record project outputs that feed up into program outcomes and result in streamlined reporting. The Customer Relationship Management (CRM) module in enQuire is also being used to support case management for the Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme.

Sustainable Organisational Funding Model

During FY16-17, senior management have worked closely with the NRM North Treasurer and the Audit and Finance Subcommittee, to determine strategies the organisation could pursue to provide a balanced organisational budget, that did not require supplementation from reserves and provide a sustainable funding future for the organisation. The Senior Management Team prepared a report that identified options to either increases in revenue or decreases to costs. The Management Committee reviewed the report and its findings and recommended to staff six (6) priority areas to investigate to address the organisational budget. These strategies included:

- State government funding;
- Federal government funding;
- Resource sharing with other organisations;
- Grants;
- Awards; and
- Fee for service.

NRM North staff have worked to meet those strategies throughout FY2016/17, with some success. The three NRM regions submitted a joint budget proposal and value proposition to support organisational funding to the state government, which included a three-year budget request, budget rationale and value proposition to be considered in the 2017 State Budget. Although unsuccessful in securing increased funding, the three regions have been allocated funding for the next two years at the current rate.

NRM North’s Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers (TEER) Program also submitted a three-year project funding proposal to the Tasmanian Government that was successful in gaining funding for its continuing operations, after funding was previously withdrawn in 2015.

The federal government has announced funding for the next round of the National Landcare Programme, however, the details on funding allocations and program objectives are not yet available. The funding announcement flagged a $1 billion investment over five years, effectively a 20% reduction from current levels. Staff will prepare applications for the next round when details are available.

The NRM North Management Committee undertook a review of the Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association Constitution during the FY16-17, to enable NRM North to apply to the Australian Tax Office for deductible gift recipient status in the future, which will increase the organisation’s ability to accept donations.

NRM North has worked closely with NRM South and Cradle Coast NRM to improve funding efficiency and leverage. For example, the three regions have shared costs and resources in contributing to the Statewide Planning Scheme review, collaboration on the development, design and distribution of the three Tasmanian regional strategies and delivery of the state government’s Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme.
Staff Performance Management

Following the NRM North Staff Survey in 2015, NRM North continues to work towards opportunities for improvement identified by the survey. During FY16-17, staff underwent the first of an annual process for performance assessment. The NRM North performance assessment aims to allow staff to have input on their own performance, provide input on assessment of workloads and review training and development needs. Review of these assessments will identify staff needs into the future, help management plan for program resourcing and plan staff training requirements.

Feedback from staff will be incorporated into the performance assessment process going forward.

A priority in FY17/18 will be to develop individual staff work plans based on the organisational strategic plan. The work plans will form the basis for the performance assessment process.

Operations and People Management

Central Office

NRM North has its main office at 63 Cameron Street, Launceston. The office provides good working conditions, adequate space and is conveniently central for visitors to town and places the organisation in the hub of the CBD. The boardroom is made available to community groups for meetings and quite a number have used it for this purpose.

Operational Funding

During 2016-17, NRM North received $246,667 of funding for its operations from the Tasmanian Government. This core funding remains critical to effectively carrying out the regional committee’s functions under the NRM Act. The Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme also provides operational funding as a percentage of funding received.

Personnel

Throughout 2016-17, NRM North personnel provided critical support for the development and implementation of natural resource management programs in the region. This support includes effective stakeholder and sector engagement, business administration and management, partnership development and communication. NRM North staff are employed on terms and conditions determined by NRM North.

Organisational Health

NRM North constantly strives to promote a friendly, supportive and continual learning environment for staff members. To ensure that this ethic is incorporated into daily operations, the following processes have been reviewed and improved:

- NRM North Employee Handbook;
- Health and Wellbeing program;
- Staff induction procedures;
- Team development opportunities; and
- NRM North staff performance assessment.
## NRM Contract Staff

### 01. During 2016-17 were as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Incumbent</th>
<th>Commencement date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td>Rosanna Coombes</td>
<td>4 January 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager – Operations</td>
<td>Amanda Locatelli</td>
<td>1 October 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager – Engagement &amp; Communications</td>
<td>Melissa Lewam</td>
<td>22 September 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager – Corporate Services</td>
<td>Fiona George</td>
<td>23 July 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration Coordinator</td>
<td>Denise Colvin</td>
<td>8 September 2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance Officer / Executive Assistant</td>
<td>Sarah Presnell</td>
<td>10 May 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Program Manager &amp; Regional Landcare Facilitator</td>
<td>Adrian James</td>
<td>24 August 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MERI Coordinator</td>
<td>Emma Williams</td>
<td>1 July 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Coordinator</td>
<td>Joanna Voller</td>
<td>24 September 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water &amp; Strategic Programs Manager</td>
<td>Andrew Baldwin</td>
<td>7 March 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invasive Species Coordinator</td>
<td>Greg Stewar</td>
<td>31 July 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRM Facilitator – Tamar &amp; Small Farm Living Coordinator</td>
<td>Megan Dykman</td>
<td>2 November 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Coordinator</td>
<td>Jesse Webster</td>
<td>17 November 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEER Scientific &amp; Technical Coordinator</td>
<td>Toni Furlong</td>
<td>11 December 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity Program Manager</td>
<td>Kate Thorn</td>
<td>6 August 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Landcare Facilitator</td>
<td>Peter Heading</td>
<td>11 November 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity Coordinator</td>
<td>Alison Hugo</td>
<td>18 February 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation Scheme Project Officer</td>
<td>Russell Currie</td>
<td>23 January 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Not all staff are full time employees, the total full time equivalent is 15.2 employees.*

### Staff Members Who Resigned or Completed Contracts

#### 02. During 2016-17 were as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Incumbent</th>
<th>Completion / Resignation Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TEER Scientific &amp; Technical Coordinator</td>
<td>Michael Attard</td>
<td>December 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Corporate Governance

Enabling Legislation

Functions of NRM North
NRM North's primary functions as determined by the Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Act 2002 (2009 Amendments) are:
- Identify the priorities for natural resource management for the northern region;
- Prepare a regional strategy for the northern region;
- Facilitate the implementation of the regional strategy;
- Promote the natural resource management principles;
- Facilitate the integration of natural resource management and planning activities for the region;
- Seek, manage and allocate funds according to the regional strategy;
- Coordinate the northern region’s participation in national and state programs relating to NRM;
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the northern regional strategy; and
- Develop and implement processes to ensure appropriate education and training in natural resource management.

Responsible Minister
At 30 June 2017, the State Minister responsible for NRM North was the Honourable Jeremy Rockliff, Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Training, Minister for Primary Industries and Water, Minister for Racing.

Under the Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Act 2002 (2009 Amendments) the Minister has the power to:
- Declare a managing body or committee of an incorporated association or body corporate as a regional committee; and
- Appoint the Chairperson of the regional committee.

Accountability to Parliament
NRM North is accountable to the Minister and, through him, to the Parliament of Tasmania. Under the Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Act 2002 (2009 Amendments) the Minister must table NRM North’s annual report in Parliament.

The Management Committee
The Management Committee is responsible for the oversight of the business affairs of NRM North and ensuring appropriate management is in place to carry out its objectives and functions. The Management Committee sets the strategic direction of the organisation and ensures that NRM North as an organisation meets all required areas of compliance and performance.

Management Committee Meetings
The Management Committee meets for a minimum of six scheduled meetings within a year. The Management Committee has out of session processes in place to address specific matters that require attention between scheduled meetings.

Composition of the Management Committee
Section 9 (3) of the Natural Resource Management Act 2002 (2009 Amendments)
NRM North Management Committee Members

As at 30 June 2017 was as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Association Status</th>
<th>Committee Term</th>
<th>Date Appointed / Reappointed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. James Walch</td>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>October 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Michael Walsh</td>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>October 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Maureen Bennett</td>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>September 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Joanna Ellison</td>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>September 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Peter Voller</td>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>June 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Stuart Blom</td>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>September 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Mandy Shepherd</td>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>September 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Peter Sattler</td>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>September 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Royce Aldred</td>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>4 Years</td>
<td>September 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

outlines the requirements of the composition of a regional committee. In compliance with the Act at 30 June 2017, the NRM North Management Committee had nine sitting members with skills across best-practice governance; business administration; legal and contractual issues and the achievement of natural resource management and conservation outcomes.

Subcommittees and Working Groups

The Management Committee has delegated responsibility to committees and working groups to undertake certain duties. All matters considered and determined by committees and working groups are submitted to the Management Committee for information and, where appropriate, ratification and decision. The following three subcommittees and working groups operated in 2016-17 to assist NRM North to fulfil its functions effectively:

Audit and Finance Subcommittee

The Audit and Finance subcommittee is responsible to the Management Committee for NRM North’s financial reports including the appropriateness of the accounting policies and principles that the organisation uses. The external auditors are responsible for auditing the Association’s financial reports.

The subcommittee will take appropriate action to set the overall standards for quality financial reporting and sound business practices.

In 2016-17, the subcommittee placed a focus on fiscal planning and organisational budgeting, review and improvement of reporting to the Management Committee, audit processes and procurement policies and financial procedures.

Members: Michael Walsh (Chairman), Royce Aldred, James Walch and Karen van der Aa (Independent Member).

Governance and Policy Subcommittee

The Governance and Policy subcommittee is responsible for ensuring that NRM North’s governance policies and procedures comply with legislation and current best practice standards. The committee will review these policies regularly and make any recommendations to the Management Committee.

The subcommittee helps to set the overall corporate ‘tone’, business practices and ethical behaviour of the organisation. In 2016-17, the subcommittee was focused on completing the review and amendment of the Association constitution, reviewing and monitoring risk management, reviewing existing internal policies, NRM North Employee Handbook and associated policies and reviewing existing governance and performance.

Members: Stu Bloom (Chair), Mandy Shepherd, Peter Sattler and James Walch

CEO Performance Review Subcommittee

The CEO Performance Review Subcommittee’s primary responsibility is to oversee the NRM North Chief Executive Officer’s performance review process on behalf of the Management Committee and to provide recommendations to the Management Committee regarding the CEO’s annual evaluation.

The Subcommittee developed and managed a review framework including, but not limited to, timeframes, process and assessment criteria, for the review of the CEO.

Members: James Walch (Chair), Joanna Ellison and Peter Voller
Conflicts of Interest

The Management Committee has a policy in place for the disclosure and resolution of any matter that may give rise to actual or potential conflicts between the interests of a Management Committee member and those of NRM North.

Ethical Standards

NRM North always aims to conduct its business with the highest standards of personal and corporate integrity. The NRM North Management Committee and personnel have adopted Codes of Conduct outlining the standards of personal and corporate behaviour that Management Committee members and personnel observe.

Remuneration of Board Member Delegates

Members who are self-employed or not otherwise remunerated for attending NRM North Management Committee meetings, may claim sitting fees in accordance with Department of Industrial Relations Policy “Remuneration of Part-time Chairs and Members of Government Boards, Committees and Statutory Authorities” (12 May 2003). NRM North meetings include those meetings that a Management Committee member has been given delegation by the Management Committee to attend on behalf of NRM North.

Significant travel costs associated with meeting attendance may be reimbursed in accordance with Tasmanian Government Directive Department of Industrial Relations Directive No. 06/04 “Motor Vehicle Allowances” (September 04).
## Management Committee Payments

### 05. Management Committee payments 30th June 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Member</th>
<th>Sitting Fees</th>
<th>Travel Payments</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Walch</td>
<td>$2,788.50</td>
<td>$742.50</td>
<td>$3,531.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Walsh</td>
<td>$1,600.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,600.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maureen Bennett</td>
<td>$850.00</td>
<td>$270.00</td>
<td>$1,120.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Joanna Ellison</td>
<td>$850.00</td>
<td>$67.50</td>
<td>$917.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tim Holder</td>
<td>$425.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>$425.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuart Blom</td>
<td>$1,790.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,790.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Shepherd</td>
<td>$1,530.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,530.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Carswell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Sattler</td>
<td>$1,122.00</td>
<td>$441.00</td>
<td>$1,563.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter Voller</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royce Aldred</td>
<td>$1,190.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,190.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$12,145.50</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,521.00</strong></td>
<td><strong>$13,666.50</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NRM North Management Committee Member Profiles

Mr James Walch
EPPING FOREST
- Manager of Stewarton Pastoral, a mixed farming business at Epping Forest

Mr Michael Walsh
LAUNCESTON
- CPA Finance Professional
- Financial Controller - Timberlands Pacific Pty Ltd
- Treasurer – Friends of Four Mile Creek (Coast Care Group)

Mrs Maureen Bennett
ELIZABETH TOWN
- Partner in Farming Business
- Director of Cheese Manufacturing Business

Dr Joanna Ellison
BRIDGENORTH
- Senior Lecturer – Land & Food, University of Tasmania
- Member – Tamar NRM Reference Group
- Public Officer – Northern Tasmanian Eventing Club
- Member – Westbury Show Horse Committee
- Associate Editor – Wetlands Ecology and Management

Mr Peter Voller
LAUNCESTON
- Senior Project Manager, DPIPWE
- Deputy Chair, Cradle Coast NRM Regional Committee Tasmania
- Representative, National Landcare Network Members Council
- Chair, West Tamar Landcare Group Member
- Committee Member, Landcare Tasmania
- Small landholder West Tamar

Ms Amanda Shepherd
LAUNCESTON
- Deputy General Manager – Theatre North Inc
- Australian Institute of Company Directors, Member and Graduate

Mr Stuart Blom
LAUNCESTON
- Director – Rae & Partners Lawyers
- Director – Heritage Isle Credit Union
- Australian institute of Company Directors, Member and Graduate

Mr Peter Sattler
BRIDPORT
- Farmer – Beef Cattle and Potatoes
- Member – Bridport Lions Club
- Dorset NRM representative on the Scottsdale Irrigation Scheme
- Member – Great Forester Catchment Management Consultative Group

Mr Royce Aldred
LAUNCESTON
- Leader Sewerage System Performance, TasWater
- Director and Deputy Chair, City Mission
- Chair, National Committee of Engineering Associates and Technologists (Engineers Australia)
- Member of Congress, Engineers Australia
- Bachelor of Technology (Environment), UTas
### Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

**For the Year Ended 30 June 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017 $</th>
<th>2016 $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government grants</td>
<td>2,295,543</td>
<td>2,298,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate contributions</td>
<td>686,240</td>
<td>684,613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest received</td>
<td>58,869</td>
<td>73,256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>7,866</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,048,518</td>
<td>3,056,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee benefits expense</td>
<td>1,395,585</td>
<td>1,271,372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional services</td>
<td>365,155</td>
<td>143,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications and information technology</td>
<td>49,873</td>
<td>50,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract services</td>
<td>937,873</td>
<td>1,357,434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travelling and motor vehicle</td>
<td>102,108</td>
<td>132,437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other operating expenses</td>
<td>335,483</td>
<td>245,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3,186,077)</td>
<td>(3,200,225)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net surplus/(deficit)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(137,559)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(143,734)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comprehensive income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total comprehensive income for the year</strong></td>
<td><strong>(137,559)</strong></td>
<td><strong>(143,734)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Note</th>
<th>2017 $</th>
<th>2016 $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents</td>
<td>3,672,158</td>
<td>2,135,337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade and other receivables</td>
<td>21,663</td>
<td>92,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepayments</td>
<td>10,575</td>
<td>15,937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total current assets</strong></td>
<td>3,704,396</td>
<td>2,243,353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-current assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property, plant and equipment</td>
<td>14,568</td>
<td>34,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total non-current assets</strong></td>
<td>14,568</td>
<td>34,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total assets</strong></td>
<td>3,718,964</td>
<td>2,277,805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade and other payables</td>
<td>380,968</td>
<td>337,046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deferred income</td>
<td>1,979,592</td>
<td>445,130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisions</td>
<td>157,392</td>
<td>132,015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total current liabilities</strong></td>
<td>2,517,952</td>
<td>914,191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-current liabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisions</td>
<td>52,662</td>
<td>77,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total liabilities</strong></td>
<td>2,570,614</td>
<td>991,897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net assets</strong></td>
<td>1,148,350</td>
<td>1,285,908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Equity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserves</td>
<td>905,342</td>
<td>905,342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained earnings</td>
<td>243,008</td>
<td>380,566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total equity</strong></td>
<td>1,148,350</td>
<td>1,285,908</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Projects Reserve $</th>
<th>Retained Earnings $</th>
<th>Capital Reserve $</th>
<th>Total $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance at 1 July 2016</strong></td>
<td>830,342</td>
<td>380,566</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>1,285,908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total comprehensive income</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(137,558)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(137,558)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transfers to and from reserves</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance at 30 June 2017</strong></td>
<td>830,342</td>
<td>243,008</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>1,148,350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Projects Reserve $</th>
<th>Retained Earnings $</th>
<th>Capital Reserve $</th>
<th>Total $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance at 1 July 2015</strong></td>
<td>997,699</td>
<td>356,943</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>1,429,644</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total comprehensive income</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(143,734)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(143,734)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transfers to and from reserves</strong></td>
<td>(167,357)</td>
<td>167,357</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance at 30 June 2016</strong></td>
<td>830,342</td>
<td>380,566</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>1,285,909</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash from operating activities:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receipts from Government and corporate partners</td>
<td>4,567,958</td>
<td>2,609,208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract payments</td>
<td>(1,038,965)</td>
<td>(1,359,852)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payments to employees</td>
<td>(1,395,252)</td>
<td>(1,315,352)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payments to suppliers</td>
<td>(822,910)</td>
<td>(546,365)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other income</td>
<td>7,866</td>
<td>568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest received</td>
<td>48,729</td>
<td>73,921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GST refunded/(remitted)</td>
<td>169,395</td>
<td>4,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</strong></td>
<td>1,536,821</td>
<td>(532,909)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash flows from investing activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net cash used by investing activities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cash flows from financing activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net cash used by financing activities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net cash increase (decreases) in cash and cash equivalents</strong></td>
<td>1,536,821</td>
<td>(532,909)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year</td>
<td>2,135,337</td>
<td>2,668,246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</td>
<td>3,672,158</td>
<td>2,135,337</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notes to the Summary Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

1. Basis of Preparation of Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements are an extract from the full financial statements of NRM North for the year ended 30 June 2017.

The financial report covers Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association ("NRM North") as an individual entity. NRM North is an association incorporated in Tasmania under the Associations Incorporations Act 1964 and operates as a not for profit entity.

The financial statements, specific disclosures and other information included in the summarised financial report are derived from and consistent with the full financial report of the association.

The summarised financial report cannot be expected to provide as detailed an understanding of the financial performance, financial position and financing and investing activities of the company as the full financial report. Further financial information can be obtained from the full financial report which is available, free of charge, on request to NRM North.

2. Funding revenue

Grant funding received by NRM North is generally provided for the purpose of achieving specified outcomes. NRM North manage these outcomes through the appointment through a competitive tender process of service providers who are contracted by NRM North to deliver agreed services, and funds paid under those contracts are conditional upon successful completion of milestones and reporting targets.

Where the performance obligations relating to funding received under contract has yet to be met, the unsatisfied portion is set aside as a liability representing outstanding commitments. NRM North anticipates that the conditions attached to all amounts of funding received but not yet spent will be satisfied in accordance with the funding requirements.

### SUMMARY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Opening balance $</th>
<th>Funding received $</th>
<th>Revenue recognised $</th>
<th>Closing balance $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government grants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Landcare Program</td>
<td>118,222</td>
<td>1,622,720</td>
<td>(1,501,481)</td>
<td>239,461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Million Trees</td>
<td>15,983</td>
<td>152,840</td>
<td>(141,980)</td>
<td>26,843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State core funding</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>246,667</td>
<td>(246,667)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Landscape Rehabilitation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,925,000</td>
<td>(405,416)</td>
<td>1,519,584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>134,205</td>
<td>3,947,227</td>
<td>(2,295,544)</td>
<td>1,785,888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate contributions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamar Estuary and Esk Rivers</td>
<td>310,925</td>
<td>463,520</td>
<td>(675,741)</td>
<td>98,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myer Foundation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>95,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>95,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10,500</td>
<td>(10,500)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>310,925</td>
<td>569,020</td>
<td>(866,241)</td>
<td>193,704</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>445,130</td>
<td>4,516,247</td>
<td>(2,981,785)</td>
<td>1,979,592</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Management Committee Declaration

The Management Committee declare that:

1. the summarised financial report as set out on pages 1 to 5 is an extract from the full financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 and is consistent with the information contained in the full financial statements.

2. at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that NRM North will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Management Committee.

Deputy Chair

[Signature]
Joanna Ellison

Treasurer

[Signature]
Michael Walsh

Dated this 30th day of August 2017
Independent Auditor’s Report

To the Members of NRM North


The summary financial statements, which comprise the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and related notes, are derived from the audited financial report of Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association Incorporated (NRM North) for the year ended 30 June 2017.

Opinion

In our opinion, the accompanying summary financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial report, on the basis described in Note 1.

Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by Australian Accounting Standards – Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Natural Resource Management Act (Tasmania) 2002 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. Reading the summary financial statements and the auditor’s report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial report and the auditor’s report thereon.

The Audited Financial Report and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial report in our report dated 4 September 2017.

Management Committee’s Responsibility for the Summary Financial Statements

The Management Committee of NRM North is responsible for the preparation of the summary financial statements on the basis described in Note 1.

Auditor’s Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summary financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with the audited financial report based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810 Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements.

Synectic Audit & Assurance Pty Ltd

Date: 4 September 2017

Benjamin Coull
Director