



Biodiversity  
Conservation  
Trust

# **KOALA HABITAT CONSERVATION TENDER**

## **Planning for the BCT Site Visit**



Congratulations, you have submitted your Expression of Interest in the Conservation Tender and it has progressed to the next stage, which is a site visit by field staff from the Biodiversity Conservation Trust (BCT).

The BCT will be in contact with you shortly to arrange the visit.

### **The purpose of the site visit will be:**

- To confirm that the site does include Koala habitat (see below), and assess the area and condition of that habitat, and any other areas adjoining the habitat you may wish to include in the proposed conservation area.
- To discuss the area/s that you are proposing to manage for conservation
- To confirm that your proposed conservation area meets the minimum size requirements
- To discuss the management actions that you are proposing to undertake within the conservation area/s.

### **What is Koala habitat? Is my site eligible?**

In the project area, Koala habitat comprises trees of one of four key feed-tree species: Tallowwood, Swamp Mahogany, Forest Red Gum, or Small-fruited Grey Gum. At least some individual trees of these species need to be present on site\* If these are present, other 'secondary' trees may become important, including Thin leaved Stringybark, Scribbly Gum, Flooded Gum, Blue Gum, Red Mahogany, and White Stringybark.

\*NOTE: During the site assessment, BCT staff will advise on eligibility criteria and confirm the existence of eligible Koala habitat.

### **What will take place during the site visit:**

- 1) A sit-down discussion (1 hour) with BCT field staff to:
  - a. discuss the Conservation Tender program and provide you an opportunity to ask questions
  - b. explain the management options available under the program
  - c. mark up the A3 site map – with your proposed areas for the conservation management plan, management zones and your preferred management options.
- 2) A field assessment (2-4 hours) conducted by BCT field staff to assess the size of the proposed conservation area/s, the habitat on site and its condition and quality, and to determine whether your site is eligible for the program
- 3) A discussion of the “next steps” for your bid preparation.

These objectives may be completed in any order that works best for you and the BCT field staff. For example, the visit may commence with a kitchen table discussion followed by the field assessment. You may want to accompany the BCT field staff for all or part of the field assessment and discuss management actions while inspecting the site. The visit may be concluded with another discussion to finalise mapping and planning for management action options.

## What you need to do to prepare for the site visit

We are asking you to do some preparation before the site visit. An A3 aerial image of your site has been included with this information for you to identify what part or parts of your property you would like to consider for conservation areas and start to mark these up. At this stage it is important for you to know that the BCT gives higher value to bids that have larger areas of higher quality koala habitat.

## Prior to the site visit, could you please prepare or give consideration to the following:

- ☐ **A3 Map:**  
Mark up the aerial image of your property with the boundary of your proposed conservation area. The conservation area must include at least 10 ha of Koala habitat, or, 5 ha if the site is adjacent to a protected area such as a National Park. Also, mark your map with other important features such as tracks, farm dams, fence-lines and other infrastructure.
- ☐ **Management options:**  
Carefully review the 'management options' outlined on the next page. The BCT field staff will explain these further to you during the site visit.
- ☐ **Management zones**  
If you want different 'management options' in different parts of the proposed conservation area, you may further split this area into different 'management zones'. A management zone is an area of land bounded by fence-lines or other natural management boundaries such as a creek-line, and will have different 'management options' from other management zones.  
If you want to have the same 'management options' over the whole proposed conservation area, you do not need to identify different management zones.
- ☐ **Cost of management actions:**  
Consider the cost of undertaking the management actions to assist you in the preparation of your bid. There is a short time between the site visit, preparation of the management plan and submission of your costed bid. You may need to organise some quotes from local contractors for fencing, weed and pest animal control, habitat restoration, or developing a fire management plan, etc.
- ☐ **Existing or past agreements:**  
Please have copies of any past agreements that you may have entered into that impact on the area that you are proposing to manage. These may include agreements with Local Land Services (or Catchment Management Authority) and the Office of Environment and Heritage. Further discussion on any past agreements will be held during the site visit.
- ☐ **Your Questions/Input:**  
Think about any questions you have and other site features you want to discuss at the site visit and if relevant, mark these on the A3 map.

## What are the Management Options?

There are three management options. All “Maintain” actions are required to be implemented for the proposed conservation area. You may also choose to implement some other optional management actions in one or all Management Zones. These are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Management Options:

Management Option	Management Issue	Management Actions
<b>Maintain Actions</b> These are the minimum requirements for the conservation area	<b>Weed control</b>	Significant (>90%) reduction in cover of Lantana, Cats Claw Creeper, Madeira Vine, and Morning Glory. Eradicate Tropical Soda Apple if found. Control the spread of other weeds.
	<b>Domestic stock grazing control</b>	Exclude grazing by domestic stock by maintaining existing fencing.
	<b>Dogs</b>	Landowner’s dogs excluded from conservation area. Other dogs to be considered as ‘pest animals’
	<b>Pest animal control</b>	Control pest animals as required, and participate in local and regional pest control programs.
	<b>Fire Management</b>	Site will be managed in accordance with RFS Bushfire Risk Management Plan. Assist RFS with implementation of the BFRMP if requested and where applicable to the site.
<b>Enhance Actions</b> These are additional actions which are optional. One or more may be chosen.	<b>Weed control</b>	As for ‘maintain’ actions, but also including significant (>90%) reduction in cover of other key weed species, as advised during site assessment.
	<b>Domestic stock grazing control</b>	As for ‘maintain’ actions. Also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modify existing fencing in line with ‘koala-friendly’ guidelines, and / or</li> <li>• New fencing to control stock access as required and with agreement from BCT.</li> </ul>
<b>Restore Actions</b> These are additional actions which are optional. One or both may be chosen	<b>Habitat Restoration</b>	Supplementary planting or re-vegetation, including Koala feed tree species, where agreed by BCT. May be appropriate for cleared or partially cleared areas which form a buffer to, or connect, habitat areas. Ongoing management and maintenance of restoration areas through guarding, weed control, and replacement plantings
	<b>Fire Management</b>	Develop a Fire Management Plan for the site, that may include Low Intensity Burning (including Ecological or Cultural Burning), to be agreed by the BCT and RFS. Implement the approved Fire Management Plan. Any burning is to be approved by RFS.

## Tender milestones from here

Note: You will be informed of the date for submission of your bid, and this date is final. Bids submitted after this date will not be considered for this round of tenders.

Step 1	Site Visit
Step 2	BCT prepares a conservation management plan and conservation management actions, for Landholder comment
Step 3	Landholder has 7 days to request any amendments from receipt of conservation management plan
Step 4	Landholder submits bid within 14 days of receipt of conservation management plan. The closing date for Bids is 5pm on 27 July 2018.
Step 5	Bids evaluated by the BCT
Step 6	Successful and unsuccessful landholders notified
Step 7	Successful Landholders execute Conservation Agreement within 14 days. Conservation Agreement registered with Land Titles. Management actions and payments commence.

If you have further questions, your local BCT representative is:

**Mark Sheahan**  
Regional Co-ordinator, North Coast

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