



Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach

Improving fish habitat and river health in the Upper Murrumbidgee

Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach project



FINAL REPORT 29 June 2018

Grant Agreement Number: MD004131



Project Proponent:

Bush Heritage Australia
ABN: 78 053 639 115

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Acknowledgements:

The support of the MDBA, BHA and the UMDR steering committee for the UMDR initiative is gratefully acknowledged.

Project objectives:

The project objectives are:

- 1) to establish a long term commitment to river restoration and engender broad community support for action throughout the UMDR;
- 2) to support provision of on-ground works aimed at supporting recovery of native fish in the UMDR; and,
- 3) to promote the activities and actions implemented within the UMDR as demonstration initiatives which can be adopted elsewhere in the catchment.

Project summary:

This project supported the UMDR initiative through the provision of a 0.4 FTE facilitator who worked to maximise community and stakeholder engagement, supported the governance of the UMDR and sought further funding and partnerships in 2017-2018. Contributions to this project have included funding by the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) and Bush Heritage Australia (BHA).

The UMDR Facilitator was employed under contractual arrangements between BHA and the ACT Government to facilitate the employment of the Facilitator. The UMDR Facilitator's employment contract included four key deliverables through which the objectives of this project proposal will be met. The outputs against these four deliverables are detailed below.

Project deliverables and outputs achieved:

The UMDR project has achieved all of its prescribed deliverables and hence achieved the objectives of this project. Outputs against the deliverables are set out below.

Deliverable 1) Completion of an updated strategic plan for the UMDR, including a monitoring plan. This deliverable supports objectives 1 and 2 of this project.

The UMDR initiative has, up to now, been guided by the UMDR Implementation Plan. It was developed in 2010 and sets out the objectives and priorities for the initiative. The UMDR steering committee has sought to update the current UMDR Implementation Plan, given that the funding sources available to the UMDR and catchment management organisations that are involved have changed since the establishment of the original UMDR in 2010. The steering committee has sought to develop a 10 year management plan which can oversee the activities and projects carried out by the UMDR into the future and support funding procurement. This will include a monitoring plan which can measure and capture the outcomes (of the UMDR generally) and the outputs delivered by individual projects over time.

The organisations involved in the planning include the steering committee and key stakeholders of the UMDR. This includes BHA, the Australian River Restoration Centre (ARRC), Upper Murrumbidgee Waterwatch (UMWW), ACT Government's Conservation and Planning Unit and Parks and Conservation Services, NSW Department of Industry- Fisheries, South East LLS, Icon Water and the University of Canberra.

The planning process is utilising the Open Standards for Conservation methodology and the UMDR Facilitator has supported BHA Conservation planning staff to undertake the planning process, including Jody Gunn and Eleanor Carswell. This has been a major activity for the UMDR throughout the project period. Significant progress has been made with a threat/situation analysis, developments of revised targets, goals and objectives and identification of data sources for the monitoring plan completed.

The planning has identified that engagement of traditional owners is key to future UMDR development and a process for doing is being implemented by the planning team, but remains to be completed. The UMDR planning team feels that it is important to allow the necessary time required to do this properly.

It is estimated that the planning process will be completed before the end of 2018.

Deliverable 2) Community engagement, including social media and newsletters (at least 12 social media posts/shares and two newsletters), regional events (six events held or attended to promote UMDR) and management of the UMDR website. This deliverable supports objective 3 of this project.

Media and promotion of The UMDR included:

- UMDR Facebook is maintained and has 413 likes. 28 posts were made during the reporting period. Subjects of post included UMDR news as well as shares about native fish, fish habitat restoration and fish passage. This has been the main vehicle for UMDR news as it has high visibility and is easily shared.
- The UMDR has not published a dedicated newsletter during 2018-2018, however news and events have been shared throughout the UMDR networks via the quarterly newsletters of our partners such as Upper Murrumbidgee Landcare Committee, Upper Snowy Landcare and Cooma Waterwatch. Direct emails have also been sent to groups of UMDR stakeholders, such as the landholders in the Bumbalong Valley (where the UMDR completed its Rivers of Carbon Upper Bidgee project) to let them

know of specific training and further funding opportunities. The UMDR Facilitator has now established a MailChimp account (software to manage news mailouts), which will allow mailouts to stakeholder groups to be better managed better in the future.

- The UMDR website is operational and existing arrangements have been maintained, including support by the ACT Government's Conservation and planning Unit to pay for the subscription and up keep fees (www.upperbidgeereach.gov.au).
- The UMDR Facilitator attended a digital story telling workshop on the 22nd May, 2018 in Goulburn which has built capacity for the development of further promotional materials for the project.

Promotional events which the UMDR Facilitator has attended to promote the UMDR and its partnership projects have included:

- MDBA Native Fish Forum (24th August, 2017). The UMDR Facilitator was part of the Rivers of Carbon (RoC) presentation with Phil Palmer (BHA) and lead by Dr Siwan Lovett (Director, ARRC). It highlighted the river restoration work which has been carried out by the UMDR, ARRC and BHA on the Murrumbidgee River at Bumbalong in the last three years. The presentation is available on Youtube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T1AS6fNzJUk&index=30&list=PLG4856nlXnJ5ladZX3H6zmVYspawT7WIM&t=0s>
- The UMDR Facilitator organised a Willows Weeds and Waterways Field Day on the October, 2018 at Bredbo in partnership with South East LLS, Bredbo Landcare and the Snowy Monaro Regional Council.
- The UMDR was very pleased to receive a highly commended at the 2017 ACT Landcare awards in the partnership category. The nomination was put forward by Ms Woo O'Reilly (UMWW) and completed by the UMWW and UMDR Facilitators. The UMDR Facilitator and UMDR Project Manager Phil Palmer (BHA) attended the award ceremony on the 23rd November, 2017.
- The UMDR Facilitator presented to the SE Local Land Services board meeting on the 24th November to highlight the initiative and the work we have been doing partnering with LLS in our region.
- Ballina Shire Council staff visited BHA property, Scottsdale, 28th November, 2017 to learn more about the Rivers of Carbon program including the UMDR partnership with ARRC and BHA to implement riparian restoration works along the upper Murrumbidgee. The UMDR Facilitator gave a presentation about the UMDR's onground works in the Bumbalong Valley and helped lead a field trip to Scottsdale's riparian restoration site (the topmost restoration site in the Bumbalong Valley) with Phil Palmer (BHA), Lori Gould (RoC) and Dr Siwan Lovett (Program Manager of RoC and Director of ARRC).
- The UMDR had a display and information stand at the Jerrabomberra Wetlands Open Day held in conjunction with UMWW for World Wetlands Day on the 3rd Feb, 2018. The UMDR Facilitator compiled and attended the display stall to promote citizens logging carp sightings in the catchment via the feral fish scan website/app.
- The UMDR Facilitator presented an overview of the UMDR initiative to the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Network on the 7th February, 2018. All major UMDR stakeholders are part of this network.
- Rivers of Carbon riparian retreat, 11th April, 2018. The riparian retreat shared learning about riparian restoration with river management professionals. The

group visited BHA's Scottsdale property and showcased the riparian restoration works we have completed as part of the UMDR there. A fabulous film about the retreat, produced by film maker Richard Snashall can be seen at <https://open.abc.net.au/explore/258498>

- BHA Bush Chat, Coffs Harbour, 22 March, 2018. The UMDR Facilitator travelled to Coffs Harbour as part of the BHA team to talk to potential sponsors of BHA about the benefits that the BHA/UMDR partnership is having for conservation of threatened species (especially fish) at the landscape scale.

In addition the UMDR Facilitator has prepared submissions of comment for the ACT Aquatic and Riparian Strategy Review and the ACT Fisheries Act Review and attended The National Carp Control Plan consultation meeting in Goulburn on the 18th December, 2017.

Deliverable 3) Governance support, including quarterly steering committee meetings held and minuted. The stakeholder reference group is to be kept informed of UMDR activities (as required). This deliverable supports objective 1 of this project.

The Steering committee has actively supported the UMDR initiative throughout the 2017-2018 period both by overseeing the planning process which has been occurring throughout the duration of the project period and advising other activities such as applying for funding and making submissions on public consultations. The committee has met at planning meetings, via phone links and has been updated regularly by the UMDR Facilitator and BHA planning staff via email. Jody Gunn (BHA) and Phil Palmer (BHA) have chaired the steering committee in 2017-2018.

Key stakeholders of the UMDR have been involved in the planning process and have been regularly updated with UMDR activities. Planning has involved two all day face to face meetings (25 October 2017 & 28 March 2018) and specific teleconference sessions with selected planning group members and other experts to provide additional detail for input into the planning.

Other stakeholders have been kept informed of the UMDR activities and the planning process via attendance by the UMDR Facilitator at the bi-monthly network meetings including the Upper Murrumbidgee Catchment Network, Capital Landcare Association and Upper Murrumbidgee Landcare Committee. The UMDR Facilitator also has contributed news to newsletters of partner networks to keep the catchment community informed.

Deliverable 4) Fundraising including development and submission of fundraising strategies/proposals to support on-ground activities. This deliverable supports objective 2 of this project.

The UMDR Facilitator has completed funding applications and has implemented those projects which have been funded. Through its partnership with the ARRC, the UMDR implements its riparian restoration programs under the umbrella of the Rivers of Carbon program. This provides the UMDR with added support and a strong link to a trusted and reputable restoration program (see www.riversofcarbon.org.au). The UMDR Facilitator remains involved as the on-ground person delivering the UMDR projects.

The table below shows a list of projects which have been applied for in 2017-2018 and their current status.

Grant	Detail	Status
Habitat makes fish happen-UMDR project	NAB grant program. (\$753, 250 over three years). Proposed activities included priority riparian restoration, erosion control, engineered log jams and education & awareness.	Declined- NAB were looking for a national project.
Upper Bidgee Smart Farms	NLP2 grant program. (2,437,000 over five years). Proposed activities were to be carried out by a consortium of UMDR partners to enhance landscape linkages via riparian protection and enhancement, demonstrate sustainable grazing and soil conservation methods at the sub-catchment scale and support the establishment of a viable recreational native fishery in the ACT region.	Declined- innovation in the farming industry was the focus of the grant.
Rivers of Carbon Upper Bidgee	ACT NRM NLP2 EOI (\$216,000 over four years). Proposed activities included riparian protection and enhancement to support landscape connectivity along the upper Murrumbidgee River and protect/enhance She-oak riparian woodland which is the recognised breeding habitat of the Regent honeyeater.	Declined- The regent honeyeater is only found in the ACT in very low numbers and other species are priorities under SOS listing (fish are not included).
Rivers of Carbon Upper Bidgee	National Landcare Small Grants (\$50,000 for one year). Proposed activities include willow control and removal to enhance refuge habitat of Macquarie perch downstream of Cooma Gorge.	TBA
Rivers of Carbon Upper Bidgee	FHAG (\$26,196.50 for one year). Activities include 30 days of community willow control and instream planting by paddle crew accessing the gorge areas of the UMDR.	Funded- the UMDR Facilitator has been implementing this project due for completion in June 2019.
UMDR Application No. 171172	PRMFP 2017-2018 (\$20,744 for one year). Project activities include willow control by contractors in Bredbo Gorge.	Funded- the UMDR Facilitator has been implementing this project completed in June 2018.
UMDR Application No. 181651	PRMFP 2018-2019 (\$11,500 for one year). Proposed activities include follow up control of St Johns Wort in the 20ha riparian crown land area locally known as 'The Old Bumbalong Quarry' and where the UMDR has been carrying out restoration works in the last four years.	TBA
Rivers of Carbon Upper Bidgee Phase II	NSW ET (\$99,550 for two years). Proposed activities include further riparian habitat protection and enhancement along the Upper Murrumbidgee River at Bumbalong, building on phase 1 already completed prior to June 2017.	TBA
Protecting habitat for native fish project	NSW ET (\$65,360 for two years). Proposed activities include habitat mapping of priority UMDR areas and weed control to enhance high quality fish habitat.	TBA

UMDR project photos:

 Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach added 5 new photos. November 24 at 1:00am

The UMDR is honoured to have received a highly commended for the Australian Government Partnerships for Landcare Awards at the ACT Landcare Awards! Totally honoured! This award goes to our partners, river managers, landholders and community members who support and care for the Murrumbidgee River and our native fish. Thanks for working with us! #Landcare2017 Bush Heritage Australia, Australian River Restoration Centre, Act Landcare, ACT Government, Environment, Planning and... See More



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 Upper Murrumbidgee Demonstration Reach February 9 at 11:11am

Briefing session on the Carp virus coming up in Canberra on 19th Feb. All welcome.



National Carp Control Plan community briefing session (ACT)

Interested members of the ACT community are invited to attend a community briefing session on Monday 19 February about how the carp virus could...
EVENTBRITE.COM.AU

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Facebook posts sharing UMDR news and partner events which are of interest and importance to our UMDR community.



Screen shot of the Youtube video showing UMDR Facilitator speaking during the MDBA Native Fish Forum Rivers of Carbon talk which feature the river restoration works the UMDR has been doing along the Murrumbidgee River at Bumbalong.

Local Land Services South East

WILLOWS, WEEDS & WATERWAYS

Keeping our waterways free of weeds along with protecting and enhancing vegetation all helps keep our waterways and surrounding landscape healthy, diverse and resilient. The use of herbicides around waterways and other sensitive areas requires extra care and planning in order to achieve a good outcome. Landholders are invited to come along to a field day to gain an understanding of best management practices in riparian zones.

Find out:

- How to identify different willow species including seeding willows
- What methods can be used to effectively treat woody weeds along waterways
- What chemicals can be used along waterways to assist weed control
- What are best practices for chemical use and record keeping
- How can we best restore our riparian zones - a revegetation case study

Speakers:

- Leon Miners - Senior Natural Resource Management Advisor, South East LLS
- ~~Antia~~ Antia Brademann - UMDR Facilitator
- Jo Powells - Senior Agricultural Advisor, South East LLS
- Brett Jones - Snowy Monaro Regional Council

When: Saturday 28th October, 2017

Time: 9:30am - 12:30pm

Where: ~~Bumbalong~~ Bumbalong (directions given upon RSVP)

RSVP: ~~Antia~~ Antia, 0429 778 633, facilitator@upperbidgereach.org.au

Leon: 0427 212 428, leon.miners@lls.nsw.gov.au

Morning tea will be provided.

SNOWY MONARO REGIONAL COUNCIL

Willows Weeds and Waterways field day flyer, October 2018.



The UMDR was a proud recipient of a highly commended in the partnership category of the ACT Landcare Awards.



Ballina Shire Council visit to Scottsdale to look at restoration works carried out by the Rivers of Carbon Upper Bidgee project and BHA.



nt/uploads/2018/04/IMG_8666.jpg

Riparian retreat participants at Cuppacumbalong Homestead in April, 2018.



The team which facilitated the workshop, including the UMDR Facilitator, Antia Brademann (left to right) and Lori Gould, Mary Bonet and Dr Siwan Lovett (Director, ARRC).



UMDR project presentation at the Riparian Retreat, 12 April, 2018.



Paddle to explore of native fish habitat in the Bredbo Gorge with Professor Mark Lintermans at the Riparian Retreat, 12 April, 2018.