

**Mid Lachlan Landcare** supports district farming practice through its participation in the **Box Gum Grassy Woodland Habitat on Farms Project**, inviting farmers with an interest in natural capital (native vegetation and wildlife) to get involved. Natural capital on farms is becoming more valued as it increasingly disappears from the Australian farming landscape. **Some Grassy Box Woodlands in NSW are now classified as critically endangered** and it's vital that what remains is protected and given the opportunity to expand.



## Case Study A Box Gum Grassy Woodland Habitat on Farms Project



Canowindra Farmers, Bronwen Newman and Andrew Naylor run 2000 head of Merino sheep on their 688ha property characterised by shale soils. Land along their ridgeline has been fenced out into a 4ha *Box gum Grassy Woodland Habitat on Farms Project*. This area, now free from sheep camps and stock, contributes to their ever-increasing mosaic of shady native green vegetation across their once heavily grazed, eroded and characteristically dry farm.

### The issues

When Bronwen and Andrew initially took over the management of their property at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it lacked adequate shade and shelter and had a history of cleared timber with paddocks being heavily stocked. The water hydrology was poor with large paddocks suffering significant soil loss from bare soil being exposed to wind and water and ever-increasing erosion taking place along the creek line.



## The solutions

Planting scattered paddock trees has created connectivity across the farm to benefit wildlife as well as create more shade and wind protection. Two hundred hectares have been fenced out under the Biodiversity Conservation Trust. Fencing out sensitive and degraded areas along the creek line was the first program Bronwen and Andrew undertook. Several projects have followed, leading to an ever-increasing mosaic of shady native green vegetation and rich biodiversity, cohabitating with their continually growing sheep numbers. Their participation in the Box Gum Grassy Woodland Habitat on Farms Project is their most recent ecological project.

‘We have used this project as a tool to greening our property, says Bronwen. ‘It has contributed to our ongoing goals of reducing paddock sizes, adding more shelter and shade belts for stock, slowing water runoff, reducing erosion, improving moisture retention in the soil, and improving biodiversity. These environmental projects have helped us to **improve and expand our sheep farming enterprise**, and we feel a constant sense of joy and achievement.’



### Key facts about the BGGW Project

- **Landholders funded to fence out 4ha of grassy box woodland.**
- **Goal is for natural capital to expand.**
- **Area provides habitat for beneficial species.**
- **Fence line creates a shade and shelter belt.**
- **Fence line has contributed to the creation of smaller paddock sizes.**
- **Project area requires ongoing management and maintenance such as weed and pest control.**

*‘Being involved in a string of ecological activities including the Box Gum Grassy Woodland Project has introduced us to new ideas about landscape management. These combined activities have helped improve our stocking rate and our soil erosion problems. We have benefited environmentally, financially, and emotionally. It feels good to work with nature, helping endangered native species like the glossy black cockatoos that regularly visit our property.’*

*- Bron Newman*



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