

# Sustainable Agriculture Small Grants Program Guidelines

## About the Program

Tweed Shire Council's Sustainable Agriculture Small Grants Program assists farmers to implement best land management practices that benefit the farm, community and the environment.

Farmers are encouraged to bring forward project ideas to manage environmental problems or improve the health and productivity of their land.

A limited number of grants of up to \$4,000 (GST inclusive) are available for eligible activities each financial year. Grants will be awarded through a merit based competitive process. All funded projects are to be completed by the end of the financial year in which they are awarded.

See [www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/agriculture](http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/agriculture) for applications opening and closing dates.

## Program Objectives

The objectives of the Sustainable Agriculture Small Grants Program are to work with primary producers to:

1. Support and promote the adoption of improved land management practices.
2. Build capacity in natural resource management and sustainable agriculture.
3. Increase biodiversity, improve water quality and soil health on farms.

## Eligibility

To be eligible you must:

1. Be a landholder, a group of landholders, a farmer group or association that actively farms Rural (RU1, RU2) or Large Lot Residential (R5) land in the Tweed Local Government Area. If you are not the landholder, you must have consent from the landholder and/or relevant authority for project works.
2. Meet at least one of the Program objectives.
3. Complete all sections of the *Application Form*.
4. Ensure you have supplied quotes for ALL goods and services that you are seeking funding for. A minimum of two written quotes for goods or services above \$3,000 is required. Quotes need to be addressed to Tweed Shire Council and cannot exceed \$4,000 in total.
5. Be able to provide a cash and/or in-kind contribution equal to or greater than the value of funds requested.
6. Be willing to work with Council staff in the delivery of the project.
7. Commit to delivering the project and improving farming practices beyond the life of the grant.

## Eligible activities

Some examples of eligible activities include:

- Support for installation of fencing to address land degradation and improve water quality, livestock health and biodiversity such as:
  - Internal fencing to support rotational grazing practices or restrict livestock to restore degraded areas.
  - Cattle exclusion fencing of high biodiversity value areas.
  - Cattle exclusion fencing of water bodies.
- Revegetation of agricultural drains, paddocks (for windbreaks and paddock trees), constructed wetlands and dams with local native species.
- Weed control (particularly for control of problem agricultural weeds) in high biodiversity value areas of the farm.
- Support to produce and use environmentally friendly soil amendments such as compost and biochar by utilising farm waste and other local waste products.
- Release of beneficial organisms such as dung beetles, predatory insects or other biological controls in combination with cessation or reduced reliance on chemical controls to ensure the survival of beneficials.
- Assistance controlling foxes and feral cats in high priority areas.
- Installation of artificial hollows and nest boxes for beneficial predators and native fauna i.e. nest boxes for rodent predators in tree crops and orchards.
- Limited earthworks in combination with revegetation to address soil erosion and runoff issues. The costs of such activities would need to be largely borne by the landholder.
- Workshops or training activities that build natural resource management capacity for groups of farmers.

## Selection Criteria

The following assessment criteria will be used to determine a project's suitability for funding and overall ranking relative to other applications.

- Potential and scale of environmental benefits arising from the activity.
- Extent to which the project will meet one or more of the program objectives.
- Extent to which the project enables transfer of knowledge and lessons learned to other farmers.
- Feasibility of the project, and the extent to which the project will deliver clear, measurable outcomes.
- Clearly defined and achievable project timeframe.
- Risks to project delivery have been identified and appropriate risk management measures have been outlined.
- Value for money and the level of cash and/or in-kind contribution.

## **Preparing & lodging your application**

Application forms can be downloaded from Council's website at [www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/agriculture](http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au/agriculture). It is preferred that applications are submitted electronically to [tsc@tweed.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tsc@tweed.nsw.gov.au), however hard copies will also be accepted. Applications must also include copies of quotes for the proposed works. Quotes are to be addressed to Tweed Shire Council in the event that the grant is successful.

Contact the Sustainable Agriculture Program on (02) 6670 2400 if you would like to discuss your application before you lodge.

## Appendix 1: Guide to preparing a project site plan

A map/site plan says a thousand words, the following are some of the ways you can prepare a project site plan:

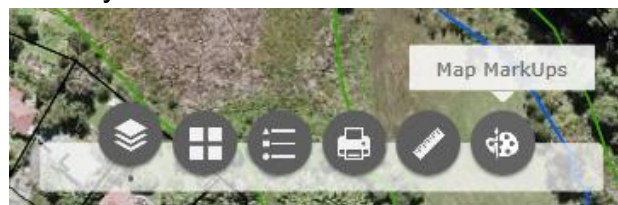
- 1) Use Council's [Environmental Mapping tool](#) to prepare a digital map or print a hard copy.
- 2) Contact Council's Sustainable Agriculture Program to request an electronic or hard copy of latest high resolution aerial photography for your property.
- 3) Copy and mark up existing farm plans.
- 4) Use a drone to take an aerial photograph and identify the project areas on the photograph.
- 5) Hand draw the site plan, providing you can accurately show the location of the project site e.g. using distances from known locations such as houses or dams.

**Project site plans must clearly show the location of ALL proposed project activities** and any other noteworthy site features. If you are wanting to show several pieces of information without losing readability, clear plastic (acetate) overlays may be helpful.

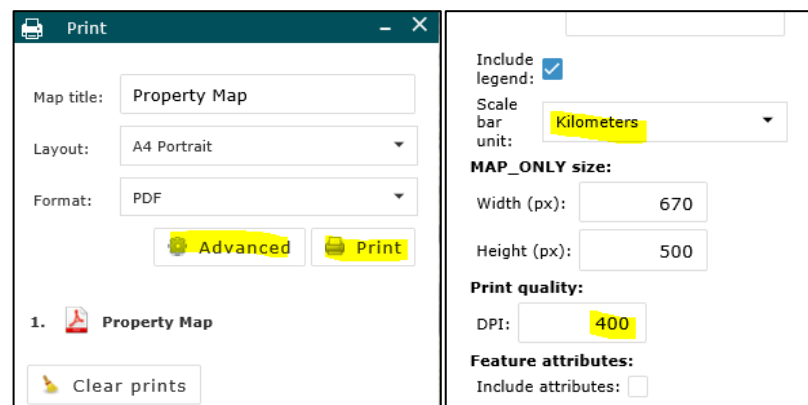
In addition to your site plans, you may also wish to include photos of the project area.

### Tips for using Council's [environmental information mapping tools](#):

- Turn on/off any relevant layers in the "Layers List" e.g. turn on contours (10m).
- Use the Map MarkUps tool to show the location of the proposed project area and other noteworthy site features.



- When you've finished your site plan, click the printer icon in the same toolbar above to generate a downloadable file for sending or printing. Note the advanced settings allow you to increase the print quality and change the scale bar units as below:



**Print**

Map title:

Layout:

Format:

1. Property Map

Include legend:

Scale bar unit:

**MAP\_ONLY size:**

Width (px):

Height (px):

**Print quality:**

DPI:

**Feature attributes:**

Include attributes:

## Appendix 2: Example project and budget

This farmer is seeking support to establish a rotational grazing system for their cattle and will be using biological controls for pasture weeds as part of an integrated pest management trial. Grant funds are sought to purchase fencing materials as well as biological control agents for pasture weeds.

The farmer is going to pay a fencing contractor to install the permanent fencing components as well as bear the cost of soil tests. The farmer will monitor (with support from Council's Sustainable Agriculture Program) the effects of the change in pasture management on pasture composition including weed abundance and feed availability.

The farmer will make in-kind contributions towards soil sampling, application of biologicals and site monitoring. The farmer provides copies of quotes for all goods and services in their application.

### Costs to be covered by the grant:

#### **Item: Permanent and electric fencing materials covering 700m**

Quote 1 – \$3000 (quotes must be attached to the application).

Quote 2 – \$4200 (not recommended – too expensive).

#### **Item: Purchase of Biological Control X**

Quote 1 – \$1000 (quote must be attached to the application).

TOTAL GRANT AMOUNT SOUGHT: \$4000 (GST inclusive)

### In-kind and cash contributions provided by the applicant:

Activity	Descriptions	Cost	Contribution type (cash or in-kind)
Vegetation quadrat surveys (pre-project)	5 quadrats x 1 hr/quadrat x 2 people x \$30/hr	\$300	In-kind
Vegetation quadrat surveys (at project completion)	5 quadrats x 1 hr/quadrat x 2 people x \$30/hr	\$300	In-kind
Soil Health Card tests (5 pre-project & 5 at completion)	10 tests x 0.5hrs/test x 2 people x \$30/hr	\$300	In-kind
Soil sampling	10 samples x 0.5hrs/sample x 2 people x \$30/hr	\$300	In-kind
Soil testing (1 pre-project & 1 at completion)	\$150/soil test x 2	\$300	Cash (quote attached)
Fencing installation	125m x \$12/m	\$1500	Cash (quote attached)
Biological control application	\$30/hr x 16hrs	\$480	In-kind
	<b>TOTAL IN KIND/CASH CONTRIBUTION</b>	<b>\$3480</b>	