

Nature Glenelg Pty Ltd
[ACN: 153 577 907]

as Trustee for



ABN: 23 917 949 584

Annual Report: 2013-14 Financial Year



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ORGANISATIONAL PURPOSE

Nature Glenelg Trust is a mission-driven, not-for-profit organisation that has been established to operate as:

1. a community environmental NGO;
2. a source of professional ecological knowledge available for delivering project work that improves environmental management outcomes; and,
3. a recipient of charitable donations for supporting habitat restoration.

This operating model enables the organisation to (1) seek and deliver grants for community environmental benefit, but also (2) provide ecological consulting services under two registered trading names, Aquasave – NGT (for aquatic ecology) and NGT Consulting (for general ecology). In furthering our organisational purpose by working with clients on important conservation management projects, our consulting services also provide a financial contribution to support the costs of running our not-for-profit organisation.

With the recent admission of Nature Glenelg Trust to the Register of Environmental Organisations, this model also seeks to diversify organisational funding streams and minimise the need to rely upon any precious future donated funds to support day-to-day operations and administration. In this way, we aim to give potential supporters the confidence that their donation to our Public Fund will achieve maximum impact in furthering the on-ground environmental objectives (such as wetland habitat restoration) of Nature Glenelg Trust.

Everything Nature Glenelg Trust does (including our ecological consulting services) must meet at least one of our organisational objectives, taken directly from our Deed of Trust, namely:

1. To protect and enhance the natural environment, with a particular emphasis on wetland conservation and restoration activities in the Focal Region^{*1}, supported by the Habitat Restoration Fund.
2. To generate and provide high quality scientific information that enhances management of the natural environment.
3. To support and undertake key conservation ecology research predominantly within, but not limited to, the Focal Region.
4. To promote public awareness of nature through education, and involving the community in the activities of the Trust.

^{*1}: Our focal region includes the NRM regions situated between Melbourne (Victoria) and Adelaide (South Australia).

FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The third year of Nature Glenelg Trust (NGT) has been an important period of consolidation and also a time when the skills, ideas and enthusiasm of our staff have led to some fantastic on-ground outcomes and exciting new initiatives. It is also pleasing to be able to report this year that priorities that were highlighted in the 2012-13 Annual Report have been addressed or substantially progressed.

Some key outcomes over the past 12 months include:

- purchasing and commencing management of our first *Habitat Restoration Reserve*, Eaglehawk Waterhole, a 684 hectare property near the Little Desert National Park;
- being accepted onto:
 - the register of Australian charities, with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission;
 - the Register of Environmental Organisations, making the organisation a Deductible Gift Recipient under Australian taxation law;
- increasing our reach and partnerships within the community, for example:
 - bringing a wide range of people into contact with nature through a diverse range of environmental events held throughout the year;
 - working with local groups in the Nelson and Hamilton districts to help progress long-term wetland restoration objectives for the Discovery Bay Coastal Park and Grampians National Park respectively;
- delivering the first suite of major permanent wetland restoration works under the *Wetland Restoration Program on Private Land*;
- expanding our science-focussed native freshwater fish conservation activities, including an increased presence for Aquasave in western Victoria;
- consolidating operations of the community nursery and small office at Vansittart Park in Mount Gambier, and continuing wider support for several staff based across the NGT focal region, geographically spread between Goolwa in SA to Torquay in Victoria; and,
- finishing the financial year (our third year of operations) with a positive balance sheet for the first time since the organisation launched in January 2012.

However, the examples above are just the “headlines”. The finer detail of the evolving story of NGT is expressed by the quiet achievements and dedicated efforts of our staff and Committee – the work that happens on a daily basis to implement the NGT vision with real commitment.

Finally, thank you to the wide range of people that work with us – community groups, landholders, government and non-government organisations – and for the positive spirit you bring to our relationship. Together, we are achieving some great things for our regional environment.

Mark Bachmann

Director

Nature Glenelg Pty Ltd as Trustee for Nature Glenelg Trust

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1. Summary of the year's activities

1.1 Project work overview

Similar to 2012-13, the 2013-14 financial year was also highly active for the organisation, with a diverse range of 66 projects underway during the year and 32 of these projects completed before the 30th June 2014.

Type of Project Work	Number of Projects Active during 2012-13 Financial Year
Native flora and/or vegetation management	17
Native fish	27
Other fauna	4
Community engagement	4
Ecological monitoring	3
Wetlands	11
TOTAL	66

1.2 Grant funded project work

Nature Glenelg Trust was awarded grant funding to commence or continue the delivery of the 15 grant funded projects in the 2012-13 financial year. Four grant funded projects were acquitted during the 2012-13 financial year, with the remaining eleven remaining active into the 2013-14 financial year.

Of particular note are two, five-year projects funded by the Australian Government, the *Cross-border Community Nursery* and *Wetland Restoration Program on Private Land*, and a new four-year project being delivered for Natural Resources South East, the *Restoring Underrepresented Ecological Communities of the South East*. These multi-year projects will result in significant on-ground outcomes and are providing an excellent opportunity for NGT to demonstrate our cooperative and professional approach to complex environmental project delivery.

1.3 Environmental consulting project work

Nature Glenelg Trust delivered a total of 51 contracted environmental consulting projects for a range of (mostly government) clients in the 2013-14 financial year. Twenty eight (28) of these projects were completed and closed during the financial year, with the balance remaining active into the 2014-15 financial year.

As previously explained, all projects delivered by NGT, irrespective of whether they are grant funded or professional contracted consulting projects, must be consistent with our organisational objectives, making a positive contribution to regional environmental management. The breakdown of these projects by category is included in the summary table presented in section 1.1.

1.4 Habitat Restoration Fund

Although donations to the Public Fund have not yet been actively sought, it is significant that the organisation was accepted onto the Register of Environmental Organisations on the 15th of April 2014. This is a major milestone for Nature Glenelg Trust. As well as giving additional credibility to our activities; it also provides philanthropic donors (organisations and individuals) with an additional incentive under Australian taxation law, to consider investing in our wetland and other restoration initiatives.

The closing balance of the Habitat Restoration Fund at the end of the 2013-14 financial year was \$915.10.

Promoting our on-ground restoration work and highlighting to our supporters the tangible value of donations into the Public Fund will be a key new task for the 2014-15 financial year.


Australian Government
Australian Taxation Office

9 May 2014

Endorsement as a deductible gift recipient

Endorsement as a deductible gift recipient under Subdivision 30-BA of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997* is provided for the operation of a fund, authority or institution as detailed below.

Name	THE TRUSTEE FOR NATURE GLENELG TRUST
Australian business number	23 917 949 584
Name of fund, authority or institution to which endorsement relates	HABITAT RESTORATION FUND
Endorsement date of effect	15 April 2014
Provision for gift deductibility	item 1 of the table in section 30-15 of the <i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1997</i>
Item(s) in Subdivision 30-B of the <i>Income Tax Assessment Act 1997</i>	6.1.1 public fund on the register of environmental organisations

Your organisation's endorsement as a deductible gift recipient for a fund, authority or institution that it operates, together with the date or period of effect, is entered in the public register maintained by the Australian Business Registrar at www.abn.business.gov.au

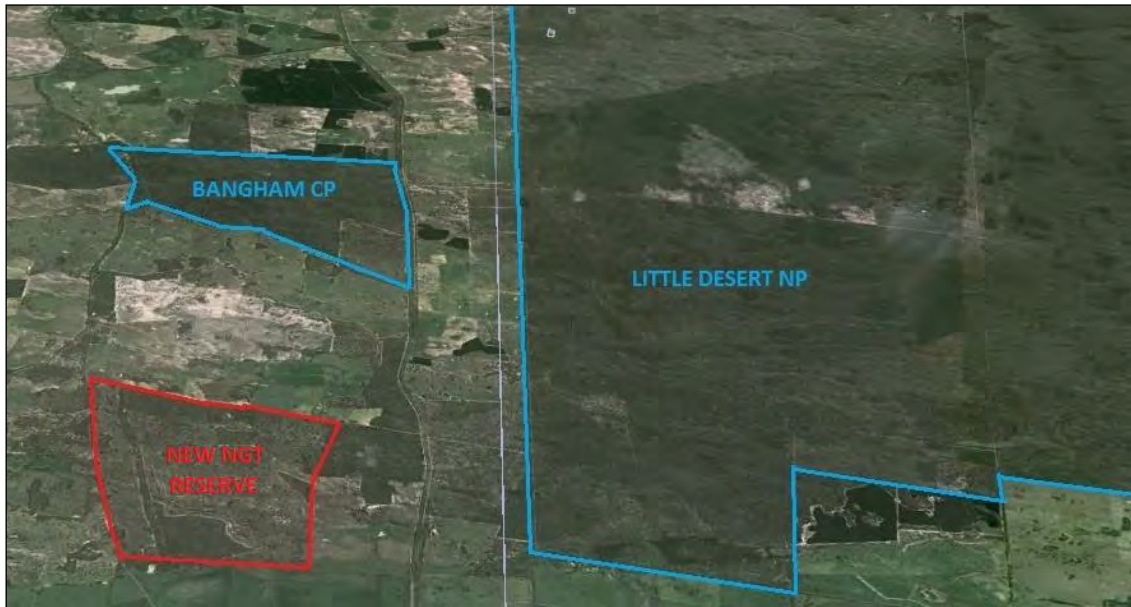
Your organisation must notify the Tax Office in writing if it ceases to be entitled to endorsement.

Chris Jordan
 Commissioner of Taxation and
 Registrar of the Australian Business Register

2. Achievements: Case studies from across the NGT focal region

2.1 The purchase and restoration of Eaglehawk Waterhole, Bangham

On the 20th of December 2013 – thanks to the generous financial support of the Native Vegetation Council and Nature Foundation SA Inc. – Eaglehawk Waterhole became Nature Glenelg Trust's first *Habitat Restoration Reserve*. Eaglehawk Waterhole is a 684 ha private property in the Upper South East of South Australia, situated approximately 2 km west of the Little Desert National Park and state border with Victoria.



Oblique image showing the strategic location of Eaglehawk Waterhole in the landscape

Although partly protected under conservation agreements, the vast majority of the property (510 hectares) has been farmed (partially cleared and grazed by sheep), but retains significant established tree, shrub and understorey cover, and a range of important biodiversity values that will respond favourably to protection, restoration and conservation management.



Aerial image of the property, showing remnant tree cover and in-tact reference areas

The property forms part of a general area (the Bangham district) with higher native vegetation remnancy that was highlighted as a priority zone for conservation activities in the Biodiversity Plan for the South East (Croft *et al* 1999). The property also retains important, currently unprotected habitat for species and communities listed under the *EPBC Act 1999*, such as the South-eastern Red-tailed Black-cockatoo and (the newly listed) Seasonal Herbaceous Wetlands of the Lowland Plains.



A seasonal wetland at Eaglehawk Waterhole (September 2013)

This establishment of the reserve will:

- enable perpetual protection and restoration of 510 hectares of grassy woodland, heathy woodland, heathland and wetland habitat in a strategic district where increasing landscape connectivity is a priority activity;
- increase the National Reserve System (NRS) estate in an under-represented bioregion;
- contribute to the recovery of *EPBC Act 1999* listed species and ecological communities; and,
- provide a community hub and strategic demonstration site for the public to experience, learn about, and become involved in, large-scale habitat restoration.

The property satisfied several criteria that make it a high priority for restoration, namely:

- **Size:** 510 hectares of the total property size (684 ha) will directly benefit from stock removal, natural regeneration and revegetation works as a result of this project. This will constitute one of the largest restoration projects ever undertaken in the South East region;
- **Location:** it is strategically located within a district of high quality reserves in SA and Victoria, and improves landscape connectivity and ecological function between them (Bangham and Geegeela CPs in SA and Little Desert NP in Victoria);

- **Existing condition:** the current state of the property is highly conducive to full ecological recovery in a more rapid timeframe than would ordinarily be possible for a restoration project in an agricultural district, due to the high level of remnant tree, shrub and understorey cover across the grazed portions (510 hectares) of the property. The remaining 174 hectares of the property are already fenced and in excellent condition, serving as reference areas, and providing a natural regeneration and revegetation seedbank;
- **Habitat complexity:** the site includes a range of habitats and ecotones between each, including grassy woodland, heathy woodland, heathland and wetland habitats. It is unusual (but highly desirable) for a restoration project to cover such a diversity of soil and habitat types;
- **Biodiversity values:** it retains biodiversity values (including EPBC Act listed species and ecological communities) that will be significantly enhanced and improved through habitat restoration; and,
- **Heritage Agreement:** the entire property will be suitable for inclusion in the National Reserve System (by being perpetually protected under Heritage Agreement).



Brown Stringybark Woodland habitat on the property – Feeding habitat for the South-eastern Red-tailed Black-cockatoo

Since the property was purchased, the process of restoration has begun with stock removal, weed identification and mapping, the ongoing development of a property management plan and the first active revegetation works already in place.

The winter 2014 revegetation plantings, as part of a project co-ordinated by Natural Resources South East (NRSE) in partnership with NGT, focussed on restoring Stringybark Woodland and Blue Gum Grassy Woodlands, and included grasses, groundcovers, daisies, climbers, shrubs and trees. For the project, five NGT staff travelled to Eaglehawk with over 800 additional plants from 13 different hard to collect or grow species, grown by the NGT Cross-border

Community Nursery Project. The plants from the Community Nursery further increased the diversity of small daisies, herbs, sedges and threatened species planted at the site – a rewarding experience for the staff and volunteers who have nurtured these plants from seed.



NGT's Cath Dickson getting ready to plant out at Eaglehawk Waterhole

The site was a delight for everyone to work in, supplementing plants in an area that already has a comparatively high amount of remnant native species and low weed levels. While on-site, the NGT and Natural Resources South East team were also rewarded a large flock of Red-tail Black-Cockatoos flying through – reminding everyone of the benefits of, and reasons for, habitat restoration.

Special thanks to Cassie Hlava and the Landscape Links project (NRSE) for funding our first revegetation project on a portion of the property – we look forward to watching this area respond over the years ahead.

2.2 Environmental events – Biodiversity “Up Close”, across the region

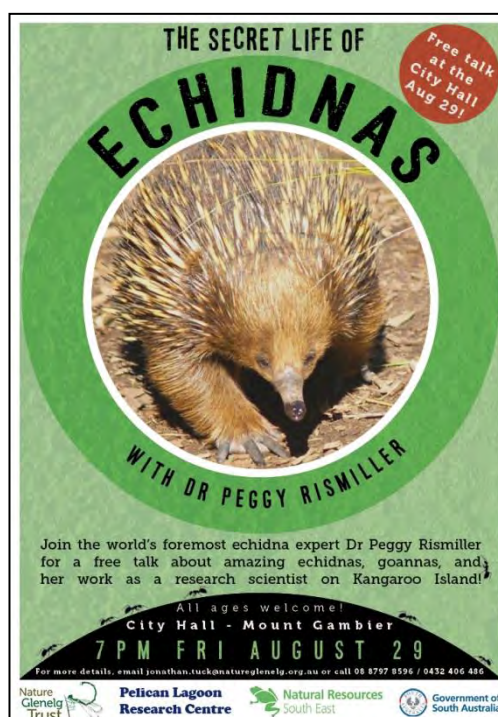
The 2014 Biodiversity Up Close events exceeded our expectations, delivering a broad range of community activities and reaching hundreds of people across a diverse range of groups – including school groups, landholders, artistic types, coastal enthusiasts, lovers of native wildlife, and a whole bunch of other people who were just curious to find out more about their local environment. This was supplemented by radio and newspaper appearances for all events, reaching a broad audience and helping to promote biodiversity to the community.



The Up Close program held 9 community-orientated activities (not including multiple sessions). More than 400 participants attended the events, and thousands more reached through our use of media: radio, newspapers and the internet.

As the number and breadth of activities held demonstrate, partnerships were vital in enabling so many successful events to be undertaken, and also in meeting our objective of the program being a conduit for promoting and complementing other State and Commonwealth funded biodiversity programs in the region and maximising their reach and impact in facilitating behavioural change and on ground action.

The events included a mix of public presentations and field-based events with strong educational and interactive components, while being fun and offering a chance to get to new places, or unlock some of the natural secrets in some familiar places. The events have been far reaching, with many people making trips from around the region and as far as Adelaide to attend.



The events really helped to facilitate networking between environmental groups. The Eaglehawk Waterhole open day brought together a wide range of groups including landholders, revegetation practitioners, threatened species officers, landcare groups and field naturalists, and partnerships were formed and strengthened.



120 people attended the Eaglehawk Waterhole open day event

The strong partnerships and collaboration focus of the 'Up Close' events has been a success, leading to around twice as many events (including multiple sessions) being undertaken as was initially planned. For example, the Marine Life of SA talk and the associated Rockpool Ramble were organised in partnership with DEWNR, NGT, Conservation Council SA, the Port MacDonnell Reef Watch group and schools, with strong support from the community. This led to an increased focus on Reef Watch and our amazing coastline in the South East, and not only involved students from schools but teachers as well.

The Open Day at Eaglehawk Waterhole near Frances was themed around property-scale habitat restoration, and included groups such as the Kowree Farm Tree Group, field naturalist groups, landholders, Natural Resources SE, Habitat 141, Elanus (David Baker-Gabb) and Birdlife SE SA. It was a great outcome gathering all these groups to focus on our overarching goal of protecting and enhancing our environment.

The echidna themed-events (see audience, right) were the final events in the program - and perhaps the largest. A high profile speaker – Dr Peggy Rismiller – travelled from Kangaroo Island for a series of events and radio appearances.

Overall, community events for NGT have been highly popular and successful – providing a key mechanism for sharing environmental messages with the wider community.



2.3 Wetland restoration trials at Long Swamp and Gooseneck Swamp, SW Victoria

Nature Glenelg Trust has continued to work with community groups like Nelson Coast Care and the Hamilton Field Naturalists Club, and in conjunction with Parks Victoria and the Glenelg Hopkins CMA, to progress the trialling of local management solutions for significant wetlands on public land.

Long Swamp, Discovery Bay Coastal Park

Based on the findings of previous investigative work undertaken, Nature Glenelg Trust was awarded grant funding from the Victorian Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) to undertake a hydrological restoration trial and an aquatic ecology monitoring program at Long Swamp, Discovery Bay Coastal Park – near Nelson. The location for the trial is at Nobles Rocks, the site of the last remaining artificial outlet drain from Long Swamp. The other previous artificial outlet at White Sands remains closed after becoming blocked by natural sand dune formation processes during the millennium drought. The natural site for discharge from the swamp to the sea is several kilometres away to the west via the Glenelg River mouth and estuary.

Wetland birds are a key attribute of Long Swamp, and are just one of many ecological values supporting a government agency assessment of its potential to be a Ramsar site in Victoria. The swamp is actually home to the western-most known population of the Eastern Ground Parrot, after becoming extinct in nearby South Australia (where no confirmed sightings have been recorded since 1945).

The aims of the trial are to address a decline in the wetland values of Long Swamp at the artificial outlet by:

- 1) increasing wetland habitat diversity in the vicinity of the Nobles Rocks drain outlet,
- 2) increasing the seasonal connectivity of wetland habitats throughout the system, and
- 3) re-creating additional habitat for the most sensitive indicator freshwater aquatic species.



The trial will progress in stages, enabling us to progressively record and measure the impacts of hydrological restoration in real time, and providing the information necessary for determining a future permanent solution.

The first stage of the restoration trial involved 45 willing volunteers from the local community getting together on the 9th May 2014 to construct a low-level temporary sandbag structure at Nobles Rocks, initially at the most accessible and technically feasible section of drain in this rugged coastal environment – see sequence of images on this page and the previous page. A few hours and 600 sandbags later, the trial structure was in place and operating as planned, with water spilling down the drain at the new trial retention height.

After assessing upstream effects, a second stage to the trial was installed in July 2014 – as an interim measure before progressing to the third and final stage of the trial over the coming summer, in time for the 2015 winter.



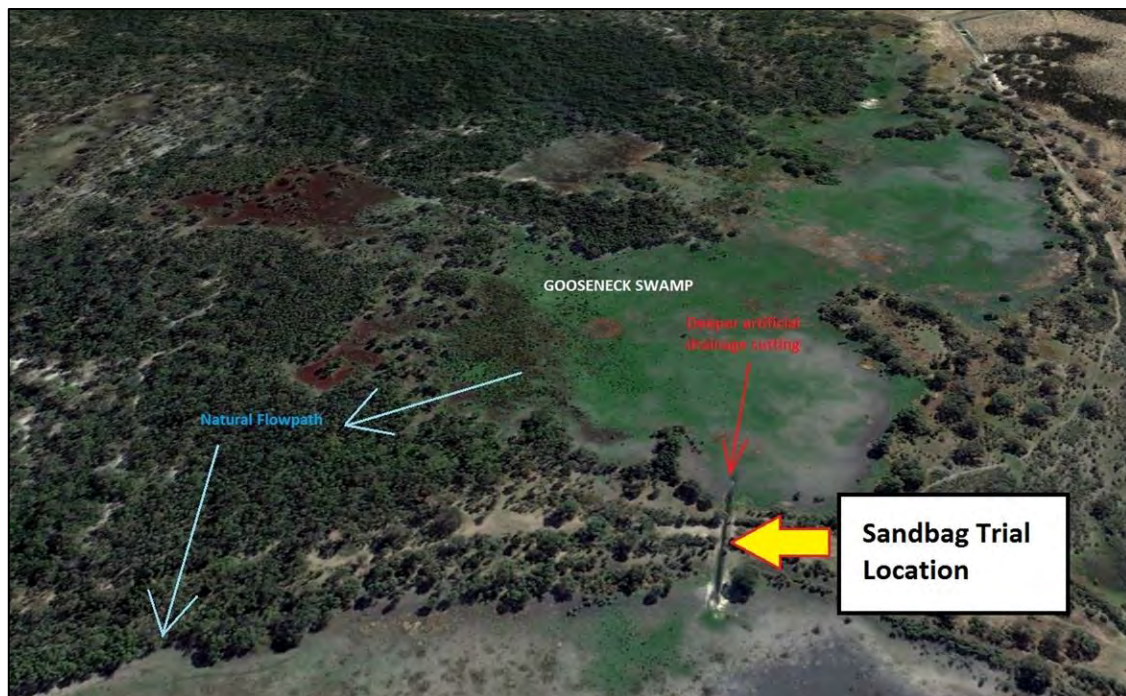
The sandbag crew standing on the completed second phase trial structure (above), and the first phase trial structure under construction with community volunteer labour (right, and on previous page)

Ecological monitoring is well underway, and is helping us document the biodiversity values associated with this nationally important wetland – proposed to be the next Ramsar site in Victoria.



Gooseneck Swamp, Grampians National Park

Gooseneck Swamp is situated within the far south-eastern corner of the Grampians National Park in Victoria's South West, near Dunkeld. Gooseneck Swamp along with downstream Brady Swamp, are wetlands of the Wannon River floodplain. Although Gooseneck Swamp naturally discharges into Brady Swamp, historically it had to fill to a certain height before the natural discharge channel and wider connecting floodplain would receive flows. As a result, an artificial cutting constructed in the 1950s (through the lunette bank that separates Gooseneck Swamp from Brady Swamp) was causing the swamp to freely drain to its bed level once inflows ceased – both reducing its depth and, more particularly, cutting short its duration of inundation.



The natural direction of flow from Gooseneck to Brady Swamp (blue arrows), artificial drain (red arrow) and location of the restoration trial structure

Moves to restore Gooseneck Swamp began under the direction of Gavin Cerini (then an officer with the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife) in the mid-1980s, with the property acquired in 1986 from Bob Fraser by the Victorian Government, and eventually incorporated into the Grampians National Park. However, a change of neighbouring land ownership in 1987 stalled plans that were well advanced at that time to restore the hydrology of Gooseneck Swamp, and the project remained idle until 2010 when the Hamilton Field Naturalists Club, Gavin Cerini, Parks Victoria and the Glenelg Hopkins CMA revisited and revived the concept. Nature Glenelg Trust became formally involved in the project, initially at the invitation of the Glenelg Hopkins CMA, in late 2012. By early 2013, funding had been secured from the DEPI Communities for Nature Grant Program to build a sandbag trial structure, with various community members coming together to help complete the works in August 2013.



The operational trial structure during a community information day on the 14th of December 2013, with Gooseneck Swamp in the background

The trial sandbag structure had immediate impacts on the flow dynamics at Gooseneck Swamp:

- increasing wetland depth by as much as 20 cm;
- reducing outflow drainage efficiency significantly, by causing water to take its original route to Brady Swamp, spilling at higher elevations via the natural overflow point; and,
- preventing the immediate drawdown of water levels to the bed level of the swamp, which the drain had previously caused to occur once inflows ceased (based on flows and rainfall, this would have started to occur in mid-December 2013).

In achieving the above, it is reasonable to conclude that the inundation period for Gooseneck Swamp was extended by as much as 4-6 weeks, creating a wetland refuge for wetland dependant fauna deep into what was a hot and dry summer period with no rainfall.

The value of Gooseneck Swamp as habitat for a wide range of flora and fauna has been demonstrated through the initial baseline monitoring undertaken, again with community volunteer support. It is confirmed as a particularly important site for nationally threatened species of fish, frogs and flora, as well as providing refuge habitat into the summer months for a wide range of waterbirds. Early indications are that the restoration trial will, as expected, significantly enhance the ecological values of the site in all but the driest years (i.e. those years when there are no flows to retain in the swamp).



Gooseneck Swamp, September 2013

2.4 Cross-border community nursery display gardens, across the region

The Cross-Border Community Nursery project is establishing eight native plant display gardens across the South East of South Australia and South West of Victoria. This project has been funded by the Australian Government and focusses on working with local communities and the nursery industry to increase the diversity of native plant species available for revegetation or gardens.

We have partnered with local community groups, councils and shires, and schools to help foster a sense of ownership of the gardens, where current and future generations can take a sense of pride in their display garden, their local environment and the plants native to their area.



The Beachport Coastal Display Garden being planted by Murlong M'raddine Coastcare and Beachport Primary School

The locations and names of the display gardens are as follows:

- Portland Native Plant Display Garden
- Ozone Walk Vertical Garden (Warrnambool)
- Swan Reserve Biodiversity Bed (Warrnambool)
- Beachport Coastal Display Garden
- South East Regional Display Garden (Mount Gambier)
- North Parklands Native Plant Display Garden (Naracoorte)
- Valley Lake Conservation Park Ecosystems Display (Mount Gambier)
- Port Fairy Native Plant Display Garden

Case Study: Portland Display Garden

In early July 2014, 25 volunteers planted more than 1000 grasses, rushes, wildflowers, shrubs and trees at the Native Plant Display Garden in Henty Street, Portland. The indigenous plant garden features a wetland area and edible 'bush tucker' garden bed, and is part of the Portland Community Garden site, managed by the Portland Community Garden Landcare Group.



The planting progress at Portland (Photos: Margaret Milich)

Nature Glenelg Trust's Community Nursery Officer Yvonne Riley selected plants for the site based on their natural range (*are they indigenous to the area?*), their protection status (*are they rare?*), and other values (*are they culturally significant?*). More than forty species were chosen for the site, ten of which are rare in Victoria. Three of these rare species are also listed as Vulnerable in Australia – Curly Sedge (*Carex tasmanica*), and Wrinkled Cassinia (*Cassinia rugata*) – and are protected under the national *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

Other plants were selected for their value to indigenous people such as the Rush Sedge (*Carex tereticaulis*) which was traditionally used to make eel traps. Portland is famous for its Correas and several varieties were planted in the garden, both for their aesthetic value and as a food source for birds and insects.

Indigenous plant display gardens such as this one can play an important role in environmental education and the preservation of threatened species. Interpretive signage and plant labels will help visitors identify the plants. Some of the plants in the garden may also be used as a seed source for future revegetation work.

Planting in the clay soil was not an easy job, but the volunteers remained enthusiastic and worked incredibly hard all day. Spirits were also buoyed by refreshments and a barbeque lunch provided by the Landcare Group. The Portland Observer also came out to cover the event and gave some excellent coverage in the local newspaper.

2.5 Managing the recovery of Murray crayfish in the southern Murray-Darling Basin

This project is being delivered under our *Aquasave – NGT* (aquatic ecology) trading name.

The Murray crayfish (*Euastacus armatus*) is the world's second largest freshwater crayfish and naturally occurs across 12,500km of Victorian and New South Wales waterways of the southern Murray-Darling Basin (MDB), including the River Murray. Yet, this iconic and recreationally fished species has undergone considerable declines in distribution and abundance over the past 50 years due to river regulation, habitat degradation and overfishing.



The mighty Murray crayfish

Most recently, the species has been severely impacted by a hypoxic blackwater event that occurring following drought-breaking flooding over the MDB during 2010-11. Hypoxic blackwater can result as microbes breakdown accumulated leaf litter when floodplains are inundated and can lead to oxygen concentrations (<2mg/l) that are and is lethal to aquatic fauna. In the River Murray, the blackwater originated in the floodplain wetlands, including the Barmah-Millewa and Koondrook-Perricoota redgum forests, as well as along tributary rivers such as the Goulburn and Murrumbidgee rivers, with hypoxic conditions extending for approximately 1800km and persisted for almost six months.



Dead Murray crayfish during blackwater event (A King)

During the 2010-11 blackwater event, fish and yabby kills and the emergence of Murray crayfish were noted. Concerns raised by these observations prompted targeted sampling in 2012 (post-event data) that was compared with before sampling (using data from 2010 sampling as part of a PhD by Sylvia Zukowski) to assess the medium-term impacts on the species (as part of a Murray-Darling Freshwater Research Centre and the Arthur Rylah Institute project funded by Victorian DSE, and including Nick Whiterod). This study highlighted an alarming reduction (81%) in crayfish abundance in areas affected by the blackwater event whereas abundance remained similar in unaffected upstream areas. Consistently, surveys by NSW DPI have revealed low and patchy numbers of Murray crayfish across other MDB waterways after the blackwater event. These impacts prompted major changes to the recreational fishing regulations for Murray crayfish, including complete closure in blackwater affected areas.

Attention has now turned to how blackwater affected Murray crayfish populations can be recovered. To guide the management of this recovery, a new collaborative project between Martin Asmus and Dean Gilligan (NSW DPI) and Nick Whiterod and Sylvia Zukowski (Aquasave – Nature Glenelg Trust) (with support from the Charles Todd – Arthur Rylah Institute and Adam Miller – Melbourne University) is now underway to:

- 1) undertake comprehensive benchmarking of the status of populations across NSW and Victoria;
- 2) repeat the targeted blackwater sampling to track recovery trajectories;
- 3) assess the genetic status of the species;
- 4) develop a population model to explore how different management scenarios may assist recovery; and,
- 5) establish a long-term monitoring strategy.

The project, funded through by NSW Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust with additional funding from the Victorian DEPI, will provide a sound basis for the future management of this iconic freshwater crayfish.

2.6 Considerations and protocols for delineating wetland boundaries in the Lower South East of South Australia

This project was delivered under our *NGT Consulting* (general ecology) trading name for the South East Natural Resources Management Board.

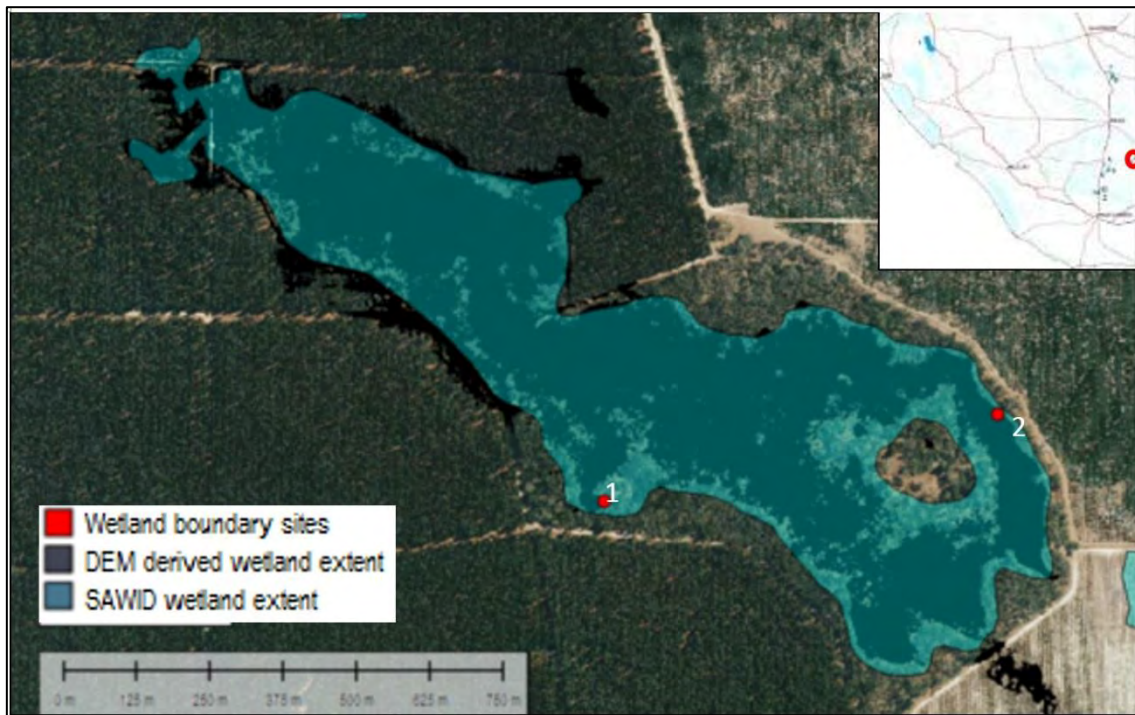
The project was commissioned by the South East Natural Resources Management Board, as the latest step in an ongoing improvement program for both (a) the accuracy of wetland (particularly spatial) data in the Lower South East of South Australia and (b) the development of a shared understanding of the scientific methods that underpin wetland delineation. One of the primary drivers of the project was to strengthen and inform the Lower Limestone Coast Water Allocation Plan.

The project undertook the following activities; it:

- developed a protocol for verifying the boundary mapping of high and very high conservation value wetlands (identified in the regional wetlands layer), and trialled the protocol for a small number of wetlands in the Lower South East (to present as case studies);
- reviewed the methods available for investigating and monitoring the groundwater dependence of wetlands;
- reviewed approaches for grouping clusters of wetlands into complexes; and,
- considered the legislative and policy framework concerning the re-establishment of native vegetation and aquatic ecosystems.

A key requirement of the project was to provide an opportunity for input and to keep a broad network of project contributors informed. This was met primarily (but not solely) by forming a technical reference group. The group consisted of state-wide and regional wetland experts, and managers of land containing wetlands. Wider concepts around wetland delineation and management were discussed among the group, to aid the assessment of various wetland delineation techniques for potential use by the project. The reference group members were given the opportunity to assess how the developed protocol worked in the field, which gave members first-hand experience of the methodology and resulted in constructive feedback and improvements to the method being made.

Field trialling of this method, across nine sites, revealed a capacity for vegetation and soil indicators to be used for achieving high levels of resolution (for corresponding field delineated transition points and digitally modelled elevation data) to determine a wetland's "edge".



Project case study site at Trail Waterhole, showing the existing wetlands layer boundary (blue shading), field delineated boundary points (red dots) and wetland extent based on DEM modelling (black shading).

In line with providing greater clarity around defining the edges of wetlands, a review of logic surrounding the grouping of wetlands into complexes was also important. This review identified that wetland complexes may occupy different landscape settings and rely on varied (sometimes inconsistent) logic as the basis of their clustering.

The final component of the project investigated the role that the *Native Vegetation Act 1991* plays in protecting and/or promoting the recovery of wetlands, including those which may have been developed under different land uses. In the case of a commercial forestry land-use, obligations for wetland management are primarily guided by responsibilities set out under industry codes of practice.

Overall it was determined that adoption of the wetland boundary delineation methods developed and refined for this project would improve wetland recognition and management for all land uses in the South East NRM region.

2.7 The state of fish communities across the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges: condition reporting from 2010 to 2013

This project was delivered under our *Aquasave – NGT* (aquatic ecology) trading name, for the SA Murray Darling Basin NRM Board. The temporary streams of the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges (EMLR), which contribute tributary flows at the terminal end of the Murray-Darling Basin (MDB), provide important habitat for a range of freshwater fishes. The understanding and provision of environmental water requirements (EWR) for different fish functional groups provides a solid base for sound and sustainable catchment management, ecosystem protection and biodiversity conservation. A decade-long Aquasave fish monitoring program now provides empirical knowledge in support of EWR initiatives in the region. Condition assessments have been undertaken by Aquasave in 2007, 2009 and again in 2013.

The last condition assessment conducted in 2009 coincided with a period of critical water shortage associated with the millennium drought and serious aquatic ecosystem impacts were noted. During 2010-11, broad-scale rainfall led to improved regional water availability and stream flow in the EMLR. Given the severity of the millennium drought, it is particularly important to provide an updated condition assessment for the post-drought period, during a time when fish populations are expected to exhibit characteristics of recovery. Hence the full project report details monitoring data from 2010 to 2013, which includes a total of 232 site assessments across 10 stream catchments. Over this period, some 60,000 fish were recorded from 28 species (including 22 native and six alien species). Of note, threatened freshwater specialists, namely Yarra pygmy perch, remain absent from the region and the alien *Gambusia* dominated. The performance of fish-related ecological assets over the reporting period were compared. Overall, six out of 10 catchments are now in equal or better condition when compared to the last reporting period, although greater recovery was anticipated and many fish-related ecological assets remain under stress (or remain absent).

Table i. 2013 overall status of reaches and catchments of the EMLR – a comparison of the reach and catchment level performance against fish indicators between 2009 and 2013. Condition scores (out of 9) are defined as good (>6,), moderate (3 to 6,) and poor (<3,). Reaches are headwaters (HW), upper pool-riffle (UC), mid pool-riffle (MC), gorge (GO), lowland (LO) and terminal wetlands (TW) with reaches not sampled highlighted (with n/s). See section 2.6 for full explanations.

explanations.

		Condition								
No	Catchment	Reach						Overall		
		HW	UC	MC	GO	LO	TW	2013	2009	
1	Angas	n/s	8.5	4.5	n/s	5.0	1.0	4.8	4.0	
2	Bremer	n/s	1.0	n/s	n/s	3.0	3.0	3.0	1.0	
3	Currency	n/s	3.0	7.0	n/s	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	
4	Finniss	n/s	8.5	3.8	n/s	1.0	3.0	4.0	4.3	
5	Inman	n/s	n/s	3.5	n/s	n/s	n/s	3.5	6.0	
6	Marne	n/s	7.5	0.0	0.0	2.0	n/s	1.0	0.0	
7	Reedy	n/s	n/s	3.5	4.3	2.0	n/s	3.5	2.5	
8	Salt, Premimma & Rocky Gully	n/s	n/s	n/s	n/s	n/s	1.0	1.0	2.5	
9	Saunders	n/s	n/s	n/s	n/s	2.0	n/s	2.0	0.0	
10	Tookayerta	n/s	n/s	3.0	n/s	3.0	3.5	3.0	4.0	
		2013	n/s	7.5	3.5	2.1	2.5	3.0	3.3	
		2009	n/s	3.0	4.3	1.6	3.8	0.5		3.0

Notable patterns in each catchment include:

- **Angas River** – strong persistence and recruitment of mountain galaxias in the upper catchment, but initial recovery of terminal wetlands halted (with southern pygmy perch now absent) and the condition of southern pygmy perch in the mid-catchment declining;
- **Bremer River** – overall improvement (reflecting extremely poor condition in 2009), but mountain galaxias populations have not returned to the upper catchment and river blackfish only persist in pools with ongoing management intervention. Mid and lowland catchment reaches along with the terminal wetlands have moderately recovered;
- **Currency Creek** – mixed patterns, with the mid-catchment performing well but only moderate fish communities in upper and lowland reaches as well as the terminal wetland (and no Yarra pygmy perch present);
- **Finniss River** – Upper catchment in performing very well with strong recruitment and survivorship of mountain galaxias, but mid and lowland reaches in poor condition (no Yarra pygmy perch present);
- **Inman River** – condition declined considerably with only one (of three identified) ecological assets performing well. At the other two locations, the collapse of southern pygmy perch populations has been observed;
- **Marne River** – catchment improved (just) but remains in overall poor condition, with the performance of upper catchment mountain galaxias populations the only positive. The gorge and lowland reaches are under considerable stress, with mountain galaxias not recorded since 2008 and the imminent loss of river blackfish expected;
- **Reedy** – slight improvement of some mid and upper catchment mountain galaxias populations, but declines in others, whilst the lowlands and terminal wetlands have benefited from greater water availability;
- **Rocky Gully** – condition of terminal wetland declined as Murray hardyhead appear to have only been temporary post-drought resident;
- **Saunders** – The only identified ecological asset (carp gudgeon) in the catchment, recolonised but numbers are low and recruitment appears lacking; and
- **Tookayerta** – mixed results: continued absence of upper catchment southern pygmy perch and declines of the lowlands but improvement of terminal wetland (although Yarra pygmy perch remain absent). At some mid-catchment locations, populations of mountain galaxias, river blackfish and southern pygmy perch continue to persist strongly.

As an established, long-term program, the EMLR fish monitoring program is well-positioned to track future waterway condition in response to changing flow regimes across the region, whether that be associated with climate change or ongoing water abstraction.

3. Plans for the 2014-15 Financial Year

3.1 Nature Glenelg Trust Strategic Plan

Given the early success and development of NGT since our launch in January 2012, preparing a forward-looking strategic plan has been identified as a key task for the year ahead. This is expected to help guide and inform our longer term direction, and will be important for clearly communicating our goals to the wider community, including future potential philanthropic donors. The plan will articulate the points of difference that make NGT the focussed and outcome driven organisation we are; attributes that we consider vital for continuing to meet our goals.

Goal: Prepare and release a strategic plan for Nature Glenelg Trust over the year ahead.

3.2 Consolidate NGT's presence and activities in western Victoria

Although Nature Glenelg Trust has staff based at a number of locations in western Victoria, creating a regional community hub in the South West similar to the successful nursery site in Mount Gambier (South Australia), would have obvious benefits for the organisation, our work and the wider community we are seeking to engage with. However, this concept relies on the right site and tenure arrangements becoming available; hence it remains a priority for NGT to be attentive to potential opportunities and willing to capitalise on this concept in the future should the opportunity arise.

Goal: To establish a community hub and small office in Warrnambool in the next 2 years.

3.2 Continue to explore opportunities for creating a strategic wetland restoration demonstration site

The *Habitat Restoration Reserve* concept focusses on Nature Glenelg Trust:

- tackling property-scale habitat restoration in our focal region;
- empowering the regional community to participate with us in the land management process;
- inspiring others to act similarly on private land; and,
- delivering a tangible environmental benefit that people can see and experience.

The successful purchase of Eaglehawk Waterhole as a *Habitat Restoration Reserve* in the Bangham district is a perfect illustration of NGT's mission in this regard, and something the organisation is keen to repeat over the coming years at a small number of strategic demonstration sites situated across our focal region. A site that requires property-scale wetland (hydrological) restoration works in a strategic location for wider conservation benefit is a currently identified priority.

Goal: To purchase and establish at least one additional Habitat Restoration Reserve, with an emphasis on wetland restoration, over the next 2-3 years.

3.3 Investigate role of philanthropy in the future direction of NGT

Nature Glenelg Trust's Habitat Restoration Fund was accepted onto the Register of Environmental Organisations on the 15th of April 2014. This makes NGT a Deductible Gift Recipient under Australian taxation law, with donations over \$2 eligible for a tax deduction.

Achieving this status is a major milestone for Nature Glenelg Trust. As well as giving additional credibility to our activities; it also provides philanthropic donors (organisations and individuals) with an additional incentive to consider investing in our wetland restoration and other environmental initiatives.

Goal: Promoting our on-ground restoration work and highlighting to our supporters the tangible value of donations into the Public Fund will be a key new task for the 2014-15 financial year, once:

- our philanthropic approach and philosophy is confirmed; and,
- administrative processes have been established for processing donations.

3.4 Website upgrade

The NGT website (developed by Pixel Harvester) has served the organisation extremely well since our launch in January 2012. However to keep pace with changing technology, improve functionality and services for internal staff and to enhance our communication with the regional community, the website is now due for an upgrade.

Goal: The website upgrade will be completed as a priority in the coming financial year.

3.5 Look for opportunities to build strategic research partnerships with academic institutions and communicate results of our applied science projects

As an organisation with a deliberate focus on helping to fill the (at times) missing link between conservation science and on-ground action, we want our work to be taken seriously by the wider scientific community. Key ways that we can achieve this goal is to:

- set-up collaborative projects with partner academic institutions; and,
- seek opportunities to inform the wider scientific community about the applied approach and outcomes of our projects.

Goal: To maintain and, where possible, expand our scientific research and publication record.

4. Employee Statistics

Nature Glenelg Trust employed a total of ten full-time or part-time staff throughout the 2013-14 financial year, and a further thirteen staff on a casual basis. Seven of these full-time or part-time staff remained in active service at 30th June 2014 (indicated with an asterisk below). At the time of writing (November 2014), the currently active twelve regular (non-casual) staff are:

1. Mark Bachmann (Manager / Principal Ecologist)*
2. Jessica Bouchier (Administration Support and Project Ecologist)
3. Catherine Dickson (Senior Threatened Species Ecologist)*
4. Lachlan Farrington (Senior Wetland and Landscape Ecologist)*
5. Bryan Haywood (Senior Ecologist)
6. Lauren Kivisalu (Project Ecologist)*
7. Adam Miller (Research and Restoration Ecologist)
8. Yvonne Riley (Community Nursery Officer)
9. Rose Thompson (Project Ecologist)
10. Jonathan Tuck (Project Ecologist)*
11. Lauren Veale (Aquatic Ecologist)*
12. Nicholas Whiterod (Senior Aquatic Ecologist)*

5. Membership

As a duly constituted fixed trust, Nature Glenelg Trust does not have its own financial membership base. As an organisation committed to filling gaps, we are specifically interested in using our expertise to work with (not compete with) other membership-based community groups to increase their effectiveness, and ultimately help them to retain and attract members. We also hope to provide regular and meaningful volunteering opportunities for these groups' members through participation in our projects.

Now that Nature Glenelg trust has been accepted onto the Register of Environmental Organisations), we will begin to actively seek regular, tax-deductible financial contributions to our Public Fund from NGT supporters. Supporters of Nature Glenelg Trust are also being encouraged to register their email address on our website (www.natureglenelg.org.au) to receive our regular updates on our projects and organisational activities.

The Board of the Trustee for Nature Glenelg Trust, currently has six voting members:

1. Mark Bachmann
2. Catherine Dickson
3. Lachlan Farrington
4. Michael Hammer
5. Melissa Herpich
6. Nicholas Whiterod

At present, the members of the Trustee for Nature Glenelg Trust, also comprise the organisation's Committee of Management, which meets 3-4 times a year to oversee the strategic direction of the organisation, and are legally accountable for the administration of the Public Fund (the Habitat Restoration Fund).

6. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

6.1 Statement of Comprehensive Income

Nature Glenelg Trust
Statement of Comprehensive Income
For the year ended 30 June 2014

	2014 \$	2013 \$
Income	1,478,346	580,458
Less		
Distribution expenses	(4,209)	(1,792)
Cost of Sales	(672,830)	(433,962)
Administration expenses	(145,522)	(119,896)
Operating surplus (deficit) for the period	655,785	24,808

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

6.2 Balance Sheet

Nature Glenelg Trust Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2014

	2014 \$	2013 \$
Current Assets		
Cash assets	879,391	192,635
Receivables	219,678	106,647
Inventories	441,240	185,075
Other	650	860
Total Current Assets	1,540,960	485,218
Non-Current Assets		
Property, plant and equipment	561,662	106,029
Total Non-Current Assets	561,662	106,029
Total Assets	2,102,622	591,247
Current Liabilities		
Payables	17,132	139,641
Financial liabilities	1,301	402
Current tax liabilities	132,840	-
Provisions	79,167	92,289
Other	1,207,730	358,686
Total Current Liabilities	1,438,170	591,036
Non-Current Liabilities		
Provision for long service leave	20,286	11,829
Total Non-Current Liabilities	20,286	11,829
Total Liabilities	1,458,455	602,865
Net Assets (Deficiency)	644,167	(11,618)
Equity		
Contribution by settlor	10	10
Accumulated surplus	644,157	(11,628)
Total Equity	644,167	(11,618)

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

6.2 Notes the Financial Statements

Nature Glenelg Trust Notes to the Financial Statements For the year ended 30 June 2014

Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

The trustee has prepared the financial statements of the trust on the basis that the trust is a non-reporting entity because there are no users dependant on general purpose financial statements. The financial statements are therefore special purpose financial statements that have been prepared in order to meet the requirements of the trust deed, and the information needs of the stakeholders.

The trustee has prepared the financial report in accordance with the following applicable Australian Accounting Standards and UIG Interpretations

AASB 108 : Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates Errors

AASB 110 : Events after the Balance Sheet Date

AASB 1031 : Materiality

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the significant accounting policies disclosed below, which the directors of the trustee company have determined are appropriate to meet the purposes of preparation. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs unless otherwise stated in the notes. The accounting policies that have been adopted in the preparation of the statements are as follows:

(a) Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE)

Property, Plant and Equipment are carried at cost or at independent or directors' valuation. All assets, excluding freehold land and buildings are depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the trust. Increases in the carrying amount arising on revaluation of land and buildings are credited to a revaluation reserve in shareholders' equity. Decreases that offset previous increases of the same asset are charged against fair value reserves directly in equity; all other decreases are charged to the income statement. Each year the difference between depreciation based on the revalued carrying amount of the assets charged to the income statement and depreciation based on the asset's original cost is transferred from the revaluation reserve to retained earnings.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by directors to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from these assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the asset's employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have not been discounted in determining recoverable amounts.

(b) Inventories

Inventories are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value. Costs are assigned on a first-in first-out basis and include direct materials, direct labour and an appropriate proportion of variable and fixed overhead expenses.

(c) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the trust has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reasonably measured. Provisions recognised represent the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at reporting date.

Nature Glenelg Trust
Notes to the Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2014

(d) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

(e) Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any trade discounts and volume rebates allowed. For this purpose, deferred consideration is not discounted to present values when recognising revenue.

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest rate method, which, for floating rate financial assets, is the rate inherent in the instrument. Dividend revenue is recognised when the right to receive a dividend has been established.

Revenue recognised related to the provision of services is determined with reference to the stage of completion of the transaction at the reporting date and where outcome of the contract can be estimated reliably. Stage of completion is determined with reference to the services performed to date as a percentage of total anticipated services to be performed. Where the outcome cannot be estimated reliably, revenue is recognised only to the extent that related expenditure is recoverable.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

(f) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Tax Office. In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the balance sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

(g) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the liability for employee entitlements arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related costs.

(h) Trade and Other Payables

Trade and other payables, including bank borrowings and distributions payable, are recognised at the nominal transaction value without taking into account the time value of money.

6.3 Independent Audit Report

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE TRUSTEE OF THE NATURE GLENELG TRUST

Scope

We have audited the attached special purpose financial report of the Nature Glenelg Trust for the year ended 30th June 2014, being the Balance Sheet, Statement of Comprehensive Income, Notes to the Accounts and the Trustees Declaration. The Trustee is responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial report and the information contained therein. We have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the Trustee of the Nature Glenelg Trust.

Nature Glenelg Trusts' responsibility for the financial report

Nature Glenelg Trust is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with its Constitution, Australian Accounting Standards as described in Note 1 to the Accounts, and for such internal controls as the Trustee determines are necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report, based on the audit. We have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the Trustee. We have complied with the auditor independence requirements prescribed by our professional body membership.

Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These standards require that we comply with relevant ethical standards relating to audit engagements, and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance as to whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal controls relevant to the Nature Glenelg Trust's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Nature Glenelg Trusts' internal controls. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Nature Glenelg Trust, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

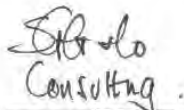
Auditor's opinion

In our opinion, the attached special purpose financial report of the Nature Glenelg Trust is in accordance with its Constitution including:


- I. giving a true and fair view of the Trusts' financial position as at 30th June 2014 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- II. complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 to the Accounts.

Basis of Accounting

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report is prepared to assist the Nature Glenelg Trust to meet the reporting requirements of its Constitution. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for any other purpose.



SGG & Co Consulting
Chartered Accountants



Stephen Graham
Partner

Dated at Adelaide this 6th day of November 2014