

Peri-urban Community Deer Grants

Note: These common questions will be updated regularly during the grant open period.

Q. What is the Deer Control Program?

A. The Peri-urban Community Deer Grants are part of the Victorian Government's Victorian Deer Control Strategy and contributes to Victoria's long-term plan to protect the natural environment, Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037.

The Victorian Deer Control Strategy (VDCS) was released in October 2020, with an initial \$1 million to implement actions in peri-urban Melbourne, and a subsequent budget allocation of \$18.25 million over four years and an additional \$4.4 million ongoing for the development and delivery of deer control across Victoria. This funding is delivering critical deer control measures in priority areas.

The Peri-urban Community Deer Grants support the implementation of the VDCS by reducing the impacts of deer on high priority values as set out in the Peri-urban Deer Control Plan released in March 2022. The program further enables the reduction of deer impacts through targeted control programs, exclusion fencing, monitoring and education.

All project actions should be strategic, collaborative, respond to the state-wide targets and area priorities, and will be informed by the decision-support tool Strategic Management Prospects (SMP) and the Peri-Urban Deer Control Plan.

Budget

Q. Do I need to contribute towards my projects budget?

A. No, applicants do not need to contribute direct funding to a project. However, an application that demonstrates in-kind contribution provides greater value for money. Contribution can be in various forms and include time, expertise, equipment, donated materials or funds. Funding and in-kind contributions can include a combination of:

- Volunteer time dedicated to the project costed at \$40 per hour (including project planning, organising and delivery).
- In-kind support e.g. photocopying, loan of equipment (at no cost), donation of materials.
- Staff time allocated to completing the project, where the salary comes from another source.
- Funding from other sources e.g. donations, philanthropic or other grants program.

Q. How do I calculate the value of our volunteer contribution?

A. Volunteer contributions (time) of activity is costed as \$40 per person per hour of in-kind contribution. You can calculate the dollar value for all voluntary activities for a project using the following:

Volunteer contribution = Number of volunteers x Hours worked per day x Number of days x \$40

- Example 35 volunteers who plant trees over two events of five hours each:

35 volunteers x 5 hours per day x 2 days x \$40 = \$14,000 in volunteer time contributions.

Eligibility Requirements

Q. What is public liability insurance?

A. Public liability insurance protects your business or organisation against claims resulting from accidents or injuries that occur as result of your activities, as well as accidental damage to property owned or controlled by someone else.

Q. Why would I need an auspicer (sponsor)?

A. If your local community group does not meet the eligibility criteria, you can partner with an organisation that does meet the requirements. If you are proposing a ground shooting program, you can partner with a local/state government agency.

An auspicating organisation can “sponsor” and manage the project. The auspicer will sign the contract, receive payment, oversee management of the project, and be responsible for reporting and acquittal of the project.

Q. What is the role of an auspicer?

A. An auspicer is accountable for the project on behalf of a local, volunteer or community group. This includes:

- Agreeing to and signing the funding agreement, receiving payment for project work and meeting reporting and project delivery requirements.
- Legal responsibility for volunteers working with them, including day to day support and health and safety.
- Covering all participants in the project including volunteers and have at least \$10 million in public liability insurance.

Q. Who can be an auspicer?

A. Potential auspicating organisations will vary, depending on project activities included and where works are planned. You should also consider the capacity of the sponsor organisation to provide assistance.

If the project does not include ground-based shooting, the following are potential auspicating organisations:

- Statutory authorities such as game, catchment or water management authorities
- Umbrella not for profit or incorporated associations. e.g. Landcare Victoria Inc.
- Local or state government agencies, such as local councils.
- Other volunteer-based community groups and networks.

If the project involves a ground-based shooting program, potential auspicers are restricted to:

- Local or state government agencies, usually the local council.
 - Note: The auspice organisation does not have to be the land manager that is delivering the adjoining public land control program.

Email enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au to find out whether there is a public land deer control program in your area.

An auspicer (sponsor) must:

- hold insurance to safeguard volunteers and participants involved in the funded activities, including public liability insurance of at least \$10million, and
- be either an incorporated association, a Government body or registered as a not-for-profit with ACNC
- agree to sign the contract with the department, receive the grant payment and to be responsible for project delivery and reporting, and
- agree to take responsibility for the management and safety of the group's volunteers and participants.

Eligible Criteria and activities

Q. Why are shooting programs only being considered where they are an extension of existing public land control programs?

A. The Peri-urban Deer Control Plan identified that buffers of private land, particularly open grazing areas, adjoining public land (state parks and forests etc), were more likely to experience deer impacts. As deer often congregate in the evenings to feed on open grazing land, control programs on these private properties, adjoining forested areas, can be more productive, and will benefit the biodiversity on the adjoining public land, whilst also reducing agricultural and social deer impacts on the private properties.

Landscape scale control programs operating over contiguous land areas have been found to be more effective than a patchwork of disconnected control activities, thus funding extensions to current works on public land will have greater benefits.

Note: Public land control programs refers to shooting programs located on public lands including state forests, state and national parks, land managed by water authorities, and local government reserves. It does not refer to private land programs being delivered by a public land manager. e.g. Where a Local Council delivering a program across private land.

Please email enviro.grants@delwp.vic.gov.au to find out where your local public land deer control programs are being delivered. We can advise your best local contact (e.g. Local Council) who may be able to auspice your project, where they have capacity.

Q. Why is payment or reimbursement to volunteer shooters not eligible?

A. We recognise the contributions of volunteer and recreational hunters to the managing of deer impacts on private and public land. Unfortunately, any payment to volunteers, or reimbursements for fuel, ammunition, time, meals etc are regarded as a commercial arrangement, meaning that the activity is no longer voluntary.

In order to guarantee that a volunteer controller/hunter is covered under their sporting club insurance, we need to ensure that they are seen to be a volunteer only. Alternatively, a controller must be a licenced professional (commercial) provider of pest animal services, with appropriate insurance cover that includes the use of firearms.

Q. How can I assist my volunteers then?

A. We fully support programs that include the use of volunteer controllers where this has been approved by the local District Firearms Officer (a requirement in peri-urban areas). Whilst we cannot directly pay the shooters, we can support administration of your program, such as payment to staff for project management, engagement of landholders, preparation of information sheets, or other items that are eligible.

Additionally we may be able to fund you to provide your volunteers – including shooters - with a BBQ lunch, or some tools and equipment that they need to be able to perform their work (e.g. thermal scopes, ammunition – purchasable only by those with a valid firearm licence), or even provide them with access to a training course. Please contact the grants team if you would like to discuss further options that you would like to consider.

Application form

Q. What are the application expectations?

A. Successful applications will:

- Clearly and logically explain what outcomes (i.e. the changes), the project will deliver and how the proposed activities are the best means to achieve this
- Outline a strong governance structure for delivery of the project, including key partners, contractors, and interest groups who are integral to the delivery of the project
- Consider the specific risks to the successful delivery of the project, and describe how you intend to manage and/or mitigate these
- Demonstrate best practice for the project's delivery
- Clearly demonstrate public benefit (if working on private land)

Q. Where can I apply for the grants?

A. All applications must be submitted online via the DELWP Grants Online Portal as per link from the [DELWP Peri-urban Community Deer Grants webpage](#). No hard copy options are available to apply.

Q. Can I apply outside of the listed application open and close dates?

A. No, the online DELWP grants online system used to submit applications does not accept late applications.

Q. How many applications can I submit?

A. Groups may submit more than one application but must demonstrate that the projects are distinctly separate and occur on different sites.

Projects must be 'stand-alone' in that they can be delivered separately from other projects or activities that are already funded by other programs.

Q. Can I change my application after I've submitted it?

A. Generally, no. You will not be able to change or update your application after submission.

If you find any errors after submission while the program is still open for application, you can copy and paste information to a new application and with any changes you want to make and submit a new application prior to the closing date. Please email to grantsinfo@delwp.vic.gov.au to request the deletion of the application not required, by including the grant application number and date of submission as part of the Subject for the email.

No changes can be made or will be accepted after the closing date.

Q. I'm having trouble with the DELWP Grants Online Portal - where do I go for help?

A. If you require assistance submitting your application online contact the Grants Information Line on 1300 366 356 or grantinfo@delwp.vic.gov.au.

Q. Are there any tips for applying?

A. Yes!

- Start early to give yourself enough time to read the guidelines carefully, get help if needed, check and submit your application on time.
- Refer to the *DELWP Grants Online Information Sheet for Community Users* link provided on the [web page](#).
- Use **Google Chrome** rather than Internet Explorer which doesn't perform as well.
- *Mandatory fields are marked with an **Asterisk***. The online form won't let you continue unless these questions are answered.
- Use the navigation bar to get to the page you want or use the **Next Page** or **Previous Page** buttons (not the browser backwards/forwards arrows).
- You will be asked to enter your account. If you don't have one, click on the **Create an Account** button.
- Keep a record of your username (email) and password for future reference. Try to choose an email that will not change in the future because over time your account will record your grant history.
- To return to a saved draft application, click on the '**Access Saved Application**' button.
- You will receive an **application number** (APPL-XXXXX) when you submit an application online. **Please quote this number in all communications** with the department relating to your application noting that this number will change if you are successful in obtaining a grant.

Q. Can we discuss our application with the assessment panel (before or after we submit)?

A. No. The assessment panel will not discuss projects or applications with individual applicants.

During the project

Q. What if I need to change/vary my project after commencing?

A. Changes to the following controls (timing, scope (including activities), budget, risks) will require notification to and approval from the Deer Control Program Team.

Activity requirements

Where applicable, you must adhere to these guidelines for all relevant activities:	
Capital Items	<p>Capital items and equipment are those that have a usable lifespan beyond one year and therefore would need to be maintained on an asset register by an organisation to be depreciated over several accounting periods. This includes items such as for example tree planters and photographic, video and motion sensor cameras.</p> <p>All capital items or equipment should be registered as an asset with your organisation.</p> <p>Please ensure that where possible, assets are hired or borrowed and shared between organisations/groups rather than purchased for one-off projects.</p>
Contractors	<p>You must ensure that any contractors have current and adequate insurance, licences, permits and approvals for all works before commencing. Contractors must have insurance that is appropriate for the risk and scale of the works to be conducted. Contractors are</p>

Common questions

		required to meet hygiene standards to prevent the spread of weeds, pathogens, and diseases.
Cross tenure work		If any of your project activities will be carried out across different land tenures, you must receive written approval from the appropriate land manager/s to undertake your activity on their land.
Data		<p>On-ground species observations must be recorded in the Victorian Biodiversity Atlas.</p> <p>Information about how to enter data into the VBA can be obtained from the department's website: https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/biodiversity/victorian-biodiversity-atlas/about-the-vba or contact vba.help@delwp.vic.gov.au if you require further assistance.</p> <p>Activities delivered by projects must be reported spatially (mapped) and meet DELWP Biodiversity 2037 Activity data requirements.</p> <p>Data must be submitted at the completion of the project (annually) in one of the following ways:</p> <p>GIS Shapefile, Biodiversity Division will supply the template. Parks Victoria activities must be initially entered into the Environment Information System.</p>
Fencing to exclude grazing and for monitoring		<p>Regular checking of fencing should be undertaken to ensure fence is well maintained to exclude grazing. Gate(s) may be required to be installed.</p> <p>Note that barbed wire is prohibited. Funding cannot be used for its purchase or use.</p> <p>Ensure you have any necessary local government Planning Approvals for fencing.</p>
Humane & legal pest animal control	General	<p>In relation to specific pest control activities, please consult with the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) (https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/animal-welfare-victoria/pocta-act-1986/humane-vertebrate-pest-control/) to ensure that all legal and animal welfare requirements are met. Additional guidance can be found in the DELWP Output Delivery Standards.</p> <p>Refer also to Legal Roles and Responsibilities for Managing Invasive Species: https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/protecting-victoria/legislation-policy-and-permits/legal-responsibilities-for-managing-invasive-species</p> <p>Where pest management activities are to be conducted on public land, you must apply the relevant Codes of Practice (COPs) and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).</p>
	Trapping	Trapping is not an eligible activity under this DCP funding.
	Baiting	Baiting is not an eligible activity under this DCP funding.
	Aerial shooting	Aerial shooting is not an eligible activity under this DCP funding.
	Ground shooting	<p>Shooting must be conducted in accordance with all Acts, regulations or other instruments, including requirements under the <i>Firearms Act 1996</i> and any codes of practice or standard operating procedures. All shooters must hold appropriate Victorian firearms licences issued by Victoria Police.</p> <p>Where professional contractors are engaged to deliver ground shooting activities, they must hold appropriate public liability insurance. Shooting must only be conducted with the explicit written permission of the land manager. Projects which intend to use shooting as a control method must develop an operational plan approved by their organisation prior to starting the activity. The plan must include actions for:</p> <p>a job safety assessment or equivalent risk management assessment developed for all activities involving shooting controls to be put in place to address risks or hazards</p>

	<p>associated with any activities involving shooting documented understanding of legal requirements in relation to applicable laws securing all licence requirements, approvals and authorisations, etc. delivery in accordance with all conditions.</p> <p>A tactical plan must be prepared for each ground shooting operation to address site and time specific operational issues prior to starting the activity.</p> <p>Public land managed by Parks Victoria – before undertaking any activities involving shooting of pest animals you must first obtain explicit written approval from Parks Victoria. All the requirements of Parks Victoria must be adhered to.</p> <p>Accredited volunteer shooters can be used on public land managed by Parks Victoria, ensuring that project activities are carried out in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Parks Victoria, the Sporting Shooters’ Association of Australia (SSAA) and the Australian Deer Association (ADA). All accreditations and approvals to use accredited volunteer shooters on public land managed by Parks Victoria must be approved and documented before commencement.</p> <p>All shooters must be authorised under Section 37 of the <i>National Parks Act</i> to use, carry or possess a firearm on land scheduled under the <i>National Parks Act 1975</i>.</p> <p>Public land not managed by Parks Victoria - accredited volunteer shooters can only be used for this grant program where an MOU is developed between the land manager and the SSAA and/or ADA before the activity commences. The MOU must include training and accreditation requirements and be of equivalent standard to the Parks Victoria MOU.</p> <p>You must obtain the explicit written consent of all land manager/s prior to starting the activity.</p> <p>An Authority to Control Wildlife permit is no longer required to control deer on public land. This includes Hog Deer, but only where they are on land managed under the <i>National Parks Act</i> (since 19 October 2022). Hog deer control on other public land (and private land) continues to require an Authority to Control Wildlife.</p> <p>Private land - any grant-funded activities involving shooting of pest animals must only be conducted by professional pest control operators. Volunteer shooters must not be used on private land under this grant program.</p> <p>Explicit written consent of all property owner/s must be obtained prior to starting any activity on private land – i.e. signed letter of agreement or Authorisation Form for Landowners (Governor in Council Order).</p> <p>Refer to the Code of Practice for the Welfare of Animals in Hunting: (https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestock-and-animals/animal-welfare-victoria/pocta-act-1986/victorian-codes-of-practice-for-animal-welfare/code-of-practice-for-the-welfare-of-animals-in-hunting-revision-no-1).</p>
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Common questions

	<p>Deer management</p>	<p>The control of deer must be conducted in accordance with all the requirements of the <i>Wildlife Act 1975</i>. If deer control will be conducted on Crown Land (including Council-owned reserves), an Authority to Control Wildlife under the <i>Wildlife Act</i> must first be obtained by the land manager/contractor. ATCW's cannot be issued by Office of the Conservation Regulator (OCR) for DELWP projects unless the applicant is the contractor, or it is issued by the GMA. (It is intended to remove the requirement for an ATCW, however at this time the requirement is still in place.)</p> <p>See the following link for more information on how to apply, or contact your local DELWP office: https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/managing-wildlife/wildlife-management-and-control-authorisations.</p> <p>The shooting of deer (and pest animals) also requires an appropriate firearms licence issued by Victoria Police and compliance with the <i>Firearms Act 1996</i> more broadly. Depending on the location, you may be required to obtain a 'Public Place Permit' from Victoria Police. For more information about firearm matters please visit https://www.police.vic.gov.au/firearms-licensing, call 1300 651 645 or contact your local Victoria Police station.</p>
	<p>Feral cat control</p>	<p>Feral cat control is not an eligible activity under DCP funding.</p>
	<p>Wild dog control</p>	<p>Wild dog control is not an eligible activity under DCP funding.</p>
<p>Occupational Health and Safety</p>	<p>You must ensure Occupational Health and Safety requirements are met, including undertaking a safety analysis before work commences. You must also ensure that there is appropriate supervision and training of volunteers and contractors, and safe equipment and protective gear is provided when working on site, including remote locations or roadsides or at night.</p>	
<p>Permit/consent - Marine and Coastal Crown Land</p>	<p>If any of your project activities will be carried out on Marine and Coastal Crown land you may require approval under the <i>Marine and Coastal Act 2018</i>.</p> <p>Before commencing any works, you must obtain approval to use or develop marine and coastal Crown land. You must comply with the conditions of any consent provided.</p> <p>For more information contact DELWP general enquiries on 136 186 or contact your local DELWP office.</p>	
<p>Permit - Research / Survey Assessment and monitoring of wildlife and plants</p>	<p>For some projects a permit or authorisation may be required under the <i>Wildlife Act 1975</i>, <i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988</i> (FFG Act) or the <i>National Parks Act 1975</i>.</p> <p>For projects that involve the capture, collection or interference with wildlife, including fauna surveys; live-capture and release; bird or bat banding (ABBBS), marking; radio tracking; taking of tissue samples; call playback, baited remote sensing cameras, retaining wildlife for education; collection of dead specimens (bones, skin, feathers, teeth, etc.); or any other handling of wildlife, and collection of listed terrestrial invertebrates under the <i>FFG Act</i> you may require an authorisation or permit under the <i>Wildlife Act 1975</i>.</p> <p>For projects that involve native vegetation surveys, any taking of protected flora, direct (picking) or indirect (trampling) including collection of herbarium specimens; collection of vegetation samples; collection of seed or propagation material and research in protected communities, taking or surveying of protected fish, collection / taking of any <i>FFG Act</i> listed aquatic invertebrates you may require an authorisation or permit under the <i>FFG Act 1988</i>.</p> <p>You may require a permit issued under section 77 of the <i>Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994</i> for projects relating to pest animals.</p> <p>An authorisation or research permit is required for all research conducted on Parks Victoria managed land.</p>	

Common questions

	<p>Applications forms and further information can be found at: https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/wildlife-research-tourism-and-cinema/flora-and-fauna-research-permits.</p> <p>For further information regarding relevant permits under the <i>Wildlife Act 1975</i>, <i>FFG Act 1988</i>, and the <i>National Parks Act 1975</i>, please contact the DELWP Environmental Research Coordinator environmental.research@delwp.vic.gov.au regarding requirements and timelines.</p> <p>Permit approvals must be in place before on-ground project activities commence.</p>
<p>Permit – Removal of native vegetation as part of conservation work, which may include where it is having a detrimental impact</p>	<p>Under Clause 52.17 of the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>, exemption is required for conservation work where native vegetation is removed (such as Sweet Pittosporum). Access to this exemption requires prior written permission to be given. The exemption is:</p> <p>Conservation work</p> <p>Native vegetation that is to be removed, destroyed or lopped to the minimum extent necessary to enable the carrying out of conservation work:</p> <p>which provides an overall improvement for biodiversity; and with written agreement of the Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (as constituted under Part 2 of the <i>Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987</i>).</p> <p>This work may include removal of native vegetation which is having a detrimental impact to the local environment. This exemption came into effect in December 2017 when the Native Vegetation Regulations were amended. This exemption requires the Secretary's prior approval.</p> <p>Clause 52.17 which includes the conservation work exemption can be found at 52.17 NATIVE VEGETATION Victoria Planning Provisions Planning Scheme - Ordinance</p> <p>Additional information on the regulations including the exemptions can be found at https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation/native-vegetation</p> <p>Please contact nativevegetation.support@delwp.vic.gov.au to apply or request further information about accessing this exemption.</p>
<p>Permit – Waterways</p>	<p>You may require a Works on Waterways permit from the Catchment Management Authority or relevant Water Authority to undertake work along a designated waterway including weed spraying, planting, in-stream and other survey activities. For some projects, a licence, permit or authorisation may be required under the <i>Fisheries Act 1995</i>.</p> <p>For further information contact Victorian Fisheries Authority general enquiries 136 186, or online https://vfa.vic.gov.au/about/contact-us</p>
<p>Vehicle/ machinery/ equipment and weed hygiene</p>	<p>Please ensure that you obtain advice and ensure current and appropriate safety and hygiene standards are applied for all activities regarding weed hygiene and equipment clean down requirements. (https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds/weed-warning-after-drought-fire-and-flood; http://serratedtussock.com/management/reducing-spread)</p>