

Conservation Tender Lower Clarence Valley

Do you want to earn annual payments for managing biodiversity on your land?

The NSW Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT) is calling for expressions of interest from landholders in the Lower Clarence Valley with native vegetation on their land.

Through this tender, eligible landholders are given the opportunity to set their own price to protect and manage native vegetation on their land. Bids will be ranked on a best biodiversity value for money basis. Successful bidders will receive annual, ongoing payments for implementing an agreed management plan under a conservation agreement which is registered on the property title.

Why the Lower Clarence Valley?

The BCT opens conservation tenders in high priority areas periodically throughout the year. The areas are selected for their important biodiversity and its potential looming threats.



Freshwater Wetland vegetation. Image: Peter Richards

The Lower Clarence Valley supports important threatened floodplain ecological communities including Freshwater Wetlands, Sub-tropical Coastal Floodplain Forest, Swamp Sclerophyll Forest, Swamp Oak Floodplain Forest, Lowland Rainforest and Coastal Saltmarsh. These communities provide important habitat for many threatened fauna species such as water birds.



Dromaius novaehollandiae (Coastal Emu) chick from NSW north coast population. Image: John Turbill

The tender area encompasses tribal areas belonging to the Bundjalung, Gumbaynggirr and Yaegl people, and includes cultural landscapes that support important cultural keystone species such as the endangered population of Coastal Emu.

This region also contains many nationally significant wetlands including The Broadwater, Everlasting Swamp, Upper Coldstream and part of the Clarence River Estuary. The remnant wetlands of this area have been extensively modified by artificial drains, vegetation clearance and stock grazing, with far-reaching impacts on these

wetlands and their associated conservation values.

The Lower Clarence Valley conservation tender has been designed to help protect threatened communities and species by securing native vegetation in moderate or good condition.

How do I know if I'm eligible?

To be eligible for this tender, the part of your land that you wish to have considered as a conservation area needs to:

- I occur within the tender area shown on the map on this factsheet; **and**
 - I have a minimum size of 10 hectares of one or a combination of floodplain Threatened Ecological Community; **or**
 - I support an area of important wetland (no minimum size however must meet additional criteria as outlined for eligible important wetlands); **or**
 - I have a minimum size of 20 hectares of native vegetation within the Save our Species (SoS) Coastal Emu Management Site; **and**
- I support native vegetation that is in moderate to good condition (this will be determined by the BCT during site assessment).



Swamp Sclerophyll Forest vegetation. Image: Peter Richards

Up to 10% of the total area proposed may contain vegetation in poor condition.

Eligible important wetlands

Important wetlands are those recognised in international agreements (RAMSAR) and/or within the Directory of Important Wetlands in Australia (DIWA).

For this tender, important wetlands also include those coastal wetlands recognised under *State Environmental Planning Policy (Coastal Management) 2018*.



Subtropical Coastal Floodplain Forest vegetation. Image: Peter Richards

What is the process?

You can apply to participate by sending a completed expression of interest (EOI) form to the BCT via info@bct.nsw.gov.au or call us on **1300 992 688**. The form will be available on the BCT website from **30 August 2021**.

EOI forms must be received between 30 August and 17 September 2021.

Submitting an EOI comes with no obligation to participate in the tender.

Once the EOI period closes, EOIs will be prioritised for site assessment with site visits being offered to the highest-ranking sites.

At the site visit, the BCT will confirm eligibility to participate in the tender process and the values of your site will be assessed.

BCT field staff and ecologists will work with you to identify the potential conservation area and agreement management actions in a draft Conservation Management Plan.

Once this is complete, you will be invited to submit a tender or 'bid' which includes the conservation management plan and a schedule setting out the annual payments you wish to receive to implement the plan.

Bids under the Lower Clarence Valley conservation tender are for entering into an in-perpetuity conservation agreement with the BCT.

All bids are then ranked on a best biodiversity value for money basis and successful landholders will be invited to enter into a funded conservation agreement with the BCT.

Who is the BCT?

The BCT is a statutory organisation within the NSW Government that was established in 2017 to protect and enhance biodiversity in NSW. We do this by supporting, facilitating and encouraging landholders to conserve biodiversity on their land, for the long term.

The BCT provides a unique opportunity for private landholders to secure an additional revenue stream to conserve and manage the native biodiversity on their land.

For more information visit the BCT website or contact us using the details at the bottom of this page.

A map of the tender area can be found on the following page.

Lower Clarence Valley conservation tender area map

