

Several options are available to landholders in the Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA) to protect and manage native vegetation and wildlife habitats, each offering differing levels of protection, and each having their advantages and disadvantages. Sources of funding and labour are also available.

Briefly the most realistic options for landholders in the Wollongong LGA are:

Conservation Agreement (CA)

A CA (administered by the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), formerly known as the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water) provides a high level of permanent legal protection for conservation on a property, registered on the property title and remains on the land with a change of ownership.

More information:

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cpp/ConservationPartners.htm>
<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cpp/ConservationAgreements.htm>
<http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private>

Contact: Sally Ash of OEH on (02) 9995 6768, or sally.ash@environment.nsw.gov.au,
Louise Brodie of OEH on (02) 9995 6770, or louise.brodie@environment.nsw.gov.au.

BioBanking Credit Site

BioBanking is a market-based offsetting program administered by OEH. A BioBanking credit site provides a high level of permanent legal protection for conservation on a property, registered on the property title and remains on the land with a change of ownership.

More information:

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/biobanking>
<http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private>

Contact: BioBanking Team on (02) 9995 6753, or biobanking@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Conservation Property Vegetation Plan (PVP)

A PVP is a legally binding agreement between the landowner and the local Catchment Management Authority (CMA) that describes how the native vegetation on the property is to be managed for conservation outcomes. A PVP runs with land for the duration of the plan, and can be registered on the land title. PVPs can be very flexible; they can be established for a fixed period of time or they can be in perpetuity.

More information:

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/vegetation/pvp.htm>
<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/vegetation/negotiatepvp.htm>
<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/vegetation/nvinfosheet3.pdf>
<http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private>

Contact: Vanessa Allen of Southern Rivers CMA on (02) 4224 9705, or vanessa.allen@cma.nsw.gov.au.

Wildlife Refuge

A wildlife refuge (administered by OEH) provides a moderate level of permanent legal protection for conservation on a property and is registered on the property title. Wildlife refuges may contain remnant native vegetation as well as habitat provided by wildlife corridors, windbreaks, woodlots or farm dams.

More information:

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cpp/ConservationPartners.htm>

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cpp/WildlifeRefuges.htm>

<http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private>

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Louise Brodie of OEH on (02) 9995 6770, or louise.brodie@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Property registration with OEH

A landholder registers their property with OEH, to be managed for conservation. This is not legally binding, and does not change the property's legal status. Two property registration schemes are available in New South Wales - Land for Wildlife and Conserve Wildlife. Land for Wildlife operates on a regional level. In Conserve Wildlife, landholders register their properties with OEH by purchasing a 'Conserve Wildlife' sign.

More information:

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cpp/ConservationPartners.htm>

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cpp/PropertyRegistration.htm>

<http://www.cen.org.au/landforwildlife/>

http://www.cen.org.au/images/stories/projects/land_for_wildlife/publications/lfw_brochure_092010.pdf

<http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private>

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Louise Brodie of OEH on (02) 9995 6770, or louise.brodie@environment.nsw.gov.au.

A Possible Source of Funding - Escarpment to Sea program

Administered by the Southern Rivers CMA, the program is offering free advice and funding during 2011/12 to assist the conservation of remnant native vegetation including Woodland and Sub-Tropical Rainforest and to reduce the impacts of Weeds of National Significance in these areas. Funding amounts are negotiated.

More information:

http://www.southern.cma.nsw.gov.au/grants_funding.php

Contact: Michael Andrews of Southern Rivers CMA on (02) 4224 9715, or michael.andrews@cma.nsw.gov.au.

A Possible Source of Labour - Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA)

CVA selects priority environmental and heritage projects on the basis that they meet their guidelines. CVA charges \$550 per day (excluding GST) for a team of managed volunteers.

More information:

<http://www.conservationvolunteers.com.au>

Contact: CVA Wollongong on (02) 4228 9246, or wollongong@conservationvolunteers.com.au.

Disclaimers

This information was believed to be correct at the date of its publication.

This Fact Sheet is for general information purposes only and should not be relied upon for legal advice.

Options Available to Landowners to Protect and Manage Native Vegetation and Wildlife Habitats - Information for the Public

Option	Description	Administered by	Available to	Available for	Most Suitable for	Legally Binding?	Registered on the Land Title?	Advantages	Disadvantages	More Information/Contacts
Conservation Agreement (CA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A legal instrument, described under Division 12 (sections 69A to 69KA) of the <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i>, for establishing a conservation area on land outside the national park estate. • A joint agreement between landowners and the Minister for the Environment. • Provides permanent protection for the special features of the land. • Is voluntary. • Provides a high level of legal protection for conservation. 	OEH	Owners of freehold land, lessees of Crown land and local councils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas containing scenery, natural environments or natural phenomena worthy of preservation. • Areas of special scientific interest. • Areas that are the sites of buildings, objects, monuments or events of national significance. • In relation to areas in which Aboriginal objects, or Aboriginal places, of special significance are situated. • The study, preservation, protection, care or propagation of fauna or native plants or other flora. • The conservation of critical habitat, or the conservation of threatened species, populations or ecological community, or habitat. 	People who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have special features including native vegetation, wildlife habitat, Aboriginal sites and historic places on their property, • want their investment in the conservation of the area to be protected after they leave the property. 	Yes, and on future landowners	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanent legal protection for the property, registered on the property title. • High level of protection. • Remains on the land with a change of ownership. Benefits for landholder (as described on the OEH website): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property visits • Legal agreement, with detailed management strategies • Management advice • Council rate exemption • Money for on-ground work • Property signage • Technical notes and 'Bush Matters' newsletter • Field days • Local networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complex to establish. • Landowner is generally prevented from subdividing the conservation area. • Limited financial support. 	http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cpp/ConservationPartners.htm , http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cpp/ConservationAgreements.htm , http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/cpp/LandholderHandbookMay2010.pdf http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private Sally Ash (02) 9995 6768, email: sally.ash@environment.nsw.gov.au , Louise Brodie (02) 9995 6770, email: louise.brodie@environment.nsw.gov.au

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Conservation Agreement (also called Trust Agreement) entered into under the <i>Nature Conservation Trust Act 2001 (NSW)</i> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A legally binding agreement between a landowner and the Nature Conservation Trust to protect the environmental integrity and biodiversity of a property. • Is registered on the property title which ensures the land is protected forever. • The landholder plays an important role in deciding the conditions included in the Trust Agreement, as they continue to own and manage their land. • Each agreement is unique. Some Trust Agreements cover all of the property, some cover only part of the property. Where management requirements are complex the property may be broken into zones which have different conditions. • Is voluntary. • Provides a high level of legal protection for conservation. 	Nature Conservation Trust of New South Wales (since 2005)	Private landowners of properties with high conservation values.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The protection of the natural heritage values and associated cultural heritage values of a property. • The <i>Nature Conservation Trust Act 2001</i> defines natural heritage to include (but not limited to) the following: ecosystems and ecosystem processes, biological diversity (within the meaning of the <i>Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995</i>), landforms of significance (for example, caves of scientific significance), including geological features and processes. • The Act outlines cultural heritage, in relation to land, to include the following: places, objects and features of cultural value in the landscape, including (but not limited to) places, objects and features of significance to Aboriginal people. 	The Nature Conservation Trust is interested in the following types of natural heritage: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Properties with an unusually high species richness, vegetation diversity or that support examples of regional vegetation communities in good condition. • Vegetation communities and ecosystems that are poorly represented at a sub-regional level in existing public reserves, or that have a high national, state or regional conservation priority, and that are in good condition and likely to benefit from covenanting and management. • Habitats or populations of State and Commonwealth listed threatened species that are viable and likely to benefit from covenanting and management. • Vegetation communities and habitats that contribute to maintenance of essential ecosystem processes such as the provision of corridors and links, communal roosting and nesting sites, migratory bird habitat, or that play a significant role in reducing soil erosion and air and water pollution. 	Yes, and on future landowners	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of protection. • Successful applications will result in a Conservation Agreement registered on the property at no cost to the landholder. • The Nature Conservation Trust provides on-going support, guidance and management advice to the landholder, including periodic visits to observe the condition of the land. • A management plan is prepared for the property by the Nature Conservation Trust in conjunction with the landowner, and is reviewed periodically, to provide the landowner guidance for ensuring the conditions are met. • The Nature Conservation Trust can help source advice on most aspects of land management and is also able to direct landowners to various grants and agencies which offer financial subsidies and assistance for landowners to help protect the conservation area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited number of Conservation Agreements available so success is not guaranteed. 	http://nct.org.au/protecting-private-land/about-conservation-agreements.html , http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private

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BioBanking credit site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is a market-based scheme that provides a streamlined biodiversity assessment process for development, a rigorous and credible offsetting scheme as well as an opportunity for rural landowners to generate income by managing land for conservation. Provides a high level of legal protection for conservation. 	OEH	Landowners (individuals and entities such as corporations) who pass the 'fit and proper person test' (Clause 15 of the BioBanking Regulation).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most land in NSW Classes of land that are ineligible to become a BioBanking site are described under clause 11 of the BioBanking Regulation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Properties containing native vegetation or threatened species, populations, ecological communities or their habitats. Landowners who are committed to improving their site's biodiversity values and managing it for conservation in perpetuity. 	Yes, and on future landowners	Yes	<p>For landowners who establish a BioBanking site, they can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure funding for management actions to improve the site's biodiversity values into the future. Conserve the site's biodiversity values into the future. Retain the land in private management and ownership. Make a profit from the proceeds of selling biodiversity credits. Use the BioBanking site for other compatible purposes such as ecotourism activities or cultural uses. Be exempt from paying land tax on the proportion of the land designated as a BioBanking site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As BioBanking is an offsetting program rather than a conservation program, there is often no net gain for conservation overall because the biodiversity credit issued for the protection of the BioBanking site offsets development and environmental loss on another site. Complex to establish - the registration process is lengthy and costly. 	http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/biobanking http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private

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Conservation Property Vegetation Plan (PVP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A legally binding agreement between the property owner and the local Catchment Management Authority that describes how the native vegetation on the property is to be managed. • Made under the <i>Native Vegetation Act 2003</i>. • Used to restore degraded land or as a legal tool to protect land for conservation. • Makes it illegal to damage or clear the vegetation the landowner has agreed to protect under the PVP. • Removes the landowners option to seek approval for private native forestry activities in the area being protected and most exemptions under the <i>Native Vegetation Act 2003</i> will be foregone. • Provides a moderate level of legal protection for conservation, but a high level of legal protection for conservation if the PVP is requested to be in perpetuity. 	Catchment Management Authority (Sydney Metro CMA for north of Stanwell Park and Southern Rivers CMA for remainder of LGA)	Landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing native vegetation, e.g. rebuilding riparian vegetation, fencing off riparian or other sensitive habitats, planting to improve biodiversity and management of existing high value vegetation. 	<p>Landowners wanting to manage their property for conservation.</p> <p>Landowners seeking development of some part of their property may be required to enter into a PVP.</p>	Yes, and on future landowners. Runs with land for the duration of the plan.	Can be.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives landowners security to plan and invest. • PVPs can be very flexible; they can be for a fixed period of time or they can be in perpetuity. • Incentive funding is available, for example for rebuilding riparian vegetation, fencing off riparian or other sensitive habitats, planting to improve biodiversity and management of existing high value vegetation. • A PVP can also cover more than one property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not receive tax incentives. • Do not receive a local government rate reduction for an agreement in perpetuity. • If the works wanted to be undertaken do not align with the CMA's priorities highlighted in their Catchment Management Plans then they may not be able to fund the works. 	<p>http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private</p> <p>http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/vegetation/pvp.htm</p> <p>http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/vegetation/negotiatepvp.htm</p> <p>http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/vegetation/nvinfosheet3.pdf</p> <p>Vanessa Allen of Southern Rivers CMA (02) 4224 9705, email: vanessa.allen@cma.nsw.gov.au</p>

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Wildlife Refuge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal status given to land outside the national park estate by proclamation under section 68 of the <i>National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974</i>. • Wildlife refuges may contain remnant native vegetation as well as habitat provided by wildlife corridors, windbreaks, woodlots or farm dams. • Wildlife refuge declarations enable landowners to nominate part or all of a property where the land has native wildlife values and will be managed for this purpose. With whole property management, landowners can continue to include agricultural and other landuses with the conservation of wildlife. • Is voluntary. • Provides a moderate level of legal protection for conservation. 	OEH	Private landowners, public land managers and lessees of Crown land.	<p>The purposes of a wildlife refuge can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recovery of local wildlife species. • Restoration of natural environments. • The study of wildlife and natural environments. • Creating simulated natural environments. 	<p>People who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a variety of natural, modified or artificial habitats (e.g. woodlots, dams) which may include remnant native vegetation and who want to commit their land for the protection and conservation of wildlife and their habitats. 	Yes	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land is legally declared a wildlife refuge, although the landowner can change its status when required. • The status is noted on the land title and remains with a change of ownership. • Is free. <p>Benefits for landholder (as described on the OEH website):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property visit • Brief scheme of operations • Management advice • Property signage • Technical notes and 'Bush Matters' newsletter • Field days • Local networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be revoked at any time by either party. • No tax concessions. 	<p>http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cpp/ConservationPartners.htm http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cpp/WildlifeRefuges.htm http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/cpp/LandholderHandbookMay2010.pdf http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private</p> <p>Sally Ash (02) 9995 6768, email: sally.ash@environment.nsw.gov.au, Louise Brodie (02) 9995 6770, email: louise.brodie@environment.nsw.gov.au</p>

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Property registration with OEH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landowner registers property with OEH, to be managed for conservation. This is not legally binding, and does not change the property's legal status. Registration ceases when the property is sold. Two property registration schemes are available in New South Wales: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Land for Wildlife Conserve Wildlife Land for Wildlife operates on a regional level and is co-ordinated on a statewide basis by the Community Environment Network (CEN). In Conserve Wildlife, landowners register their properties with OEH by purchasing a 'Conserve Wildlife' sign. Provides no legal protection for conservation. 	OEH, Community Environment Network	Landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing wildlife habitat. Land for Wildlife is available to landowners who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> have properties with half a hectare or more of native bush land are willing to manage all or part of their property in an environmentally sustainable way. 	People who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> would like to conserve their property's special features, but don't want to sign a legal agreement. 	No	No	Benefits for landholder (as described on the OEH website): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property visit Management advice Property signage Technical notes and 'Bush Matters' newsletter Field days Local networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less protection for the land, and less support from OEH when compared with a Wildlife Refuge, or Conservation Agreement. 	http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cp/ConservationPartners.htm http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/cp/PropertyRegistration.htm http://www.cen.org.au/landforwildlife/ http://www.cen.org.au/images/stories/projects/land_for_wildlife/publications/lfw_brochure_092010.pdf http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private Contact for Land for Wildlife: John Asquith 0410 730 032, 4349 4759, email: lfvnsw@cen.org.au . Contacts for Conserve Wildlife: Sally Ash (02) 9995 6768, email: sally.ash@environment.nsw.gov.au , Louise Brodie (02) 9995 6770, email: louise.brodie@environment.nsw.gov.au

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Wildlife Land Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working under the guiding principle of “humane stewardship”, the Wildlife Land Trust protects not only large landscapes, but also the smaller places that provide for the needs of all wildlife. Landowners sign a non-binding ‘Letter of Agreement’ that outlines the mutually supportive and compatible missions, aims, and objectives of the owner and the Wildlife Land Trust for the protection of the property. The owners agree to maintain and protect the property as a wildlife sanctuary. In protecting the land as a wildlife sanctuary landowners must not allow the following activities to occur: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Hunting of any native animals; Commercial removal of timber products; The use of pesticides or herbicides except where they are used to eradicate invasive weeds; and Any other activity that is incompatible with the ongoing protection of wildlife and habitats on the property. The Wildlife Land Trust is designed not to conflict with any other existing or future conservation mechanisms. Is voluntary. No legal protection for conservation. 	Humane Society International	Private landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protection of properties that provide for the needs of all wildlife. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Wildlife Land Trust protects not only large landscapes, but also the smaller places that provide for the needs of all wildlife. Properties of any size, with or without any type of formal covenant or protection status are suitable for registration. Private landowners with a concern for wildlife and habitat protection. 	No	No	<p>Member benefits include (as described on the HSI website):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Becoming part of a continually growing national and international network of sanctuaries, promoting best conservation practices and protecting wildlife and habitats around the world. The facilitation of useful communication between sanctuary members, as well as HSI staff and experienced land managers and native wildlife rehabilitators. Help and advice regarding both the legal and ecological integrity of the property should it be required. The opportunity to talk about the invaluable work undertaken to protect important wildlife habitats through feature pages on our website and in our regular <i>Wildlife Lands</i> newsletter. Wildlife Land Trust signs to erect on the property. No costs or legal obligations involved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No incentive funding. No legal protection for the natural features of the land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> http://www.hsi.org.au/?catID=28 http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/publications.php#private