

BANDICOOT SUPERHIGHWAY PROJECT



IMPACT REPORT 2021-2023

"We are ambitious and hopeful. Bandicoots don't have to be threatened with extinction if we invest in and implement the right strategies"

David Kilmartin, landowner and
Bandicoot Superhighway Chair

We acknowledge and respect the ongoing cultural and spiritual connection that First Nations People have with their country, and their ongoing commitment to its stewardship for current and future generations.

WHY THE BANDICOOT?

The endangered **Southern Brown Bandicoot** is the last remaining species of the bilby and bandicoot group in the Mount Lofty Ranges (MLR).

Bandicoots are **threatened by the loss and fragmentation of habitat**. Much of their remaining habitat is made up of small patches on private land. They are important for the health of the landscape as **their diggings improve soil condition** and encourage plant germination.

Because **bandicoots require dense vegetation to shelter** from predators like cats and foxes, **improving and connecting their habitat is vital** to their on-going survival in our region.

Photo: David Kilmartin

PROJECT GOAL

Implement a community-led project that reduces the extinction risk of the Southern Brown Bandicoot. We aim to foster a 'highway' of interconnected bandicoot populations and habitat throughout the Mount Lofty Ranges in South Australia.

The Bandicoot Superhighway Project partners:

The Sturt Upper Reaches Landcare Group, The Nature Conservation Society of SA, Landscapes Hills and Fleurieu, Green Adelaide, National Parks and Wildlife SA, The University of Adelaide and Friends of Parks Groups.

Funding for this project: Sturt Upper Reaches Landcare Group was funded by an Australian Government program. Landscapes Hills and Fleurieu was funded by The Foundation for National Parks & Wildlife and the Landscapes Levy. Green Adelaide funded the printing of this Impact Report and the Bandicoot Superhighway Project Habitat Management Guidelines.

VALUE PROPOSITION

Using our community-centric and grass-roots approach we educate, support and motivate community to protect and improve bandicoot habitat, that will also improve the overall health of the landscape.

We will continue to learn and adapt, and provide opportunities for community, business, government and households to be meaningfully involved.

To ensure the bandicoot does not go extinct, we need to deliver more on-ground outcomes with more community members. The project needs more investment to meet unprecedented demand and expand our impact.



"These bandicoots were once right across the Mount Lofty Ranges, but sadly they are on the brink of extinction. I applaud the many volunteers and landholders who are working on this exciting project"

Rebekha Sharkie MP (Mayo)

FROM OUR CHAIR

As a landowner in the Mount Lofty Ranges, being part of the Bandicoot Superhighway Project has been a great way to join a group of like-minded conservationists and organisations to act on our shared responsibility to nurture the natural environment.

The endangered Southern Brown Bandicoot, the last bandicoot species remaining in the Ranges, faces many challenges and needs our help to improve its long-term prospects.

After years of planning and making slow but steady progress, we were fortunate to receive funding for two years to pilot on-ground conservation work and innovative engagement strategies. We have achieved and learnt a lot. Armed with this new knowledge, we are now strongly positioned to implement a landscape-scale, long-term bandicoot conservation program. But it needs to start now, and it needs to be backed by the community and investors - we openly invite individuals, organisations and businesses to get involved.

The future of Southern Brown Bandicoots is in our hands – let's work together to create an environment in which they can thrive.

David Kilmartin, Bandicoot Superhighway Steering Group Chair



BANDICOOT SUPERHIGHWAY PROJECT

Our logo was designed by Allan Sumner, a talented visual artist, musician and graphic designer, and director of Aboriginal Contemporary Arts (ACA Studios). Allan is a descendant of the Ngarrindjeri people of the lower Murray and lakes of the Murray River along the Coorong, the Kurna people of the Adelaide plains and the Yankunytjatjara people of central Australia.



"The logo features the Southern Brown Bandicoot. The bandicoot is represented in its natural habitat with dense low foliage. It's depicted showing its playful and inquisitive nature alongside two Superb Blue Wrens that live in the same environment. The archway above the bandicoot represents the 7 partner organisations who make up the Bandicoot Superhighway Project. Between the 7 groups are the footprints of the bandicoot representing its explorative nature and its revival as an endangered species throughout the Adelaide Hills."

Allan Sumner (artist)

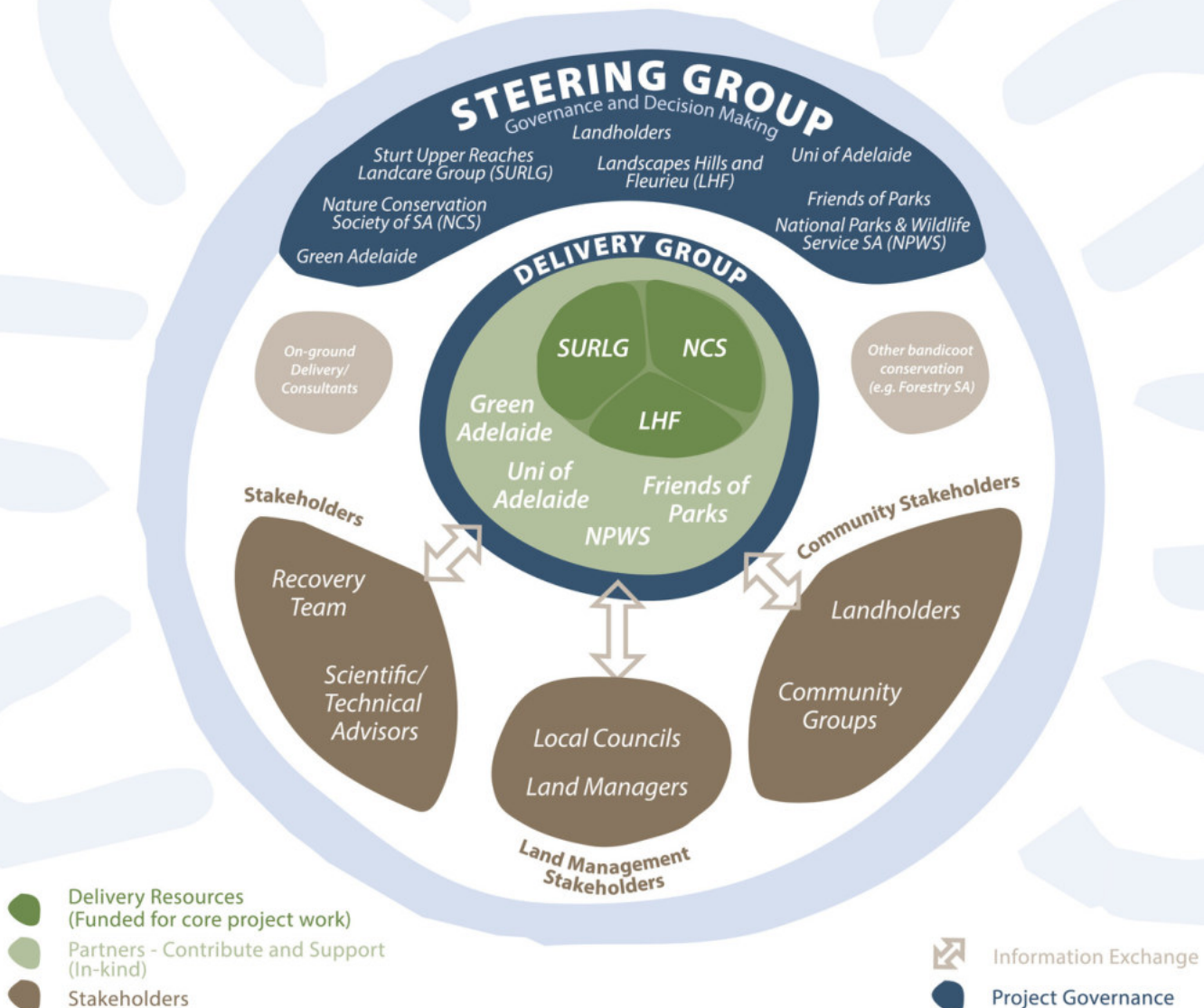


OUR APPROACH

Although the project is community-led, and not owned by any one organisation, we have strong management and decision-making processes to ensure that delivery is effective and efficient. The project is overseen by a Steering Group that represents seven different organisations and groups. We have 4 principles that underpin our delivery approach:

- 1 Maintain and develop new relationships and partnerships to amplify our impact
- 2 Undertake delivery based on the best information available, and address information gaps as required
- 3 Consider and create novel approaches and strategies
- 4 Inspire, support and build capacity of landholders and community to lead bandicoot conservation work

OUR PARTNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT MODEL



HIGHLIGHTS & LEARNINGS

We are proud of what we have achieved as a 2-year pilot. The lessons learnt will help us to identify and address emerging priorities and implement conservation at a larger scale.



On-ground delivery: Targeted revegetation and weed control has been successful and well supported by community, landholders and the general public. All of our events have been booked out with ongoing interest and wait-lists.



New information: Our customised web-based bandicoot data portal was launched. In just one year, there have been >110 sightings uploaded, many of these are from new locations.



It takes a village: Our partnership model has proven effective as we all work together to complement and value-add to one another's work. The goodwill, trust and dedication of our partners and supporters is the backbone to successful delivery.



Other ways to reduce extinction risk: We have been considering the opportunities for undertaking thoroughly planned and approved translocations (under SA legislation), where we take individuals from one area and release them at new and suitable sites.



Working across properties: Because of our project, landholders are working together across each others properties to manage connected habitat for bandicoots and other native species.



Understanding what bandicoots need: We know that sometimes, in the absence of suitable native habitat, bandicoots can use introduced weed species (such as blackberry). As a result, a careful weed management approach was implemented, leaving weedy areas if bandicoots were using them.



IMPROVING BANDICOOT HABITAT

by controlling weeds and fencing habitat from grazing animals, holding planting days, providing information/support to landholders and the community about bandicoot habitat management.



216

hectares of priority bandicoot habitat benefited from on-ground works



34,699

seedlings grown for bandicoot habitat



ACTIVATING COMMUNITIES

by connecting people to each other and to their local environment through inclusive workshops and events, and talks with community groups and schools.



>215

people reached at presentations to community groups



>900

attendees at workshops, events and planting days



ENGAGING LOCAL PEOPLE

through our project newsletters, news articles, site visits with landowners and remote camera set-up and training.



245

project email subscribers



67

property visits and/or events provided



EXPANDING SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE

through remote cameras, and citizen science via our bandicoot observation portal.



110

bandicoot sightings uploaded into our portal



>800

camera trapping days (15 properties, bandicoots seen 32 times)



SHARING INFORMATION

by producing information flyers, bandicoot habitat management guidelines, media releases and sharing the activities of the project on social media and to project subscribers.



>90,000

people reached
on our social media



>90

publications, media and
information produced



INVESTING IN LOCAL BUSINESS

through our project delivery work we have engaged many businesses and services. It is projected that every dollar spent on biodiversity work will generate \$6.67 for the local economy.



>\$211,000

invested in work that benefits
bandicoots and biodiversity




>\$1.3 MILLION

economic activity will be generated
after 5 years



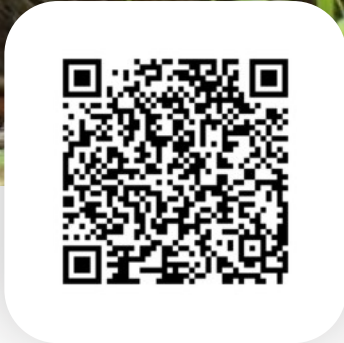
THE FUTURE

- Continue to build a bandicoot conservation **community of practice**.
- Seek and **secure investment** to undertake more impactful on-ground conservation work.
- Trial the development of **educational packages** that can be used by local schools.
- Provide **habitat management** guidelines to landowners and connect them with funding opportunities.
- Identify interest in a **state-wide bandicoot forum** - let's share our passion and knowledge!
- Use **creative ways to communicate** bandicoot and biodiversity conservation such as having an artist-in-residence.
- Develop a **growth plan** so we can expand our reach and impact, including working with new stakeholders.



"I encourage other individuals and businesses to get behind such wonderful and important projects like the Bandicoot Superhighway, because it's so rewarding to give back."

KPMG employee and volunteer



FIND OUT MORE



Bandicoot
Superhighway



[bandisuperhighway](https://www.instagram.com/bandisuperhighway)



www.surlg.org.au



www.ncssa.asn.au



[www.landscape.sa.gov.au/hf/
bandicootsuperhighway](http://www.landscape.sa.gov.au/hf/bandicootsuperhighway)

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This impact report was produced by the Nature Conservation Society of South Australia (2023) on behalf of the Bandicoot Superhighway project partners.