

Byron Shire Council's Regenerative Agriculture Small Grants Program Guidelines

1. Overview

Byron Shire Council's Regenerative Agriculture funding program assists farmers to adopt sustainable farm management practices that will improve the health and productivity of their land.

Regenerative Agriculture is about working with nature to help improve ecological functions, biodiversity and build soil carbon whilst producing food, fibre or other value-added products. The grants will help landowners and farmers to improve management of our natural resources and increase sustainable on-farm productivity and build flood and drought resilience.

Farmers are invited to apply for funding for on farm activities that will help improve the ecological functions of their land, quality of their soil, and productivity of their land.

A limited number of grants of up to \$3500 (GST inclusive) are available for eligible activities. The total funding pool is \$10,500. Grants will be awarded through a competitive, merit-based process and applications will be assessed based on the extent to which they address the program objectives and key selection criteria detailed within this Grant Opportunity Guidelines document.

All funded projects are to be completed by the end of the financial year in which they are awarded.

See our website for application opening and closing dates.

2. Program Objectives

The Objective of this program is to assist landholders in developing on farm practices that:

1. Improve ecological functions on farm through improved land management
2. Increase soil health and water holding capacity
3. Increase on farm biodiversity
4. Increase farm productivity

3. Eligibility Criteria

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 Byron Shire. If you are not the landholder, you must have consent from all landholders and/or relevant authority for projects put forward.
2. Meet at least one of the programs objectives.
3. Complete all sections of the online application form
4. Ensure you have supplied quotes for ALL goods and services that you are seeking funding for AND provide quotes for goods and services you will be paying for as your contribution to the

project. Goods or services to be paid for with the grant need to be addressed to Byron Shire Council and cannot exceed \$3500 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.
8. Be willing to host a community farm walk with other farmers from the Byron Farmers Network, funded and supported by the Byron Shire Council to showcase and discuss the project.

*Actively producing crops and/or raising or keeping livestock as a commercial enterprise or in the startup phase of a legitimate farming business.

4. Eligible Activities

The grant can be used for a range of activities that contribute to the program objectives. Some examples of eligible grant activities that may be undertaken include:

- Fencing and water infrastructure to create more paddocks accompanied with a grazing plan for adaptively managed planned grazing.
- Trialling and showcasing more ecologically sound forms of weed control, eliminating the need for chemicals.
- Support to produce and use environmentally friendly soil amendments such as compost and biochar by utilising on farm and local “waste” resources.
- Integrated Pest & Disease Management, the introduction of biological control of insects or diseases that may affect crops and enhance production, such as dung beetles, and other beneficial insects.
- Development of worm farms and utilisation of castings and extracts as a way of developing humus, building soil and increasing soil microbial activity.
- Use of cover crops for soil building, biodiversity and aiding productivity.
- Incorporating the use of support species and other plants to increase productivity of fruit or nut orchard and/or pasture.
- Integrating animals as a tool for biodiversity and productivity increase.
- Bringing old, neglected orchards back into production, or transitioning from monoculture to agroforestry polyculture systems.

5. Ineligible activities

Some examples of activities that the grant will not fund include:

- Personal home garden projects i.e. establishment of vegetable garden or citrus orchard for personal use
- Camphor clearing
- Projects dependent on chemical use
- Projects reliant on heavy machinery for land clearing
- Educational workshops. Whilst these can form part of the project proposal, they should not be the only activity for which funding is sought.

6. Selection Criteria

The following assessment criteria will be used to determine a projects suitability for the funding and overall ranking relative to other applicants.

1. Activity: The extent to which the project meets one or more program objectives. Projects that meet all four program objectives will score more highly against this criterion.
2. Benefit: The potential and scale of environmental and productivity benefits arising from the proposed activity. Projects that are scalable and/or demonstrate broader environmental and community benefit will score more highly against this criterion.
3. Feasibility: Clearly defined project with measurable outcomes and a realistic and achievable project timeframe.
4. Budget: Value for money in terms of cost, quality and sustainability. Level of cash and/or in-kind contribution. Reliably represents the project expenses. All quotes provided.

7. How to apply

Before applying for this grant, make sure you have thoroughly read this Grant Guidelines document. As part of your application, you will be required to include:

- A project site plan (Refer to Appendix 1 for guidance)
- A project budget and quotes (Refer to Appendix 2 for guidance)
- Received letters of authority from all landowners (If the applicant is not the only landowner). Letters must include a statement such as "As the owner/s or appointed authority of the subject land, I/we give consent to the lodgement of this Regenerative Agriculture Small Grants Program application"

Applications can be completed online via the Council's website <https://www.byron.nsw.gov.au/Regen-Ag-Small-Grant>. To apply using a paper form please contact Council's Agricultural Extension Officer on 02 6626 7375 or agriculture@byron.nsw.gov.au

8. Questions during the application process

If you have any questions during the application process, or would like to discuss ideas that might be suitable for your particular context, please feel free to contact our Agricultural Extension Officer by phone: 02 6626 7375 or email: agriculture@byron.nsw.gov.au

Appendix 1. Guide to preparing a project site plan

The site plan should clearly show:

- The property/site location
- The existing infrastructure/relevant elements e.g. fences, water points, trees, tanks, plantings etc.
- The proposed infrastructure/activities
- The intended impacts

Below are some of the ways you can prepare your site plan for your submission:

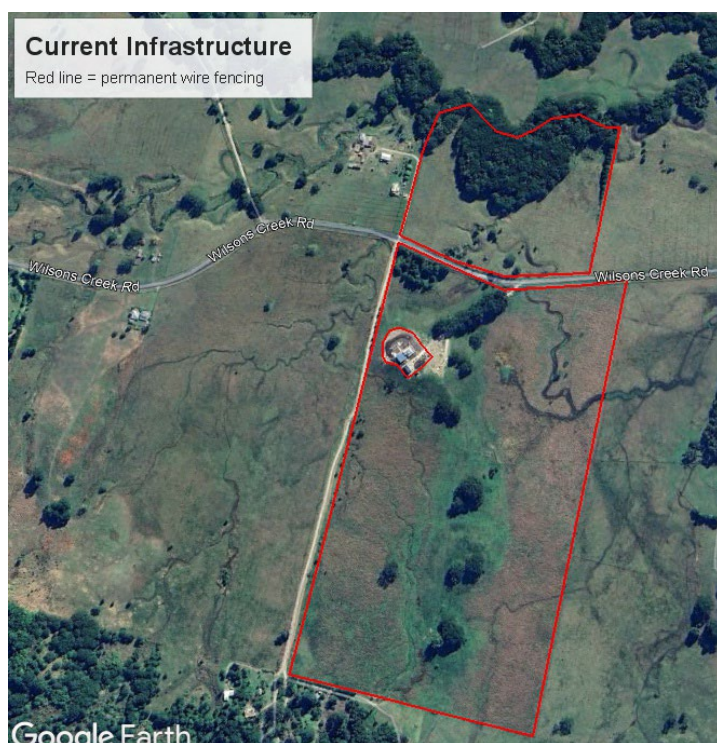
- 1) Download [google earth pro](#) to your desktop and use the software to mark up your work zones and proposed activities. i.e. paddock perimeters, water points etc. There are a number of instructional videos that will help you to use google earth pro on the [Regrarians Ltd. - YouTube](#). Particularly helpful videos on this channel include:
 - a. Video 14 - Polygons (first 3.5mins) will help you map and measure paddocks
 - b. Video 15 - Paths will help you mark up roads
 - c. Video 13 - Placemarks (First 4 mins) will help you mark water points or plantings etc.
 - d. Video 8 - Ruler Tool will help you measure
 - e. Video 32 - Exporting images
- 2) Contact councils Ag Department and request a high resolution electronic or hard copy aerial photo of your property. Use this to draw up your site plans.
- 3) Hand draw the site plan, providing as much detail as you can to show location of site, existing elements and proposed activities.

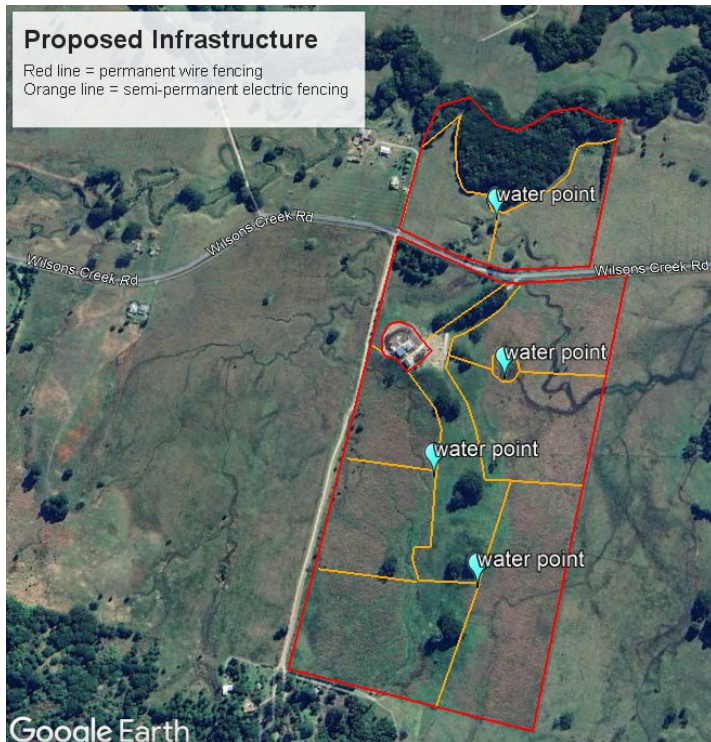
Contact the Agriculture team at agriculture@byron.nsw.gov.au if you would like assistance with this process.

Example Site Plan – Fencing and water infrastructure to facilitate holistic grazing

In the example below, a farmer is requesting funding to install new semi-permanent electric fencing and 4 new water points around the property. This will also remove the reliance of livestock drinking from riparian areas and allow for rotational grazing.

The site plan clearly shows the existing infrastructure, proposed infrastructure, and the intended impacts (i.e. creation of 4 new water points and an extra 7 paddocks (total = 9) to activate planned grazing. Each of the 9 paddocks will be able to be split up into smaller cells using electric fencing to facilitate rotational grazing.





Example Site Plan – Tree planting

In the example below, a farmer is requesting funding to support the regeneration and transformation of a neglected avocado orchard. Whilst simultaneously stacking enterprises to make the area a viable and productive piece of land. The plan is broken down into 3 stages:

1. Prune and chip old avocado trees bringing them to a manageable height. The wood chip will help build soil biology.
2. Mulch, propagate and plant groundcovers around trees
3. Incorporate native support species and enterprise stacking.

Orchard site:

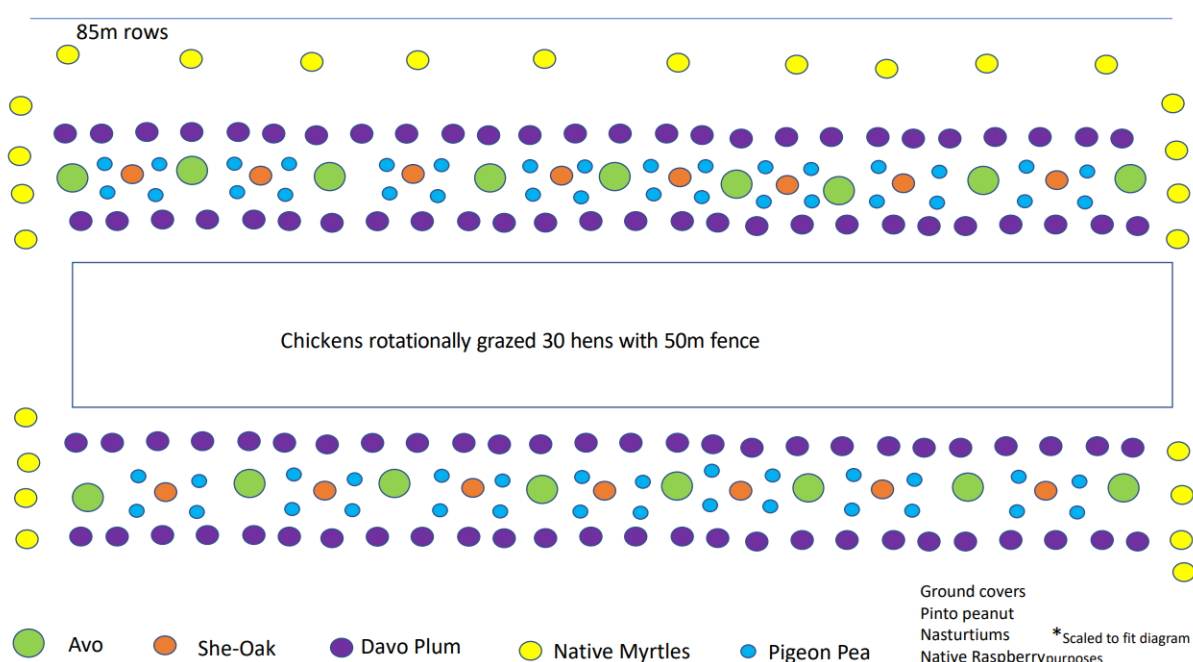


Orchard design and planting plan

Each row of the avocado orchard averages 85m length with 12m inter-row spacings where chickens will graze, adding nutrition. Chicken eggs will be sold to the local IGA and butcher store.

Davidson Plum will be planted at 2m spacings in interrow 2 and 3. Native myrtles will be planted on edge of rows and edge of top and bottom of orchard at 3-5m spacings. She-oak will be planted in between avocado with 15-20 planted per row. Davidson Plum will provide an additional income stream when trees start producing.

Further details can be shown in the orchard layout plan pictured below:



Appendix 2. Project budget

A project budget is required to clearly outline what will be grant funded and how you will match your in-kind contribution either through labour, machine time, costs or inputs.

Costs should be clearly split into those to be covered by grant funds (not greater than \$3,500) and the contributions (cash and/or in-kind) provided by you, the applicant. Applicant contributions should be equal to or greater than the requested amount.

Quotes for ALL goods and services that you are seeking funding for AND quotes for goods and services you will be paying for as your contribution to the project are required.

Goods or services to be paid for with the grant need to be addressed to Byron Shire Council and cannot exceed \$3500 in total. These quotes must be uploaded when completing your online application.

Example Budget

In the example below, a farmer is requesting fencing infrastructure to install new semi-permanent fencing and temporary fencing with a supplied grazing plan to show how they will create 10-30 extra paddocks to activate planned grazing which will help build soil and increase productivity on a 100-acre property.

Activity	Descriptions	Cost	Grant funded or applicant contributions
Portable fencing geared reel and Wire	2 x portable fencing reels 2 x 400m 3.5mm wire	\$615	Grant funded quotes from local supplier attached.
Portable fencing	Pig tail portable fencing posts 7 x 10pk	\$305	Grant funded quotes from local supplier attached.
Portable solar energiser	2 x s200 solar fence energiser	\$1650	Grant funded quotes from local supplier attached.
Permanent internal fencing to be electrified	7 x 10pk star pickets, 1500mm roll of wire, strainers, and insulators	\$930	Grant funded quotes from local supplier attached.
Fencing and pipe installation by farmer	30hrs x \$45/hr	\$1350	Applicants in kind contribution.
Portable water troughs	2 x 200 litre	\$780	Applicants in kind contribution quotes from local supplier attached.
Rural pipe for portable water plan	200m Rural Poly	\$1150	Applicants in kind contribution quotes from local supplier attached.
Pipe parts for portable water system	Coupla connectors, 18mm hose and fittings, elbows and connectors.	\$305	Applicants in kind contribution quotes from local supplier attached.
	TOTAL GRANT FUNDS	\$3500	
	TOTAL IN KIND/CASH	\$3585	