

# WORRIED ABOUT LOSING YOUR Paddock TREES?



**Under Australian Government's National Landcare Program, ACT Natural Resource Management Programs has funding for Protecting and Connecting Endangered Woodlands in the ACT.**

## Why are woodlands and paddock trees important?

Box Gum Woodland is the typical woodland of the lowlands of the ACT. Rolling hills dominated by Yellow Box and Blakely's Red Gum, with an understory of native grasses and wildflowers and home to many birds and animals. Box Gum Woodland has been cleared and fragmented across eastern Australia with less than 5 % of its original extent remaining. When in good condition, Box Gum Woodland is listed as an Endangered Ecological Community.

The ACT is an important stronghold for Box Gum Woodland. Around 25 % or 11 500 ha of its original extent remains, on both public and rural land. Due to the good management by our rural landholders, woodlands in the ACT are amongst some of the best quality in the country, however they still face a number of threats, including damage to the native ground story. We can ensure our Box Gum Woodland remains in good condition through activities such as revegetation, pest and weed control, fencing and strategic grazing.

Mature paddock trees are an important part of our rural landscape but are at risk of disappearing due to old age, urban development, lightning strike, burning and dieback (early death due to various stressors). It is essential we retain paddock trees and woodlands in the landscape as they play an important role in maintaining agricultural productivity, providing habitat for native species and safeguarding farms against the impacts of climate change.

### Large trees:

- *provide habitat* for birds, bats and small mammals which control pest insects and pollinate plants
- *produce a seed source* for the next generation of trees
- *provide shelter* from wind, heat and cold

### Fallen branches and leaf debris:

- *trap water and nutrients*
- *filter water* entering water courses and dams
- *recycle nutrients and carbon* back into the soil
- *provide habitat* for lizards, beneficial insects and germinating plants

### Shrubs, grasses and forbs:

- *protect soil surface* from sun/wind/ rain
- *provide habitat* for a range of woodland species, including many native birds

### Tree roots:

- reach deeper into the soil to *bring nutrients to the surface*
- *reduce salinity and erosion*



*Healthy paddock tree (Yellow Box) on Tharwa Dr in the ACT*

## What can I do?

- *Allow tree debris (fallen branches) to remain on the ground* (or move close to trees/along fence lines)
- *Retain standing dead trees* as they still provide important habitat
- *Minimise livestock access* to the base of the tree by fencing or placing fallen timber as deterrents (disturbance can damage tree roots, trees don't like excess fertiliser, dung may attract insects that defoliate trees)
- *Avoid cropping or modifying* native pastures and grasslands to maintain a healthy native ground layer
- *Avoid fertiliser application and other disturbance* (vehicles, cultivation) around base of tree (disturbance can damage tree roots and prevent native species from regenerating)
- *Re-establish missing shrubs, forbs and grasses* (plant, fence to enable natural regeneration or graze outside native plant seeding times)
- *Protect regenerating trees or plant replacements* to ensure paddock trees will be around in the future
- *Control the spread of weeds and pest species* which reduce the quality of woodland habitat

## How can I get assistance?

ACT Natural Resource Management Programs (ACT Government) has secured \$1.5 million in funding over the next five years for the project Protecting and Connecting Endangered Woodlands in the ACT. The project will work in partnership with Greening Australia and rural landholders to ensure good management of Box Gum Woodland continues, to help rural landholders connect patches of woodland habitat and to replace and retain paddock trees.

Funding will support:

- *Revegetation* (and fencing) around paddock trees and along fence lines and riparian zones to connect woodland patches and replacement of lost shrub layer to provide wildlife habitat
- *Fencing* of high quality woodland patches with strategic grazing for biomass control
- *Whole Of Paddock Rehabilitation* (including stewardship payments while applying stock exclusion in revegetation areas)
- *Management of large paddock trees*
- *Advice on strategic grazing* options to protect native plant species
- *Threat management and advice* (including weeds and pests)
- Exploration of *prescribed burns* as a management tool
- Access to *wildlife cameras* to document native wildlife and pest animals
- *Information on your native plants and animals*

## How can I get involved?

Contact us and we'll arrange a site visit to talk through options available under this funding.

### Laura Williams

Ecologist, ACT NRM  
6205 3645  
laura.williams@act.gov.au

### Ian Rayner

Greening Australia  
0400 428 749  
IRayner@greeningaustralia.org.au

### Luke Bulkeley

Program Manager, ACT NRM  
6205 2158  
Luke.Bulkeley@act.gov.au