



AGENDA

Planning & Environment Committee Meeting

Tuesday, 9 June 2020

commencing at 9.30am

Council Chambers, 9 Pelican Street, Tewantin

Committee: Crs Brian Stockwell (Chair), Karen Finzel, Clare Stewart, Tom Wegener

“Noosa Shire – different by nature”

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7 ENVIRONMENT PROJECT GRANTS

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Environment & Sustainable Development Department

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Attachments 1. Environment Project Grants Funding recommendations

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Not applicable

RECOMMENDATION

That Council note the report by the Environment Services Manager to the Planning & Environment Committee Meeting dated 9 June 2020 and approve the Environment Project Grants funding recommendations for this round as outlined in Attachment 1 to the report.

REPORT

The Environment Grants Policy endorsed by Council in September 2019 states that the Environment Grants program '*will support the implementation of the Noosa Environment Strategy, as well as Council's other key environment strategies and plans, by enabling collaboration with the community in initiatives that work towards the outcomes and targets identified in the Noosa Environment Strategy*'.

The grants program consists of three components;

1. *Environment Project Grants* for projects, programs or events that align with the Noosa Environment Strategy and have a positive impact on the Noosa environment. These grants are advertised twice a year, concurrent with the Community Project Grants.
2. *Environment Alliance Grants* provide organisational support to community groups that are primarily focused on environmental activities. These agreements are entered into for a three year period, and were most recently endorsed by Council in June 2019.
3. *Multi-year Environment Collaborative Grants* support longer-term, larger-scale strategic initiatives that align with the Noosa Environment Strategy and have a positive impact on the Noosa environment. These grants were most recently endorsed by Council in February 2020.

The purpose of this report is to seek a recommendation only on the latest rounds of stream 1 - Environment Project Grants.

Promotion & Assessment

Applications for the Environment Project Grants opened on 18 February 2020 and closed on 25 March 2020. Promotion for the grants included:

- Two paid advertisements in the Noosa News
- E-newsletter to 300 not-for-profit community groups
- Specific email to all non-for-profit community groups on the database of the Community Development team
- Details published on Noosa Council's website and promoted through social media

All promotion was concurrent with the Community Grants Program and the Regional Arts Development Fund.

Four grant applications were received as part of this round of Environment Project Grants, and were assessed by a member of the Environment Services Team with experience assessing grants, and environmental subject-matter expertise. These recommendations were moderated by the Environment Services Manager and Director, Environment & Sustainable Development.

COVID-19 impacts

During the advertising process for these grants, community changes as a response to COVID-19 were starting to be implemented. Initially to support applications, extensions were provided to two applicants, so long as they sought permission for the extension prior to the original closing date of 25 March 2020. Statements were also sought and received from all applicants as to the potential impact of COVID-19 restrictions on their proposed projects.

Given that the projects won't start until at least August and all have 12 months to run, none of the applications were withdrawn, or were deemed unable to be considered based on current COVID restrictions.

If COVID-related restrictions were to extend to the end of 2020, or be tightened, then two of the projects recommended for funding would need to work with Council with regard to possible extension for their projects. Neither are time sensitive or seasonal, so could still be delivered with some delay.

Previous Council Consideration

This is the third round of Environmental Project Grants since they were separated from the Community Grants program into their own grant stream. Previous reports have been prepared and endorsed by Council in June 2019 and November 2019.

Ordinary Meeting Minutes, 19 September 2019, Item 6, Page 9

That Council note the report by the Environmental Services Manager to the Planning & Environment Committee Meeting dated 10 September 2019 and:

- A. *Repeal the Environment Grants Policy adopted on 21 February 2019 and adopt the revised Environment Grants Policy provided at Attachment 1 to the Report with the additional words included under the heading of Council Policy: "All initiatives funded by the Environment Grants Program will have tangible and measureable outcomes.";*
- B. *Note the Draft Multi-year Collaborative Environmental Grants - Operating Guideline provided at Attachment 2 to the Report, developed by the Environment Levy Working Group, as per the Environment Grants Policy; and*
- C. *Approve the Environment Grants being directed towards outcomes of the Biodiversity and Waterways, Wetlands & Coasts sections of the Noosa Environment Strategy, while the Environment Levy remains the sole funding source for the Grants.*

Finance

The funding for this round of grants will not be allocated until July 2020 and will therefore come from the 2020/21 financial year budget. It is anticipated that \$75,000 will be available for Environment Project Grants for the financial year, consistent with amount available in the 2019/20 financial year. This will be spread over two advertised grant rounds, concurrent with the Community Grants Program usually advertised in February and August of each year. This report proposes to allocate \$35,761, which will leave \$39,239 available for the next round of Environmental Project Grants, expected to be advertised in August 2020.

Risks & Opportunities

There is some risk to the proposed projects based on uncertainty around COVID-19 restrictions for the remainder of 2020. These have been addressed by the applicants and with the current

trend of restrictions, are likely to be implemented on their original timetable. If circumstances change, Council officers will work with applicants to seek to deliver the projects.

Consultation

External Consultation - Community & Stakeholder

All applicants were required to make contact with a Council officer prior to their application.

Internal Consultation

Departments/Sections Consulted:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Executive Officer
Executive Officer
Executive Support | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Services
Director
x Community Development
Community Facilities
Libraries & Galleries
Local Laws
Waste & Environmental Health | <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Services
Director
Financial Services
ICT
Procurement & Fleet
Property
Revenue Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Services
Director
Community Engagement
Customer Service
Governance
People and Culture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environment & Sustainable Development
x Director
Building & Plumbing Services
Development Assessment
Economic Development
x Environmental Services
Strategic Land Use Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure Services
Director
Asset Management
Buildings and Facilities
Civil Operations
Disaster Management
Infrastructure Planning,
Design and Delivery |

Attachment 1: 2020-21 ENVIRONMENT PROJECT GRANTS FUNDING (ROUND ONE)

Applicant	Project Description	Assessment comments	Special conditions	Total Project Cost	Funding requested	Recommended Grant Funding
Noosa Integrated Catchment Association	Urban Wildlife Gardens - a community engagement program providing a resource and service for urban landowners wishing to enhance urban ecology by using native plants, and increasing understanding of biodiversity values on their property, and promoting enjoyment, raising awareness and facilitating citizen science.	This program fills an important gap in the urban space to support voluntary conservation efforts on private property, and relates directly to an action in the <i>Noosa Environment Strategy</i> . The uptake by residents during the 'pilot' phase has been very high and feedback from participants very complimentary, which also provides a high level of confidence an expanded program will achieve similar results.	The applicant will liaise with Council monthly to discuss project progress, in light of restrictions due to COVID-19.	\$14,184.00	\$5,323.00	\$5,323.00
Noosa Integrated Catchment Association	Migrate the data and functionality of the Noosa's Native Plants website onto a modern platform with improved access via smart phones, tablets and personal computers. In the process of migration incorporate up to date search capacity.	An upgrade of the Noosa Native Plants website is a worthwhile project with far reaching educational and on-ground benefits. A refreshed and more accessible website will also boost the resources available to an expanded Urban Wildlife Gardens program.		\$10,258.00	\$6,818.00	\$6,818.00
Hinterland Bush Links Inc.	In partnership with Landcare the program is aimed to engage the local community in restoration and connection of habitat in the Noosa Council Region. The project is based on an extremely successful model called Roving Restorers which was initiated on the Blackall Range in 2012 by Hinterland Bush Links. This group consists of	The Roving Restorers model initiated by Hinterland Bush Links has successfully operated on the Blackall Range for eight years in collaboration with a number of funding partners and other environment groups. Expanding the program into Noosa will support other existing actions by Council and partner agencies, as well as achieve environmental outcomes in hinterland areas.	The applicant will liaise with Council monthly to discuss project progress, in light of restrictions due to COVID-19.	\$41,660.00	\$23,620.00	\$23,620.00

	volunteers from the community who assist both private and public landholders with environmental weed control, revegetation and re-connection of habitat.					
Reef Check Australia	Reef Check Australia would like to screen two international, award winning documentaries which capture the impact of a changing climate on glaciers and coral reefs.	Despite being a worthwhile project, it did not score as highly as other projects in the categories of 'environmental benefit' due the lack of discrete environmental outcomes, and 'value for money', due to a lower amount of 'in-kind' contribution.		\$6,410.00	\$3,600.00	Nil