



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. Am I eligible to participate in the Habitat Links program?

The program is aimed at private landholders:

- with priority or significant conservation value bushland, wetlands and watercourses on their property or where a link can be created between these areas.
- whose properties are zoned as Special Residential, Rural Living or Special Rural (under the City of Armadale's Town Planning Scheme)

### 2. How do I register to participate?

You can fill in an [Expression of Interest](#) to join the Habitat Links program or email [habitatlinks@armadale.wa.gov.au](mailto:habitatlinks@armadale.wa.gov.au) if you would like more information.

### 3. What will I receive by participating?

Planning and implementing revegetation projects and habitat creation projects takes some preparation and knowledge to achieve success.

The City of Armadale will provide you with:

- a) a site assessment to discuss:
  - your aspirations for the property with regards to revegetation, native fauna habitat creation and enhancement
  - the native flora and fauna on your property
  - potential weeds and other issues e.g., fire, dieback;
- b) native seedlings in early winter that are most likely to establish in your soil and landscape conditions;
- c) ongoing technical advice around planting, weed control, feral animal control and other environmental management strategies.

## **4. How do I keep my seedlings alive?**

Native seedlings are well adapted and grown in specialised nurseries specifically for the soil and climate conditions that occur naturally on your property. By selecting the right species, planting the species correctly while the soils are wet (generally late autumn or winter) and watering a couple of times a week over the first couple of summers you should find you have a fairly high success rate.

## **5. How do I protect my seedlings from being eaten?**

You will need to ensure that herbivorous livestock and pets such as sheep, cattle and horses are kept away from your project site by fencing them out. Protecting seedlings from kangaroo and rabbit predation can be challenging. If this is an issue on your property, you can have success by protecting your seedlings with tree guards or planting species that aren't as attractive to herbivores.

## **6. Can I remove vegetation from my private property?**

Clearing native vegetation is an offence, unless done in accordance with a clearing permit or an exemption applies under the *Environmental Protection Act* 1986. Under this legislation, clearing is not generally permitted where the biodiversity values, land conservation and water protection roles of native vegetation would be adversely impacted. Contact the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation to check if a clearing permit is required.

The City of Armadale's Town Planning Scheme 4 protects native vegetation on private property and the clearing of vegetation may need the Development Approval of the City of Armadale. It is recommended you contact the City of Armadale's Environment department before removing any native vegetation on your property in case approval is required under the City of Armadale's Town Planning Scheme No. 4.

## **7. Who is responsible for weed control in a bushland, wetland or river reserve?**

Natural areas not under private ownership may be vested in one of a number of government agencies who have responsibility for managing the land. Some reserves within the City of Armadale are managed by the City directly, others are managed by agencies such as the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions or the Western Australian Planning Commission. Contact the City of Armadale if you need help finding out who manages a particular reserve.

## 8. Do I need permission to clear or cut down vegetation on my property?

There are restrictions on clearing native vegetation in a number of different land zonings under [Town Planning Scheme 4](#). You should contact the City of Armadale Planning Department for specific advice relevant to your zone.

There is also a requirement for a permit to clear native vegetation under the [Environmental Protection \(Clearing of Native Vegetation\) Regulations 2004](#). The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation can provide further advice with regards to your property.

Further restrictions on clearing native vegetation can apply under the Environmental Protection Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

## 9. What can I do to limit the effects of Phytophthora Dieback?

Phytophthora Dieback refers to the introduced plant pathogen *Phytophthora cinnamomi* which is causing devastating impacts in our native forests. It attacks a range of native and introduced plant species causing damage to the roots which often leads to the death of the infected plant unless treatment is applied. It is spread by surface and ground-water movement as well as the direct movement of contaminated soil on vehicle tyres, footwear, earthmoving or the feet of animals.

For more information around managing Phytophthora Dieback visit the Dieback Working Group Inc website - <https://www.dwg.org.au/>.

You can treat infected trees by injecting or foliar spraying leaves with a chemical called phosphite. Kits can be hired from the Roleystone Hardware store or you can contact the [Roleybushcare](#) group to learn how to use the injection equipment and borrow equipment to treat trees on your property.

## 10. Do I need to consider Bushfire Risk when undertaking a Habitat Links project?

All projects undertaken as part of the Habitat Links program need to comply with all relevant bushfire risk management legislation and regulations, including the maintenance of [fire-breaks](#) on your property and asset protection zones around your house or other building infrastructure.

Ensuring compliance with bushfire legislation and regulations is the responsibility of the landowner. For more information visit the City of Armadale's [Fire and emergency management](#) page.

[The Department of Fire and Emergency Services](#) also provides lots of great advice around bushfire safety including a document on [Firewise Gardening in Western Australia](#) produced by the Bushfire Centre for Excellence.

## **Watercourses**

### **11. Who owns the watercourse on private properties?**

All watercourses, including those entirely on private property, are invested in the Crown or Local Government Authority. This is covered under section 5A of the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914.

### **12. Do I need permission to work on a watercourse that flows through my property?**

Weed management and planting native seedlings along a watercourse does not require formal permission if it is on your property and will not physically change the flow of water or affect existing native vegetation.

If you intend to remove, damage or alter existing native vegetation you will need to seek permission, contact the City of Armadale.

For any actions that may cause watercourse disturbance or any other works near a watercourse, you will require permission from the City of Armadale or other relevant government management authority for example, [Department of Water and Environmental Regulation](#). Contact the City of Armadale to discuss any works on or around a watercourse you may want to undertake.

### **13. What rights does a Riparian landowner have regarding pumping from a watercourse?**

Pumping water from a watercourse not only reduces the flow and availability of water for wildlife, groundwater replenishment and other environmental needs, it also affects how much water is available to properties downstream.

In a proclaimed area, a riparian landowner can pump water from a watercourse in accordance with their license. The Canning River channel and Stinton Creek is a proclaimed area under the Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914. It is illegal to take water from a proclaimed watercourse or groundwater aquifer without a license.

In an unproclaimed area, a riparian landowner may be able to pump water without a license so long as the flow is not "sensibly" diminished, affecting the rights of downstream users. The City recommends that you contact the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's water licensing branch on 1800 508 885 prior to taking water from any watercourse.

## **14. Can I construct a dam on my property?**

The construction of a dam on your property will likely affect water flows into surrounding properties and reserves as well as groundwater replenishment and therefore requires Development Approval from the City of Armadale, along with other potential approvals from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation.

Contact the City of Armadale for more information.