



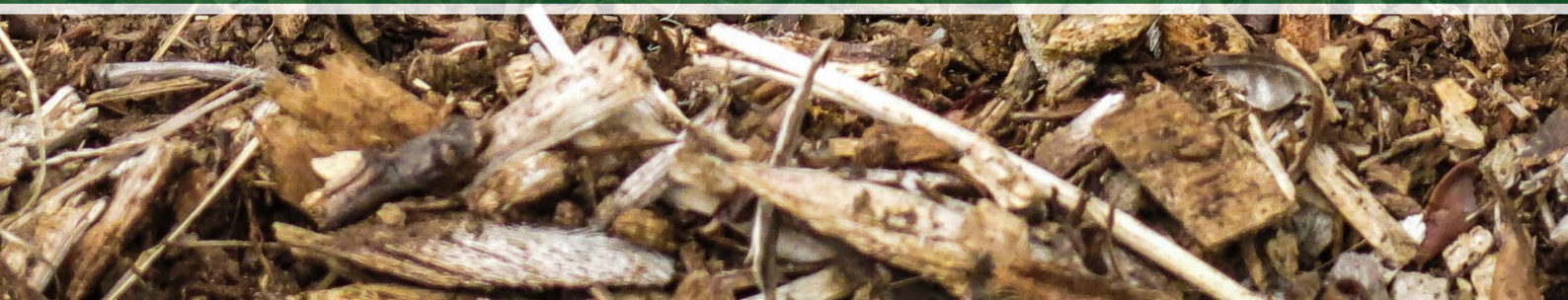
Natural
Resources
Commission



FINAL REPORT

LANDCARE BASELINE STUDY

February 2017



Enquiries

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List of acronyms

CSO	Community Support Officer
FTE	Full time equivalent
JMC	Joint Management Committee
LLS	Local Land Services
NRM	Natural resource management
OEH	Office of Environment and Heritage
RLF	Regional Landcare Facilitator

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1. Executive summary

The Natural Resources Commission (the Commission) conducted this baseline study to determine Local Land Services' (LLS) expenditure on Landcare and community groups in 2014-15.

This study forms part of the monitoring and evaluation component of the Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative, a NSW Government program delivering \$15 million in funding over four years to build the capacity of local Landcare groups. Government intended that this program would deliver additional funding to Landcare and community groups, and would not displace any support that is currently provided to these organisations through LLS.

The Commission's baseline will:

- allow changes in the amount of LLS expenditure to be assessed over the four year program
- provide assurance that this new funding does not replace existing LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups
- improve clarity around how LLS supports Landcare and community groups.

The Commission found that the 11 LLS regions spent in total approximately \$17 million supporting Landcare and other community groups in 2014-15. Expenditure varied across LLS regions, ranging between \$0.3 million (3 percent of total revenue) and \$3.8 million (39 percent of total revenue).

Approximately 84 percent of support for Landcare and other community groups was provided as grants and over 15 percent provided as funding for dedicated support staff, mostly Regional Landcare Facilitators and Community Support Officers. Some alternative forms of financial support were also identified, although these accounted for less than 0.5 percent of the total expenditure on groups.

Seventy percent of LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups was paid for using revenue received from the Australian Government, including funding received under the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and other Australian government funding programs. A further 28 percent of expenditure was paid for using revenue from the NSW Government's Catchment Action NSW. The remaining 2 percent was paid for using NSW Treasury funding and other funding sources.

In addition to the \$17 million in direct expenditure on Landcare and community groups, LLS regions also funded other support staff that had some role in working with these groups. Expenditure on these staff positions was approximately \$5.2 million. However, capturing this data was a subjective exercise and caution is needed when comparing this expenditure between LLS regions and when assessing future changes in this expenditure against the baseline year. For this reason, expenditure on other support staff has been excluded from the state-wide baseline data (**Chapter 3**). However, this data has been included in each region's individual baseline in order to indicate the value of this support provided by LLS to Landcare and community groups (**Chapters 4 to 14**).

The LLS and Landcare NSW Joint Management Committee (JMC) response to this report is at **Attachment 1**. In summary, the JMC will use this report as an input for building collaborative partnerships with Landcare and other community groups.

2. Introduction

2.1. 2015-19 NSW Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative

The 2015-2019 Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative is a NSW Government program that aims to help local Landcare and other community-based groups build their capacity in on-ground environmental and sustainable agriculture projects (Natural Resources Commission, 2015a).

The program is delivering \$15 million in new funding over four years, with the majority of funds going to community-based local coordinator positions (Natural Resources Commission, 2015a). A centralised state-wide support team is also being funded to provide information, training and communication (Local Land Services, 2015b; Natural Resources Commission, 2015a).

The local coordinators are responsible for working with Landcare groups, networks and other community groups to deliver programs, provide guidance and build capacity to deliver on-ground projects (Local Land Services, 2015b; Local Land Services, 2015c). The program is funding approximately 60 of these positions (part time), which are contracted to host organisations for up to 3.5 years between January 2016 and June 2019 (Local Land Services, 2015c; Natural Resources Commission, 2015a).

The program is being delivered collaboratively by Local Land Services (LLS) and Landcare NSW, and is managed by the Joint Management Committee (JMC). The JMC is co-chaired by the Chair of the LLS Board of Chairs (currently delegated to the LLS Director of Executive Projects) and the Chair of Landcare NSW. The JMC reports to the Minister for Primary Industries (Local Land Services, 2015b).

2.2. The Commission's Landcare baseline study

2.2.1. Background and purpose

The Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative was collaboratively developed by the Natural Resources Commission (the Commission) with input from LLS, Landcare NSW and other NSW Government agencies through a roundtable process (Natural Resources Commission, 2015a). This process was facilitated by the Commission at the request of the Minister for Primary Industries (Natural Resources Commission, 2015a).

The program was designed to include a monitoring and evaluation component to ensure accountability to the government and the community (Local Land Services, 2015b). For the first stage of this process, the Commission was appointed to establish a baseline of LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups, and to report its findings to the JMC.

This baseline will allow changes in LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups to be assessed over the duration of the Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative. As the \$15 million in program funding is a one-off NSW Government funding commitment and is additional to expenditure already provided to Landcare through LLS (Local Land Services, 2015b), establishing a baseline will provide assurance that this funding does not replace existing expenditure from LLS.

Further, this baseline study provides an opportunity to improve the Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative outcomes by strengthening relationships between LLS and Landcare NSW, particularly by clarifying how LLS supports Landcare and other community groups.

Finally, this study could also be used to identify regional success stories, to share ideas across the state, and to identify new opportunities to support Landcare and other groups.

2.2.2. Scope

The Commission's baseline study focused on establishing the amount of LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups in 2014-15. Expenditure data was collected from each LLS region, and analysed at the regional and state scales. This data was analysed by Grant Thornton Australia Limited on behalf of the Commission. A letter of attestation from Grant Thornton is provided at **Attachment 1**.

The Commission worked collaboratively with representatives from LLS and Landcare NSW to develop the project and define key terms, including: the baseline year; Landcare and other community groups; and types of LLS expenditure on these groups. These terms are defined as follows.

2.2.3. Key Terms

Box 1: The baseline year (2014-15)

The 2014-15 financial year was chosen as the baseline year because it was the year before the NSW Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative commenced. It was also LLS' first full financial year since it commenced operations in January 2014.

Box 2: Definition of 'Landcare and other community groups'

The Commission adopted the definition of 'Landcare and other community groups' from the Landcare NSW / LLS Partnership Memorandum of Understanding:

- *Landcare refers to any community based group operating in the sphere of sustainable agriculture and natural resource management in NSW and includes, but is not limited to, groups that describe themselves as Landcare, Bushcare, Coastcare, Dunecare, Friends of groups, Producer groups. (Landcare NSW & Local Land Services, 2016)*

In addition to the groups included in the above definition, the Commission also included the following groups in the baseline:

- *Local Aboriginal Land Councils; Aboriginal Corporations; schools; local councils; conservation groups; and private consultants which receive funding from LLS to support sustainable agriculture and natural resource management activities.*

While not all these organisational categories are strictly community groups, discussions with Landcare NSW representatives indicate that they can be an important conduit between LLS and these groups.

For example, some LLS grants to local councils are important for supporting Bushcare groups and other unincorporated community groups. Local councils use these funds to provide valuable support services, including administrative support, to these groups.

Other examples include schools that receive LLS grant funding to support student Landcare groups. Private consultants are also engaged by LLS to deliver training to Landcare groups, rather than funding the groups to arrange their own training provider.

Given the focus of the Local Landcare Coordinators Initiative on Landcare and other community-based groups, the baseline only captured groups with a formal legal structure operating in the sphere of sustainable agriculture and/or natural resource management. LLS expenditure on individuals was not included in the baseline.

Box 3: Definition of types of LLS 'expenditure' on Landcare and community groups

Four types of expenditure were included in the baseline:

1. **Grants** - grants provided by LLS to Landcare and other community groups.

Grant funding provides a strong indication of the level of financial support provided to groups, as well as the extent to which LLS partners with groups.

Grant funding can be measured in an objective and repeatable way and, as such, the same methodology can be applied in several years' time to determine if there have been changes in the level of LLS grant expenditure over the four year Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative.

Grants were categorised into two groups (Category A or B) depending on the recipient organisation (refer to **Section 2.2.4** for further details).

2. **Dedicated support staff** - staff positions funded by LLS that were fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups in the baseline year.

Dedicated support staff positions predominately include Regional Landcare Facilitators and Community Support Officers. Dedicated support staff that were either directly appointed by LLS or contracted to Landcare and community groups have been included in the baseline.

Like grants, costs associated with these staff can be measured in an objective and repeatable way, allowing equivalent data to be collected and compared to the baseline in the future.

3. **Other support staff** - staff positions funded by LLS that provide a support function to Landcare and community groups but also have other roles.

Many LLS staff have some level of involvement with Landcare and community groups. Each LLS region provided the costing data for these staff, adjusted for the estimated time spent working with Landcare and community groups. Capturing this data was a subjective exercise and it is therefore possible that different regions adopted slightly different approaches to these calculations. Caution is needed when comparing expenditure on 'other support staff' between the LLS regions and with future comparisons to this baseline. For this reason, 'other support staff' have been excluded from the state-wide baseline data (**Chapter 3**), but have been included in each region's individual baseline (**Chapters 4-14**). Expenditure on 'other support staff' also provides some insight into the costs of administering grants and partnering with Landcare and other community groups.

4. **Other support** - any LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups, which has not been captured in the grants section, including insurance, workshops and training.

Out of scope - the Commission acknowledges that LLS provides a wide range of additional means of support that can be important for groups. For example, Landcare NSW representatives noted that these include the quality of the narrative from LLS and Landcare groups on the strength of their partnerships, the role and composition of Community Advisory Groups, and the existence of Landcare support plans. However, these means of support have not been included in the baseline study due to the subjectivity associated with quantifying them and assigning a financial value.

2.2.4. Methodology

Provision of data

Each LLS region provided data for each category of expenditure included in the baseline (**Box 3**). They also provided data on revenue and the specific revenue streams used to pay for each category of expenditure provided to Landcare and community groups. Revenue streams included the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country, the NSW Government's Catchment Action NSW, and others. This data was collected so that the Commission can track if and how revenue streams change in the future, and adapt the baseline calculations accordingly.

Categorisation of grants

The Commission categorised LLS grant recipients in two groups: Category A and Category B (**Table 1**). Category A groups consist of those groups explicitly listed in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding's definition of Landcare and community groups (**Box 2; Table 1**). Category B groups include all other groups included in the baseline (**Box 2; Table 1**).

The categories have no bearing on the merit of the grantees or the projects funded. Rather, the split has been made as there is generally a clearer line of sight between Category A grantees and the funded community group(s) that ultimately benefit from the funding. Whereas for Category B grantees, there is often more interpretation required in determining how the grant funding benefits one or more community groups.

The Commission acknowledges that some grantees may fall in both Category A and B, and in these cases best judgment has been applied in categorising the grantees. The list of grants and their categorisation was reviewed and confirmed by state-level LLS and Landcare NSW representatives. Regional-level input into the categorisation of grants was not undertaken.

Table 1. Landcare and other community groups included in the baseline study

Category A groups	Category B groups
Landcare	Local Aboriginal Land Councils
Bushcare	Aboriginal Corporations
Coastcare	Schools*
Dunecare	Local councils*
Friends of groups	Conservation groups
Producer groups	Private consultants*
	Other*

* These organisations were included in the baseline for projects where they received grant funding from LLS to support community-based sustainable agriculture and natural resource management activities.

Geographical distribution

The Commission plotted the primary office location for each dedicated support staff member, as well as each Landcare and community grantee using regional LLS maps.

The primary office location (or best available equivalent) for each grantee was used, rather than the location where any on-ground work was performed. This approach was adopted because not all grants were used for on-ground works and some grants funded on-ground projects that were delivered in multiple locations. This approach also allows the location of each grantee to be seen in relation to the location of LLS offices and key staff. This may provide an indication of the areas where LLS has developed stronger relationships with Landcare and community groups, and those areas which could be targeted for further development.

2.2.5. Limitations

While this baseline will help ensure that the funding for the Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative builds on current LLS expenditure, some year-to-year fluctuations in expenditure should be expected. Future changes in the level of LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups may occur for a number of reasons, including:

- changes in revenue received by LLS
- changing priorities of LLS investors
- needs and priorities of regional communities, industries and landscapes favouring other activities and projects
- variation in the timing of receipt and spending of LLS funding.

Any future changes in LLS expenditure against the baseline will need to be analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively to establish the underlying drivers of change. This baseline provides a reference point to inform discussions about any future changes in the level of LLS expenditure on Landcare and other community groups, but should not be considered in isolation of external factors.

2.3. Presentation of results

The Commission has analysed the LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups and presented state-wide baseline data (**Chapter 3**) and data for each individual LLS region (**Chapters 4-14**).

The state-wide baseline data focuses on LLS expenditure on grants and dedicated support staff. The baseline data for each individual LLS region includes expenditure on grants and dedicated support staff, as well as expenditure on other support staff and alternative forms of financial support provided in 2014-15 (**Box 3, Section 2.2.3**).

The state-wide baseline includes a discussion of future considerations that could affect the baseline and future LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups (**Section 3.4**). This section is also relevant to the baseline data for each individual LLS region (**Chapters 4 to 14**) and should be considered alongside those chapters.

2.4. JMC response to the report

The Chairs of the JMC provided a written response to the Commission's Landcare baseline study. The response is presented in **Attachment 1**.

The JMC's response addresses the importance of the ongoing and collaborative partnership between LLS and Landcare NSW. It discusses the JMC's broad agenda for building this partnership and states that the Commission's report forms one part of its efforts in identifying best practice in partnership. The report will be used to guide future engagement between LLS, Landcare and community groups.

The JMC recognises that the report addresses financial investment by LLS in Landcare and community groups at a snapshot in time. However, it notes that a range of other considerations, including non-financial factors, also influence and drive the interactions between these parties.

3. State-wide baseline

This chapter presents the state-wide baseline data, which is the consolidated revenue and expenditure data for all 11 LLS regions.

3.1. Overview

Total revenue

In 2014-15, LLS revenue was \$165.4 million¹, which came from rates (\$31.9 million), NSW Treasury (\$32.4 million), grants and contributions provided by the Australian, NSW governments and other sources (\$80.9 million), and other revenue streams (\$20.2 million).

Total expenditure

Based on the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, the majority of revenue was spent on employee-related expenses, grants and subsidies, and other operating expenses (for example contractors, corporate services, maintenance and leases) (Local Land Services, 2015a).

Expenditure on Landcare and other community groups

LLS spent \$17.37 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$14.66 million (84 percent)
- dedicated support staff, \$2.63 million (over 15 percent)
- other support (such as equipment and workshops), \$0.07 million (less than 0.5 percent).

This expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 10.5 percent of total LLS revenue and 21 percent of revenue from grants and contributions². For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue. This is because most expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

Of the \$14.66 million spent on grants to Landcare and community groups, 63 percent was for on-ground projects, 11 percent was for network support and 11 percent was for capacity building projects. The remaining 15 percent was used for the development of resource materials, event information days, administration support and other purposes. Landcare groups and local councils received the largest portion of this grant funding, 31 percent and 30 percent, respectively.

Of the \$2.63 million spent on dedicated support staff, over 90 percent was for Regional Landcare Facilitators and Community Support Officers. Expenditure was fairly evenly split between the two positions types, with over 12 full time equivalent (FTE) Regional Landcare Facilitators and over 9 FTE Community Support Officers funded. About 60 percent of these positions were appointed directly by LLS, with the remainder being contracted to Landcare and Aboriginal groups.

1 Consolidated revenue data presented in this report has been calculated as the sum of all revenue data provided to the Commission by each LLS region. This revenue figure reconciles within 2 percent of LLS' total revenue reported in the LLS Annual Report 2014-15. The key difference is due to state-level revenues captured in the annual report but not recognised at the regional level. There were also some smaller differences due to internal revenue transfers between regions.

2 Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW and other funding programs (Figure 2). It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue. However, it is excluded from the grants and contributions category in the report because it was only used to pay a relatively small portion (1.7 percent) of the \$17.04 million in expenditure on Landcare and community groups.

LLS expenditure on other support was relatively low (\$0.07m) and was made by two of the 11 LLS regions, Greater Sydney LLS and Western LLS. This support is explored further in the regional baseline chapters (**Chapters 6 and 14**).

Regional expenditure on Landcare and other community groups

The level of LLS expenditure on grants and dedicated support staff varied across the 11 LLS regions (**Figure 1**). Grants to Landcare and community groups ranged from \$222,000 (Hunter LLS) to \$3.34 million (North Coast LLS). Funding for dedicated support staff ranged from about \$115,000 (Central West) to \$948,000 (South East)³.

Approximately 98 percent of this expenditure was paid for using grants and contributions revenue from the Australian and NSW governments. The National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW paid for 82 percent this expenditure. Rates were not used to pay for any of the expenditure for these grants or staff.

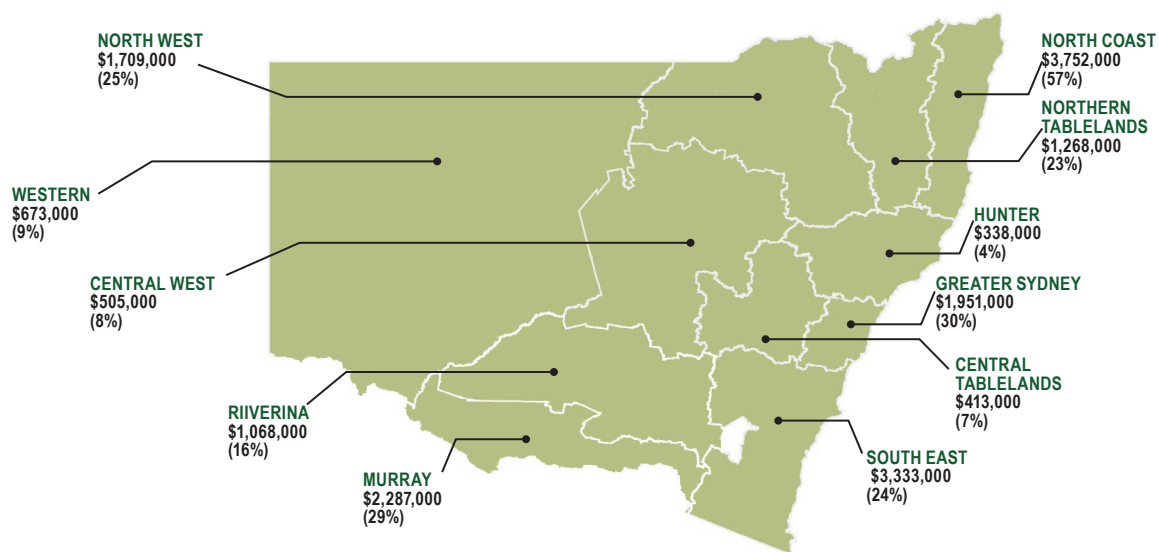


Figure 1. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups (grants and dedicated support staff), by LLS region (2014-15)

(% shows expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of revenue from grants and contributions)

3.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount and type⁴ of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 3.3**).

In 2014-15, the LLS regions received total revenues of \$165.41 million⁵. The main revenue sources included rates (\$31.87 million), NSW Treasury funding (\$32.43 million), and grants and contributions received from the National Landcare Programme (\$17.38 million), Caring for Our Country (\$16.23 million) and Catchment Action NSW (\$28.55 million) (**Figure 2**).

³ Some LLS regions provided additional funding for dedicated support staff as grants to Landcare and community groups. Refer to Section 3.3.2 for further details.

⁴ Not all LLS revenue sources (eg rates) are available for spending on Landcare and community groups

⁵ Total revenue presented in this report has been calculated as the sum of all revenue data provided to the Commission by each LLS region. The total revenue figure reconciles within 2 percent of LLS' total consolidated revenue reported in the 2014-15 annual report. The key difference is due to state-level revenues captured in the annual report but not recognised at the regional level.

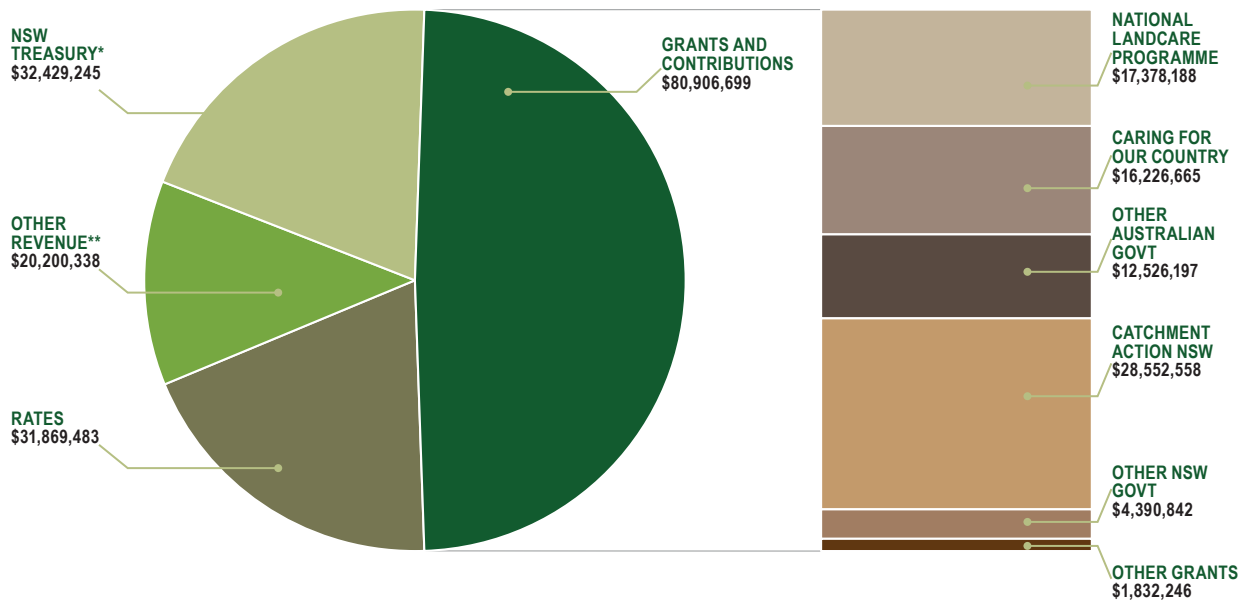


Figure 2. LLS total revenue, state-wide (2014-15)

* Revenue from NSW Treasury is reported as part of revenue from grants and contributions in the 2014-15 LLS Annual Report, but has been separated here as it was used to pay for just 1.7 percent of total expenditure on Landcare and community groups.

** Other revenue includes revenue from investments, levies, sale of goods and rendering of services.

Rates were not used to pay for any of the \$17.37 million in expenditure on Landcare and community groups, and are not discussed further in this chapter. Similarly, NSW Treasury funding only paid for a relatively small portion of this expenditure (1.7 percent) and is not discussed further.

Funding received under the National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country paid for approximately 55 percent of all expenditure on Landcare and community groups. Both are Australian Government programs, with Caring for Our Country being the precursor to the National Landcare Programme.

In 2014-15, LLS received Caring for Our Country funding from 1 July 2014 to mid-February 2015. National Landcare Programme funding was received from mid-February to 30 June 2015. Going forward, LLS will continue to receive funding under the National Landcare Programme, an Australian Government programme which aims to protect and improve natural assets through action at the local level (Australian Government, 2014b). The allocation of this funding across the 11 LLS regions is based on historical allocations for Catchment Management Authorities with adjustments for the new LLS regional boundaries.

Funding received under Catchment Action NSW paid for about 28 percent of all expenditure on Landcare and community groups. This is a NSW Government program which provides funding to LLS for regionally-delivered projects that address specific natural resource management priorities set by the Minister for Environment (Natural Resources Commission, 2015b). In 2014-15, the distribution of Catchment Action NSW funding across the 11 LLS regions was informed by a funding allocation model developed by the Commission (Natural Resources Commission, 2013).

Total revenue for individual regions ranged from \$10.7 million (Greater Sydney LLS) to \$25.6 million (South East LLS) (**Figure 3**). Australian government revenue contributions ranged from \$3.0 million (Central Tablelands LLS) to \$7.7 million (South East LLS), and NSW Government revenue contributions (excluding NSW Treasury funding) ranged from \$2.0 million (Northern Tablelands LLS) to \$5.7 million (South East LLS). This regional variation in revenue should be considered when comparing regional expenditure on Landcare and community groups. LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is discussed below.

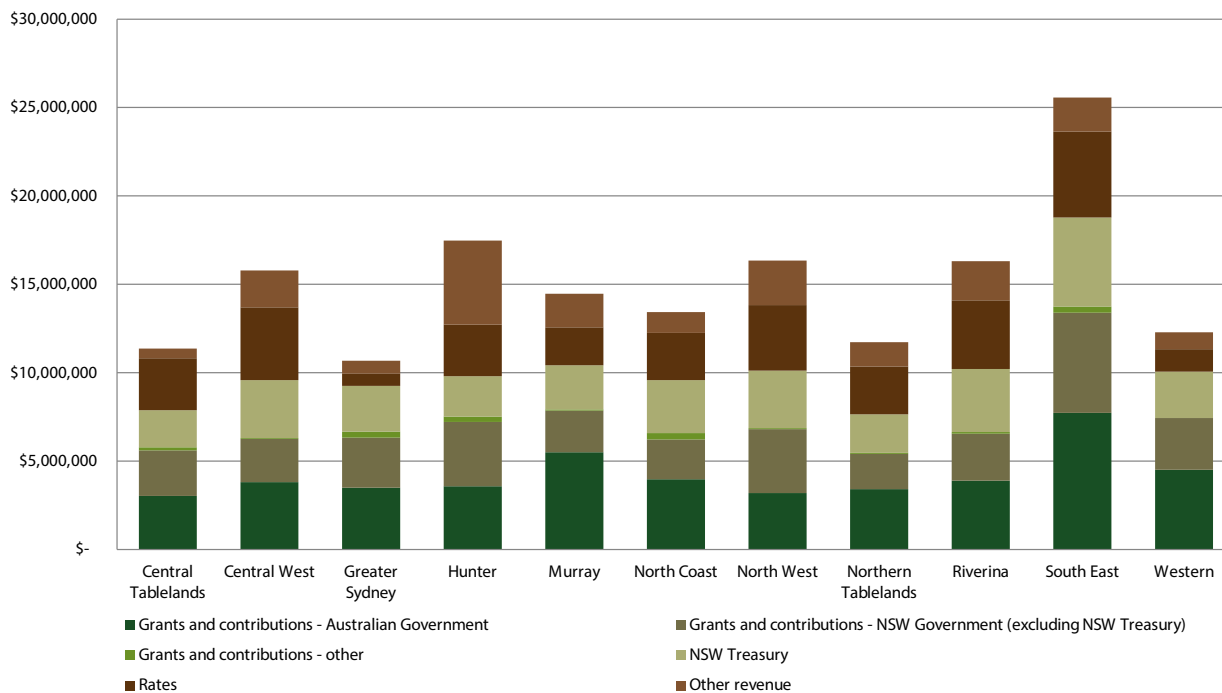


Figure 3. Total revenue by LLS region (2014-15)

3.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, LLS spent \$17.37 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 84 percent of this was provided as grants, over 15 percent as funding for dedicated support staff, and less than 0.5 percent funding as other support⁶ (Figure 4).

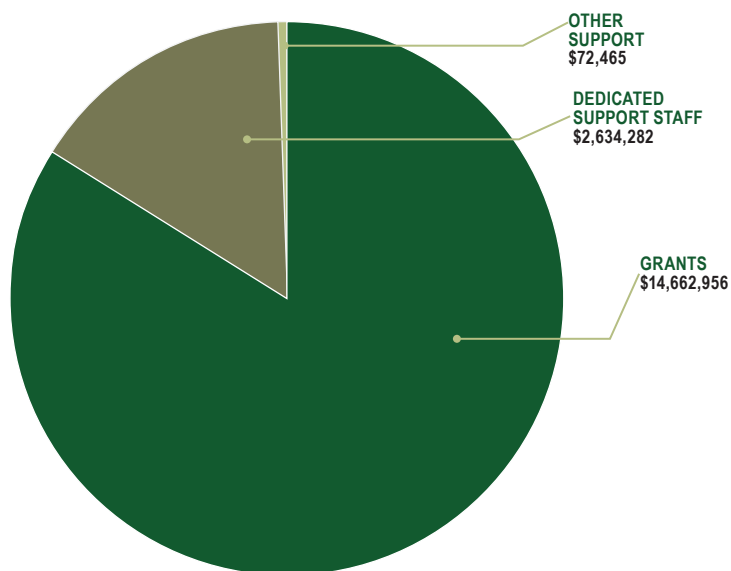


Figure 4. LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups, state-wide (2014-15)

⁶ Other support' represents a relatively small amount of total expenditure (\$0.07m) and was provided by only two LLS regions (Greater Sydney and Western). As such, 'other support' is not discussed further in this chapter, but is addressed in chapters on Greater Sydney (Chapter 6) and Western LLS (Chapter 14).

On average, each LLS region spent \$1.5 million on Landcare and community groups, with a range from \$0.34 million (Hunter LLS) to \$3.75 million (North Coast LLS) (Figure 5). Grants made up the largest portion of each region’s expenditure on Landcare and community groups, ranging from 66 percent (Hunter LLS) to 100 percent (Northern Tablelands LLS⁷) of this expenditure (Figure 5). The remaining expenditure on groups was for dedicated support staff (Figure 5).

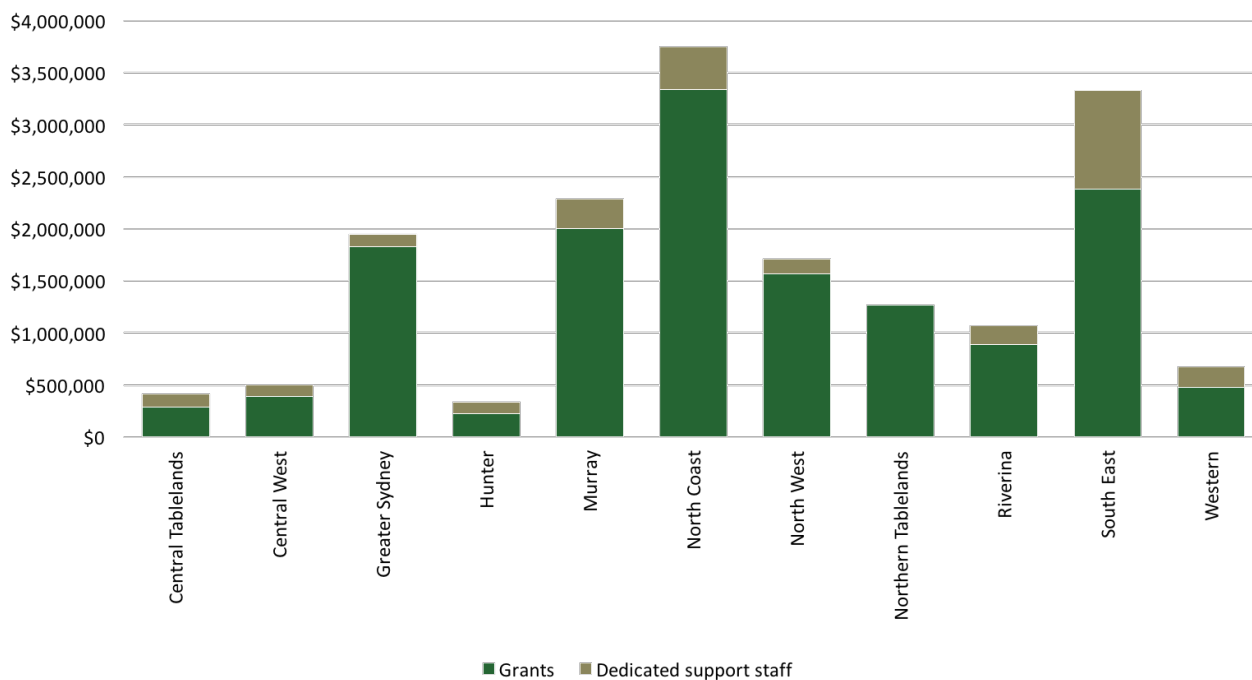


Figure 5. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups by LLS region (2014-15)

LLS paid for 70 percent of its expenditure on Landcare and community groups using revenue from the Australian Government, with the two major sources of funding being the National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country (Figure 6). About 28 percent of this expenditure was paid for using revenue from Catchment Action NSW.

Grants to Landcare and community groups, and funding for dedicated support staff are explored in greater detail in Sections 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 below.

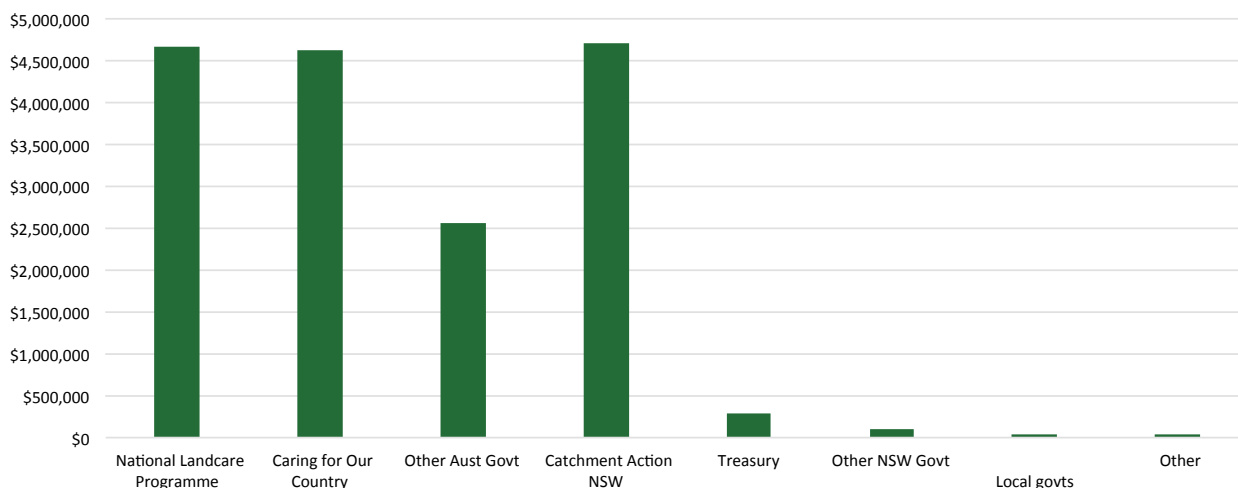


Figure 6. Revenue streams used to pay for expenditure on Landcare and community groups, state-wide (2014-15)

7 From Northern Tablelands LLS’ \$1,267,542 in grants to Landcare and community groups, \$476,421 was provided to Landcare groups to fund dedicated support staff positions located within those groups. For example, grants were provided to New England North West network of Chairs to engage and direct a Regional Landcare Facilitator across the Northern Tablelands region. While this support has been recorded as ‘grants’ in this report, it was in effect funding for dedicated support staff.

3.3.1. Grants

LLS provided \$32.53 million in grants in 2014-15⁸, of which \$14.66 million went to Landcare and other community groups⁹ (Figure 7). Other grants went to individual land managers, including farmers, for sustainable agriculture, natural resource management, education, training and workshops (Figure 7). They also went to government agencies, such as NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, for a range of projects, including weed spraying, mapping work, and riparian and aquatic health monitoring projects, as well as other grantees, such as universities and private businesses for monitoring, evaluation and other projects.

Of the \$14.66 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, approximately 41 percent went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of ‘Landcare and community groups’ in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (Figure 1; see Section 2.2.4 for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 59 percent of these grants (Figure 7).

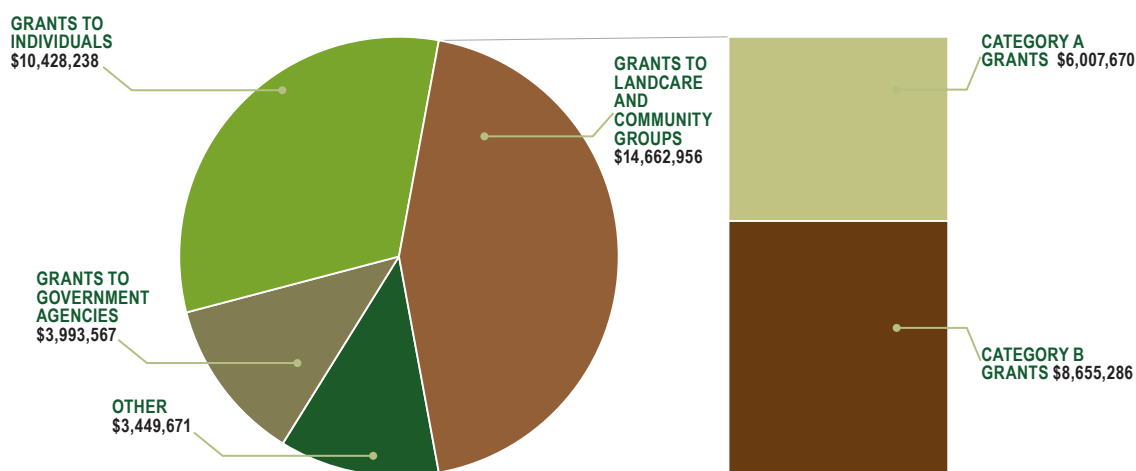


Figure 7. Total grants provided by LLS, state-wide (2014-15)

Total grant expenditure varied across the LLS regions. In absolute dollar terms, grant spending ranged from \$1.3 million (Central West LLS) to \$5.0 million (South East LLS) (Figure 8). As a percentage of revenue from grants and contributions, spending ranged from 20 percent (Central West LLS) to 53 percent (North Coast LLS).

8 Total grants expenditure presented in this report has been calculated as the sum of all grant data provided to the Commission by the 11 LLS regions. This figure reconciles within 6 percent of LLS’ total consolidated grants and subsidies expense reported in the LLS Annual Report 2014-15. Approximately half this difference is due to \$1.0 million in grants and subsidies expenses that have been included as ‘dedicated support staff’ in this report. Another \$0.76 million was due to general ledger adjustments and a payment to the Office of Environment and Heritage for flood mitigation works which was reported as grant expenditure in the annual report but excluded from this report.

9 The LLS Annual Report 2014-15 reported \$10.62 million in grants to non-government community organisations. LLS regions confirmed that these grants (where appropriate) had been included in the baseline. Additional grants were also included in the baseline, given the broader definition of ‘Landcare and community groups’ adopted.

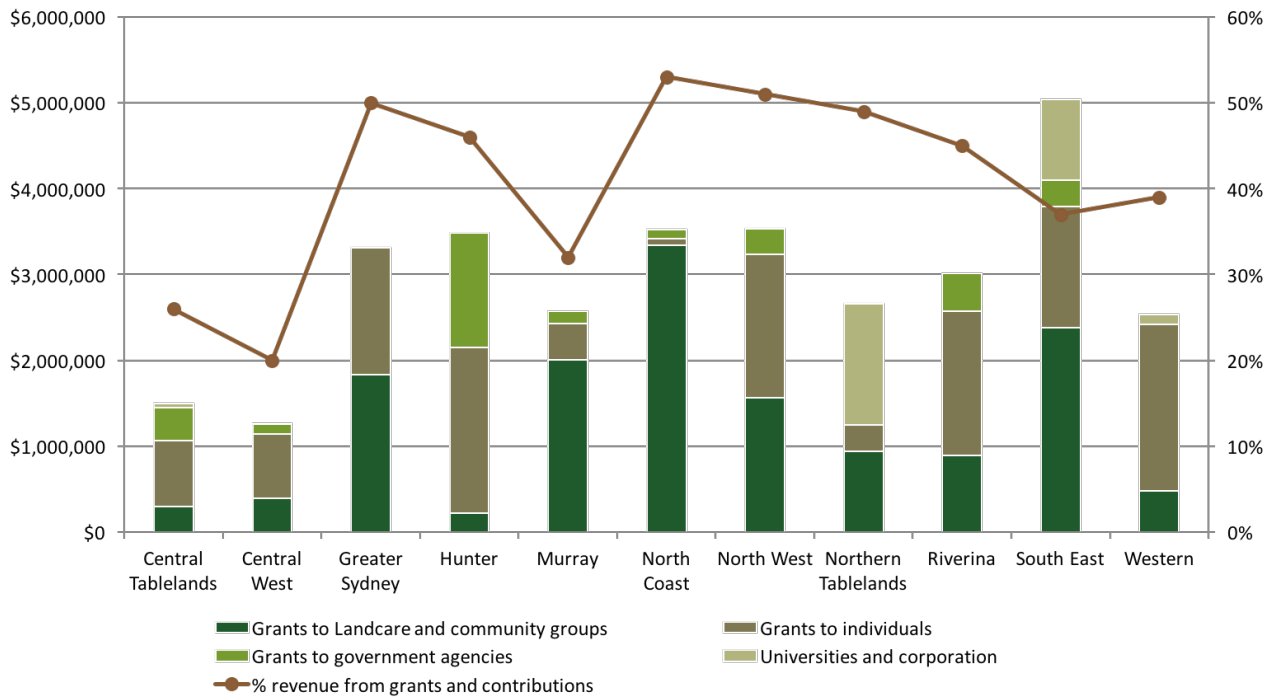


Figure 8. Total grants expenditure by LLS region

(Bars show total grants expenditure (\$) by grantee. Line shows grant expenditure as a percentage of revenue from grants and contributions)(2014-15)

Grant expenditure on Landcare and community groups also varied across the regions, ranging from \$0.2 million (Hunter LLS; 3 percent of revenue from grants and contributions) to \$3.3 million (North Coast LLS; 51 percent of revenue from grant and contributions) with an average of \$1.3 million per region (Figure 9).

While Hunter LLS reported the lowest level of grant expenditure on Landcare and community groups, part of the Hunter Valley was adversely affected by heavy rainfall and damaging floods in April 2015. During this period, Hunter LLS provided livestock and property support services to affected landholders. As a consequence of the flooding, many grant-funded projects were put on hold and Hunter LLS suspended grant payments for a period of eight weeks. As a result, Hunter LLS' total grant expenditure was lower than expected and National Landcare Programme and Catchment Action NSW revenue was underspent in 2014-15.

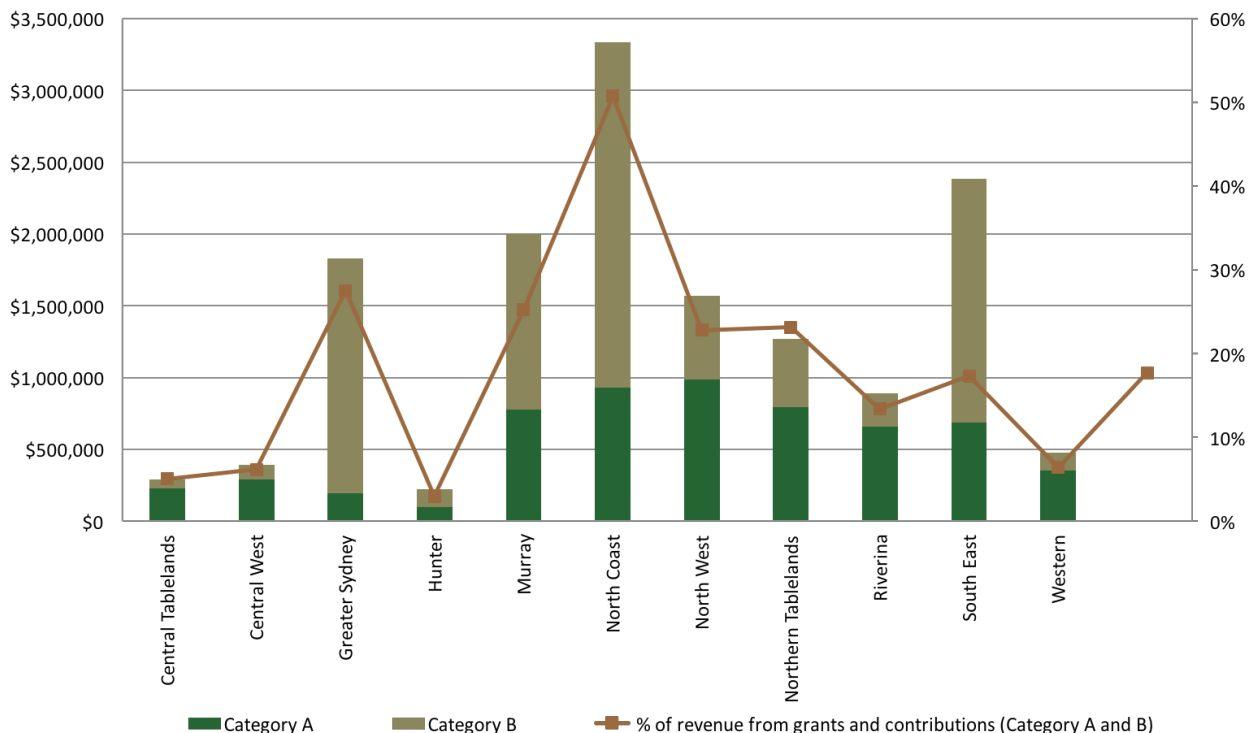


Figure 9. Grants to Landcare and community groups by LLS Region (2014-2015)

(Bars show value (\$) of grants to Category A and B grantees. Line shows grants to Landcare and community groups as a percentage of revenue from grants and contributions)

Grants to Landcare and community groups were categorised into 2 groups: Categories A and B (Table 9; see Section 2.2 for background). Landcare groups received 74 percent of grants (by value) to Category A groups, and producer groups received 20 percent (Figure 10). The remaining 6 percent went to Bushcare, Coastcare, Dunecare and Friends of groups (Figure 10). Local councils received over 50 percent of grants to Category B groups, followed by conservation groups (21 percent, mostly in the Murray and North Coast regions) and Aboriginal groups (15 percent), which include Local Aboriginal Land Councils and Aboriginal Corporations. A detailed breakdown of the number, value and range of grants to each Category A and B group for each LLS region is provided in Chapters 4-14.

Approximately 98 percent of Category A and B grants were paid for using revenue received under Catchment Action NSW (\$4.64 million), Caring for Our Country (\$3.45 million), the National Landcare Programme (\$3.35 million) and other Australian Government funding sources (\$2.56 million) (Figure 10).

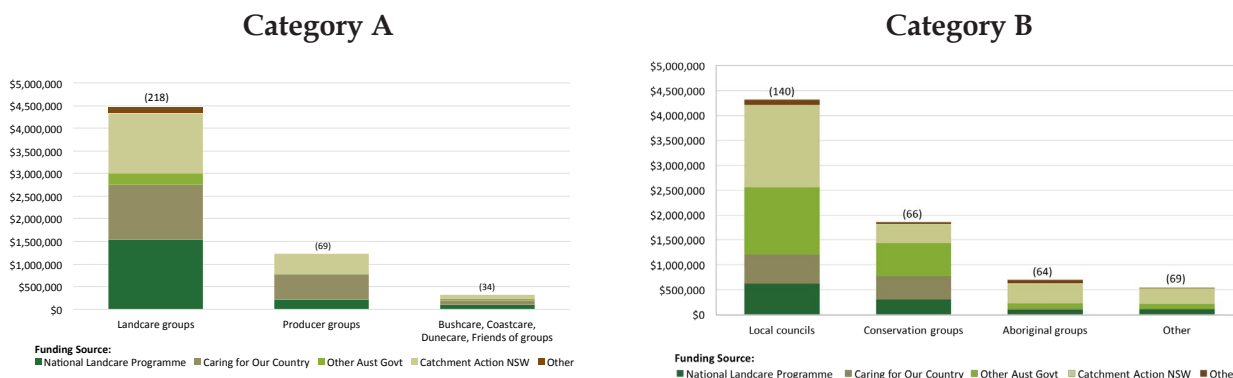


Figure 10. Grants to Category A and B groups, state-wide (2014-15)
(number in brackets shows the number of grants)

To give an indication of the types of projects that were funded by grants to Landcare and community groups, LLS assigned grants to one of following 10 general grant types (**Table 2**)¹⁰. Based on LLS' categorisation, 62 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups were used to fund on-ground projects (\$9.16 million), followed by network support (11 percent) and capacity building projects (11 percent) (**Table 2**).

Table 2. Grants to Landcare and community groups by type (2014-15)

Grant type	Amount	No. of grants
On-ground projects	\$9,164,667	342
Network support	\$1,663,624	68
Capacity building	\$1,564,276	134
Other	\$956,532	27
Development of resource materials	\$611,963	37
Staff funding	\$451,300	11
Event information day	\$205,298	27
Cultural Heritage	\$29,893	1
Administration support	\$11,100	3
Community Engagement	\$4,302	3
Total	\$14,662,955	653

3.3.2. Dedicated support staff

LLS spent \$2.63 million on dedicated support staff in 2014-15. Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups (see **Section 2.2.3** for background).

Over 90 percent of expenditure on dedicated support staff was used to pay for Regional Landcare Facilitators (\$1.34 million) and Community Support Officers (\$1.07 million). Ninety three percent of this expenditure was paid for using revenue received under the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country. The balance was paid for using a combination of NSW Treasury, Catchment Action NSW and other revenue sources (**Figure 11**).

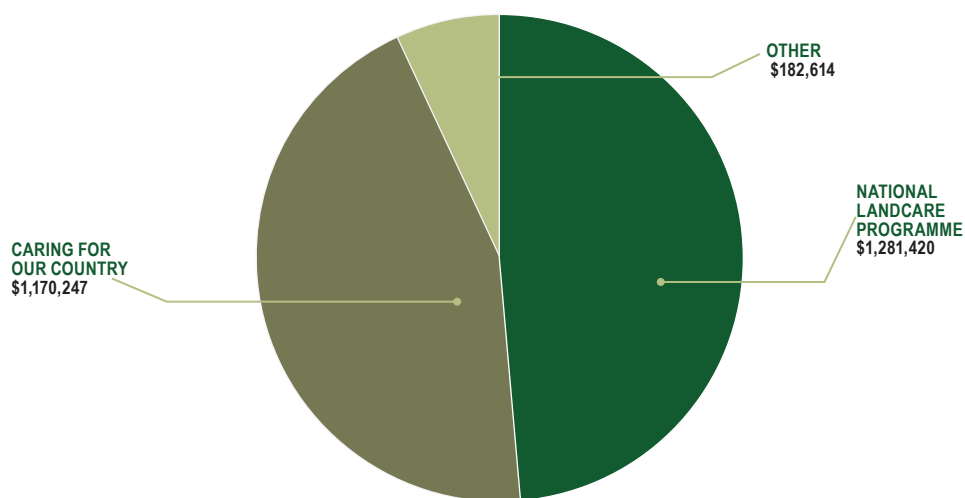


Figure 11. Funding sources used to pay for dedicated support staff (2014-2015)

¹⁰ LLS regions categorised each grant according to type or main purpose. It should be noted that there could be some overlap between grant types, and the Commission has used LLS' categorisation of grant types.

Regional Landcare Facilitators

The National Landcare Programme requires each LLS region to maintain a Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) to engage with and support farmers and land managers (Australian Government, 2014b).

Figure 12 shows that LLS funded 16 RLF positions (12.0 full time equivalent (FTE)) in 2014-15. Seven of these positions (7.0 FTE) were appointed directly by LLS, with the other nine positions (5.0 FTE) being contracted to Landcare groups¹¹.

These positions cost \$1.34 million, including salary and on costs, and were paid for in full using funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and Caring For Our Country. Most LLS regions funded 1.0 FTE RLF position, with several regions funding up to 2.0 FTEs (**Figure 12**).

In addition to these 16 RLFs, Central Tablelands and Northern Tablelands LLS funded extra RLFs through grants to Landcare groups. These grants were valued at \$91,000 and \$414,261¹², respectively. This expenditure has been captured in the grants section of the baseline (**Section 1.3.1**)¹³.

Community Support Officers

Community Support Officers (CSOs) have a role in facilitating community capacity building, collaboration, on-ground works and partnerships opportunities.

Figure 12 shows that 17 CSOs (over 9.2 FTE¹⁴) were funded by three LLS regions in 2014-15. Six of these positions (6.0 FTE) were appointed directly by South East LLS, with the other eleven positions (over 3.2 FTEs) being contracted to Landcare groups and Aboriginal Corporations in the Murray and North Coast regions^{15,16}.

CSO positions cost \$1.07 million, including salary and on costs, and were mostly (94 percent) paid for using funding received under the Australian Government's National Landcare Programme and Caring For Our Country.

In addition to these positions, South East and Northern Tablelands LLS funded extra CSO positions through grants to Landcare and other groups. These grants were valued at \$120,000 and \$115,095¹⁷, respectively. This expenditure has been captured in the grants section of the baseline (**Section 3.3.1**).

11 One 0.2 FTE position was filled for half the 2014-15 financial year, with all other positions filled for the full year.

12 Approximately 90 percent of these grants were used to fund staff at Landcare groups. The positions were engaged by Granite Borders Landcare Group and New England North West Network Chair Inc. While classified here as RLFs, the position delivered a combination of RLF and other community support functions.

13 Murray LLS also provided a grant of \$75,000 to pay for costs associated with a RLF employed by a Landcare group. This has also been captured in the grants section of the baseline.

14 Five positions were contracted by Murray LLS to Landcare groups and FTE data was not available.

15 These positions were filled for the full 2014-15 financial year.

16 The formal position name for three of the 'Community Support Officer' positions at North Coast LLS is 'Aboriginal Extension Officer'. These positions were contracted out to Aboriginal Corporations and have been captured in this section of the report based on the data provided by LLS.

17 Approximately 90 percent of these grants were used to fund staff.

Other dedicated support staff

RLFs and CSOs accounted for the majority of dedicated support staff. However, South East LLS also funded two other dedicated support staff positions in 2014-15: a Senior Land Services Officer – Aboriginal Communities; and a Land Services Officer – Aboriginal Communities (**Figure 12**). While South East LLS categorised these staff as ‘dedicated support staff’, other LLS regions also employed staff to work with Aboriginal communities but chose to categorise these as ‘other support staff’ for the purposes of this baseline. ‘Other support staff’ have been included in the regional baseline data (**Chapters 4 to 14**), but not the state-wide baseline. As such, care should be taken when comparing Aboriginal support staff data across regions.

In addition to these other dedicated staff positions, Northern Tablelands LLS provided a grant of \$33,100 to a Local Aboriginal Land Council, 50 percent of which was used to fund a project officer. South East LLS also provided grants of \$164,000 to Aboriginal Land Councils to fund support staff. The Commission has captured this support in the grants section of the baseline (**Section 3.3.1**).

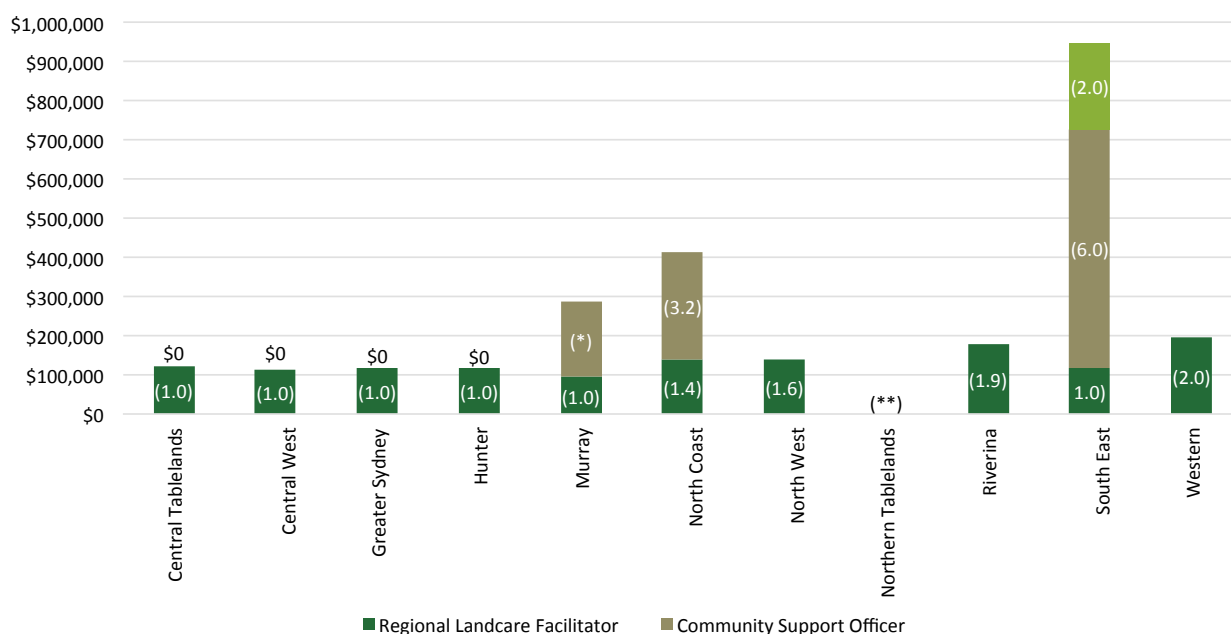


Figure 12. Dedicated staff positions, by region (2014-15)
 (The number in brackets shows the number of FTE's)

*Murray LLS contracted CSOs to Landcare groups and FTE number was not provided.

** Northern Tablelands LLS funded RLFs and CSOs through grants to Landcare groups. This is a common approach used by the LLS regions however, Northern Tablelands LLS noted that it did not have a direct relationship with these staff and it did not separate funding of these dedicated staff from grants funding. As such, these costs are captured as grants in **Section 3.3.1**.

3.3.3. Distribution of grants and dedicated support staff

Figure 13 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants and dedicated support staff across the state.

The majority of grants (by number and value) were distributed along the east coast, particularly in the North Coast, Greater Sydney and South East regions, as well as along the Murray River. Grants were more sparsely distributed over some of the larger regions in the western part of the state.

In general, grants were clustered around dedicated support staff office locations, including RLFs and CSOs. Chapters 4-14 show the distribution of grants and dedicated support staff for each region.

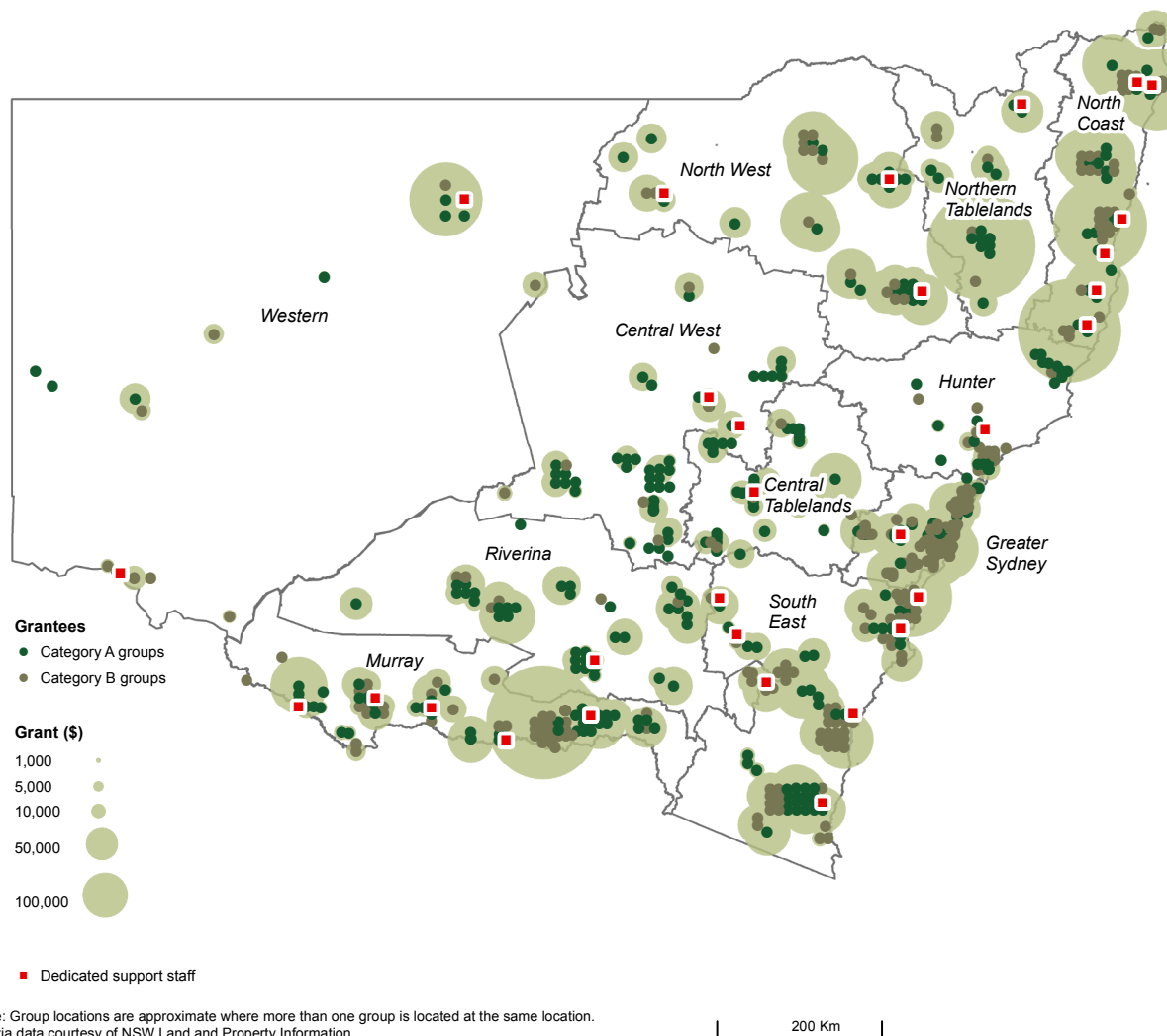


Figure 13. Distribution of Landcare and community groups grants and dedicated support staff (2014-15)

(This map shows an overview of the locations of grant expenditure and dedicated support staff by LLS region. There may be some regional cross over, for example, North Coast LLS provided funding for a dedicated staff member based outside the North Coast regional boundary. For further details, see the regional baseline chapters.)

3.3.4. Other analysis

LLS spent 21 percent of its revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. LLS spending of the remaining 79 percent of grants and contributions revenue was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission could account for an additional 47 percent of spending of total grants and contributions revenue. Approximately 28 percent was provided as grants to other organisations (e.g. government agencies and universities) and individuals (e.g. farmers), and 19 percent paid for LLS staff positions. Other LLS positions may also have been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue, so the actual figure may be higher than 19 percent.

3.4. Future considerations

The objective of this project was to establish a baseline level of LLS expenditure on Landcare and other community groups. Future expenditure can be assessed against this baseline.

The total level of expenditure on Landcare and community groups in the baseline year (2014-15) was \$17.37 million, with regional expenditure ranging from \$0.34 million (Hunter LLS) to \$3.75 million (North Coast LLS). Despite this large range in expenditure, it is important to note that some regional variation should be expected. Regional expenditure is influenced by factors particular to each region. These include revenue levels, the investment requirements stipulated by revenue providers, community capacity, the existence of community groups with the skills to undertake works, regional strategic priorities and investment priorities¹⁸, and the needs of regional communities, industries and landscapes. Any assessment of regional expenditure, as well as any future changes in expenditure against the baseline year, needs to be considered in the context of these factors. These factors are further discussed below.

3.4.1. Revenue levels

The majority of LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups was paid for using grants and contributions revenue, including funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other Australian and NSW government funding programs.

Variation in regional expenditure on Landcare and community groups can partly be explained by variation in regional revenue from grants and contributions. For example, South East LLS received more grants and contributions revenue than the other regions (\$13.7 million), and recorded the second highest level of expenditure on Landcare and community groups (\$3.3 million). Murray LLS received the second highest level of grants and contributions revenue (\$7.9 million) and recorded the third highest level of expenditure on groups (\$2.3 million). Riverina LLS received the seventh highest level of grants and contributions revenue (\$6.6 million) and recorded the sixth highest level of expenditure on groups (\$1.1 million). North West, Central West and Central Tablelands received the fifth, ninth and tenth highest levels of grants and contributions revenue, respectively, and also recorded the fifth, ninth and tenth highest of expenditure groups, respectively.

However, not all variation in regional expenditure on Landcare and community groups can be explained by the amount of grants and contributions revenue received by the LLS regions. For example, North Coast LLS recorded the highest level of expenditure on groups (\$3.8 million), but received less grants and contributions revenue than over half of the other regions (\$6.6 million). Whereas, Hunter LLS recorded the lowest level of expenditure on groups, but received the third highest level of grants and contributions revenue across LLS. While Hunter LLS spent

¹⁸ LLS has developed a State Strategic Plan and 11 local strategic plans for 2016-2021 (Local Land Services, 2016a). These plans were not finalised until after the baseline year.

proportionally less of its grants and contributions revenue on Landcare and community groups, it provided much more funding to individual land managers and government agencies for natural resource management and sustainable agriculture projects than did North Coast LLS.

Regional variation in the percentage of grants and contributions revenue spent on Landcare and community groups is to be expected, with other factors, including investor priorities and regional strategic priorities, also influence decisions about expenditure levels on groups. These are discussed below.

3.4.2. Investor priorities

LLS must align its investment activities with the strategic objectives and priorities of its investors. These priorities may not necessarily align with the needs of all Landcare and community groups. The priorities of key investor funding programs and their influence on the baseline are discussed below.

National Landcare Programme

The National Landcare Programme sets out four national strategic objectives and outcomes which aim to involve communities, farmers and fishers in natural resource management (Australian Government, 2014b). LLS is required to demonstrate to the Australian Government how it uses its National Landcare Programme funding to contribute to these strategic objectives and deliver on-ground natural resource management and sustainable agriculture outcomes (Australian Government, 2014b).

The National Landcare Programme *Regional Funding 2014-15 to 2017-18 Application Guidelines* (the guidelines) allow LLS to fund Landcare and other community groups to help achieve the programme's objectives (Australian Government, 2014b). However, the guidelines also emphasise that individual land managers and farmers have an important role in achieving these objectives and should have access to funding. Research shows that providing funding to Landcare groups and networks can have a number of advantages, including bringing people together to build a regional sense of 'community', increasing the learning capacity of individuals, improving the coordination of volunteers to deliver on-ground works (Sobels *et al.* 2001) and providing access to knowledge about land degradation (Webb & Cary, 2005). However, providing funding to both groups and individuals is a key component of achieving National Landcare Programme objectives. With about 70 percent of Australia's land privately owned or leased for agricultural production (Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, 2015), farmers and pastoralists are the largest single group of land managers and managing natural resources on their land is important for both production and conservation (Ryan *et al.*, 2010). This may in part explain why about 32 percent of all LLS grants were paid to individuals, including farmers, and about 44 percent went to Landcare and other community groups in 2014-15.

Under the National Landcare Programme guidelines, the LLS regions are required to direct a minimum of 20 percent of their annual allocation to small, on-ground projects and related activities that are delivered by, or directly engage with, the 'local landcare community' (Australian Government, 2014b). The National Landcare Programme defines the 'local landcare community' as individual land managers and farmers, as well as Landcare and other community groups (Australian Government, 2014b). This definition differs from that adopted in the Commission's baseline study, which focuses on groups but excludes individual land managers¹⁹. This may also explain why LLS provided significant levels of grant funding both individuals and groups.

It is also noteworthy that the National Landcare Programme's minimum 20 percent requirement is focussed on on-ground projects. The Commission found that the majority of LLS grants to Landcare and community groups had an on-ground focus (about 62 percent), which may, at least

¹⁹ Over 60 percent of LLS grants to individuals were paid for using funding from the Australian Government. Over 65 percent of this was paid for using National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country funding.

in part, be a reflection of this National Landcare Programme requirement.

The National Landcare Programme also requires each LLS region to maintain a RLF to engage with and support farmers and land managers (Australian Government, 2014b). This is reflected in the dedicated support staff data presented in this report, which shows that each region had at least a 1.0 FTE RLF in 2014-15, which was either directly appointed by LLS or contracted to a Landcare group.

Catchment Action NSW

Catchment Action NSW funding is administered under a Funding Agreement between the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and LLS. This agreement sets out the investment areas for LLS. In 2014-15, the agreement directed LLS to invest in activities under four themes: native vegetation (40 percent); biodiversity conservation (30 percent); threatened species (20 percent); and Aboriginal cultural heritage (10 percent) (Natural Resources Commission, 2015b).

The Commission carried out a mid-term review of LLS' delivery of Catchment Action NSW funding in 2014-15 (Natural Resources Commission, 2015b). The Commission identified several projects, including for Landcare support activities, which supported natural resource management but did not clearly deliver on-ground outcomes against a specific funding theme (Natural Resources Commission, 2015b). In that review, the Commission considered expenditure on these projects to be a legitimate use of Catchment Action NSW funding; however, it suggested that LLS could provide further clarity about how these projects deliver investor outcomes and how much they cost (Natural Resources Commission, 2015b). This current baseline report may assist in bringing some clarity and transparency around grant expenditure on Landcare and community groups.

In the mid-term review, the Commission also suggested that OEH and LLS could agree to a cap spending on Landcare support activities and other projects which do not clearly deliver outcomes against a specific funding theme (Natural Resources Commission, 2015b). In response to this recommendation, OEH decided to allow LLS to fund some sustainable agriculture projects where clear linkages could be shown with the funding themes and where direct environmental outcomes could be demonstrated. Further, LLS agreed to cap both administration costs and foundational activities each at 10 percent of total Catchment Action NSW funds, with an additional requirement for foundational activities to be clearly linked to a funding theme and majority funded through an alternative source. These changes to the Funding Agreement should be considered when comparing future LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups against the baseline year.

While Catchment Action NSW funding only paid for about 2 percent of the dedicated support staff included in this baseline, it was used to fund a larger portion (about 23 percent) of other LLS support staff (**Chapters 4 to 14** for data on other support staff). Any changes to the amount of Catchment Action NSW funding that may be used to fund Landcare coordinators and other extension staff may result in changes in expenditure against the baseline year.

Catchment Action NSW funding also varies from year-to-year. The LLS regions received about \$28.55 million in 2014-15 however, funding for 2015-16 and 2016-17 will decrease to about \$25 million per annum (Natural Resources Commission, 2015b). As Catchment Action NSW funding is sourced from Waste and Environment Levy, funding may also be reduced if expected waste levy tonnages are not reached (Natural Resources Commission, 2015b). Comparison of future LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups against the baseline should be assessed in the context of these, and any other, reductions in LLS revenue.

3.4.3. Strategic plans

In the baseline year (2014-15), LLS was still a relatively new organisation and did not have final state and local strategic plans in place. However, in its mid-term review of LLS' delivery of Catchment Action NSW funding, the Commission found that LLS regions did have some program and project prioritisation processes in place in 2014-15 (Natural Resources Commission, 2015b). Some LLS local boards had also identified investment in Landcare support as a strategic priority for their regions, above that provided by the NSW and Australian governments (Natural Resources Commission, 2015b).

In June 2016, LLS finalised its state and local strategic plans (Local Land Services, 2016b). These plans will provide further strategic direction for LLS and will influence how each region engages with and supports its communities, industries and landscapes. They may also influence decisions on how, and the extent to which, Landcare and community groups will be supported relative to the baseline year. Any future changes in expenditure relative to the baseline year should also be considered in the context of the regional priorities set out in the final local strategic plans.

3.5. Conclusion

Regional variation in the level of LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups should be expected and is influenced by regional revenue levels, the investment requirements of revenue providers, regional strategic priorities, and the needs of regional communities, industries and landscapes. These factors must be considered when comparing regional expenditure and assessing any future changes in expenditure against the baseline year. Detailed baseline results for each LLS region are presented in **Chapters 4 to 14**.

4. Regional baseline: Central Tablelands LLS

4.1. Overview

In 2014-15, Central Tablelands LLS revenue was \$11.37 million, most of which came from rates (\$2.94 million), NSW Treasury (\$2.10 million) and grants and contributions (\$5.78 million).

Central Tablelands LLS spent \$0.72 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$0.29 million
- dedicated support staff (one Regional Landcare Facilitator), \$0.12 million
- other support staff (such as Land Services Officers), \$0.31 million.

Approximately 93 percent of this expenditure was paid for using grants and contributions revenue²⁰ from the Australian and NSW governments. The National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW paid for 85 percent of this expenditure.

The expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 6 percent of total revenue and 12 percent of revenue from grants and contributions²¹.

4.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 4.3**).

Total revenue for Central Tablelands LLS was \$11.37 million in 2014-15 (**Figure 14**). Approximately 50 percent of total revenue came from grants and contributions, most of which was provided by the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 14**). Rates provided 26 percent of total revenue (**Figure 14**), but were not used to pay for any LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups. NSW Treasury funding provided 18 percent of total revenue (**Figure 14**), but was used to pay for only 7 percent of expenditure on groups. Other revenue sources made up 1 percent of total revenue (**Figure 14**) and consisted of revenue from the sales of goods, rendering of services and other minor revenue streams.

20 Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other funding programs. It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay for salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue however, it is excluded from the grants and contributions revenue category in this report because it was only used to pay for a relatively small portion of expenditure on Landcare and community groups (7 percent).

21 For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue because most of the expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

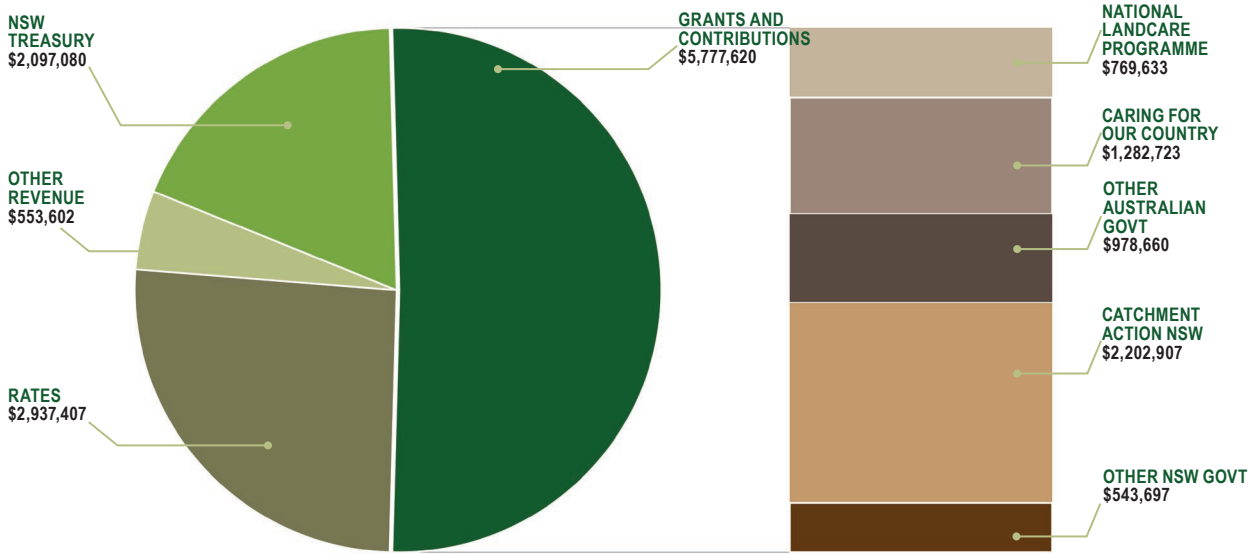


Figure 14. Total revenue, Central Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

4.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, Central Tablelands LLS spent \$0.72 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 40 percent of this was provided as grants, 17 percent as funding for dedicated support staff, and 43 percent as funding for other support staff (Figure 15). Central Tablelands LLS paid for 85 percent of this expenditure using funding received under the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW (Figure 15). This is discussed in Sections 4.3.1 to 4.3.3.

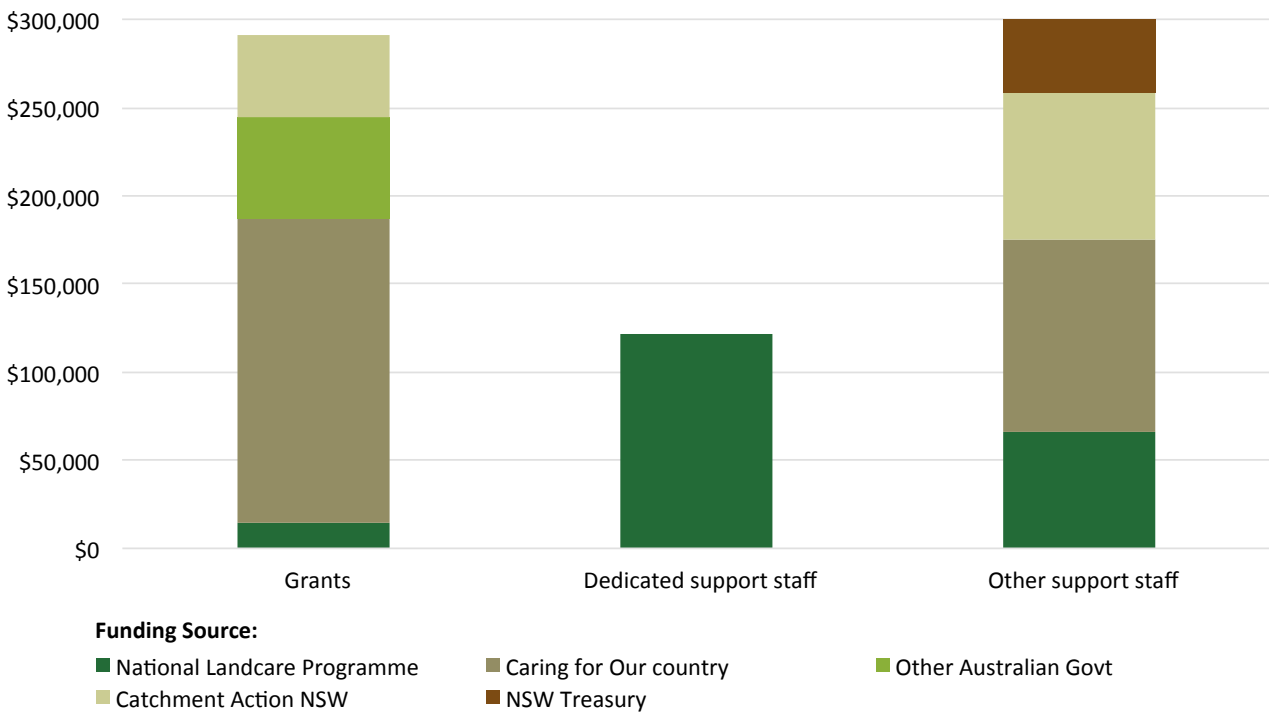


Figure 15. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups, Central Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

4.3.1. Grants

Central Tablelands LLS provided \$1.49 million in total grants in 2014-15, of which \$0.29 million went to Landcare and community groups (**Figure 16**). The remaining \$1.2 million was provided to government agencies²² (26 percent) for a range of projects, including mapping, riparian and pest work, as well as to individuals for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management projects²³ (55 percent) (**Figure 16**).

From the \$0.29 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, approximately 30 percent were used to fund a Regional Landcare Facilitator position outsourced to Lachlandcare Incorporated²⁴, 30 percent were used to fund Landcare network support, 21 percent were for on-ground projects and 19 percent were for capacity building projects, mostly for Landcare groups.

Approximately 79 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of 'Landcare and community groups' in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (see **Table 1, Section 2.2.4** for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 21 percent of these grants (**Figure 17**).

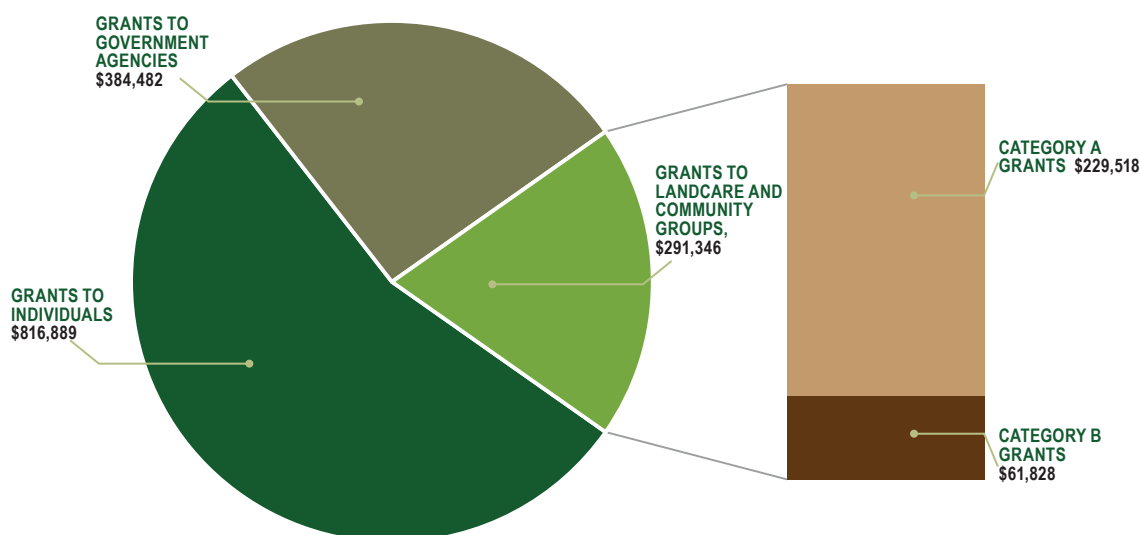


Figure 16. Total grants provided by Central Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

Table 3 shows the number, value and range for grants to Category A and B groups. In summary, Landcare groups received 97 percent of the value of grants to Category A groups, with the remaining 3 percent going to a single producer group (**Figure 17**). Local councils received 89 percent of the value of grants to Category B groups, with the remaining 11 percent going to conservation groups (6 percent), schools (5 percent) and a private consultant (less than 0.5 percent) (**Figure 17**).

22 Excludes grant to local councils or other government organisations (e.g. public schools) which were captured as grants to Landcare and community groups.

23 Some grants targeted land managers, particularly farmers, in specific areas. Land managers were each provided with a grant to work together on a common issue.

24 This expenditure on Lachlandcare Incorporated has been recorded as a grant, rather than dedicated support staff. Refer to **Section 4.3.2** for further details on Regional Landcare Facilitators at Central Tablelands LLS.

Table 3. Grants to Landcare and other community groups, Central Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

Group type	No. of grants	No. of recipients	Total cost	Range for individual grants	
				Low	High
Category A groups					
Landcare	29	10	\$222,678	\$500	\$75,000
Producer	1	1	\$6,840	\$6,840	\$6,840
Total (Category A)	30	11	\$229,518	N/A	N/A
Category B groups					
Conservation	1	1	\$3,443	\$3,443	\$3,443
Local council	4	4	\$54,860	\$9,100	\$25,000
Private consultant	1	1	\$225	\$225	\$225
School	1	1	\$3,300	\$3,300	\$3,300
Total (Category B)	7	7	\$61,828	N/A	N/A
Total (Categories A & B)	37	18	291,346	N/A	N/A

Central Tablelands LLS paid for all Category A and B grants to Landcare and community groups using funding received under Caring for Our Country (\$171,985), National Landcare Programme (\$15,000), other Australian Government sources (\$58,021) and Catchment Action NSW (\$46,340) (Figure 17). The National Landcare Programme was the major funding source used to pay for Category A grants, whereas other Australian Government funding was used to pay for the majority of Category B grants (Figure 17).

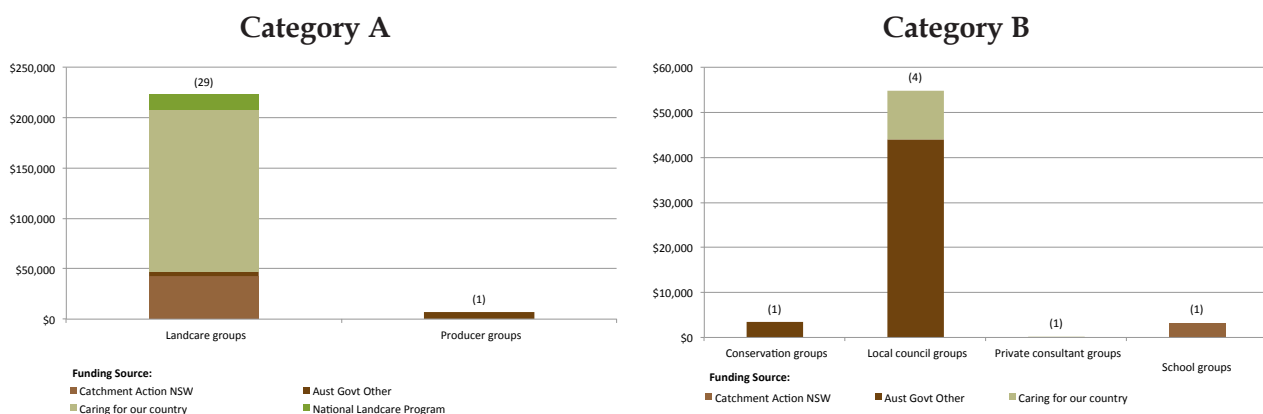


Figure 17. Grants to Category A and B groups, Central Tablelands LLS (2014-15)
(the number in brackets shows the number of grants)

4.3.2. Dedicated support staff

Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups, generally the Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) and Community Support Officer (CSO) positions (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

Central Tablelands LLS employed one RLF in 2014-15. This was a 1.0 FTE position and was filled for the full financial year. It cost approximately \$121,000, including salary and on costs, and was paid for using funding received under the National Landcare Programme. The position was appointed directly by LLS and was based at the Orange office. The role included coordinating with Landcare and community groups across the Central Tablelands region.

Central Tablelands also provided Lachlandcare Incorporated with a grant of \$91,000 for a RLF. This position worked with Lachlandcare Incorporated and has been captured as a grant in **Section 4.3.1**, rather than as dedicated support staff.

4.3.3. Other support staff

Other support staff are positions funded by LLS that provide a support function for Landcare and community groups but also have other roles (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, other support staff at Central Tablelands LLS included three Senior Land Services Officers, three Land Services Officers and three team leaders in the agriculture, natural resource management and strategic land services work areas.

Central Tablelands LLS estimated that these staff spent between 10 percent (Team Leader, Agriculture and NRM/West) and 75 percent (Land Services Officer, Project Officer) of their time supporting Landcare and other community groups. These estimates were based on time estimates from work and project planning processes, and time spent on administrative work for groups.

Based on these time estimates, the portion of these positions that contributed to supporting Landcare and other community groups cost approximately \$306,000, including salary and on costs. This was paid for using funding received from both the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 18**). These costs may be indicative of some of the costs associated with administering grants to Landcare and community groups, as some of these other support staff had responsibilities for engaging with community groups, delivering administrative support for projects, and engaging with other LLS staff in the delivery of funding milestones.

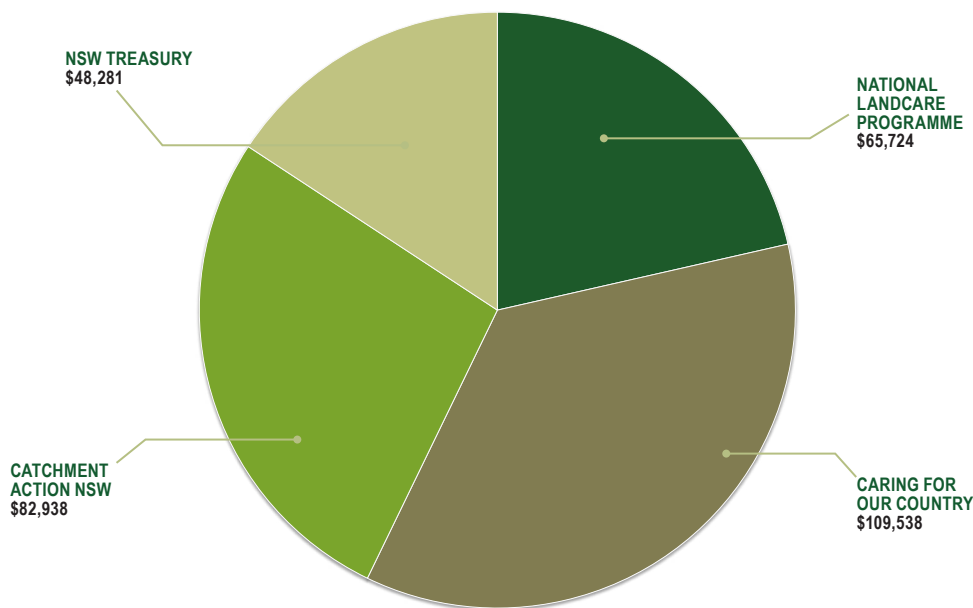


Figure 18. Cost of other support staff at Central Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

(This analysis is based on funding data provided by LLS for individual staff positions that provided support to Landcare and community groups in 2014-15)

4.3.4. Distribution of grants and dedicated support staff

Figure 19 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff positions across the Central Tablelands region. The majority of grants were concentrated around the regional centres of Orange, Cowra and Mudgee. There were LLS offices in all three towns, and a RLF based in Orange.

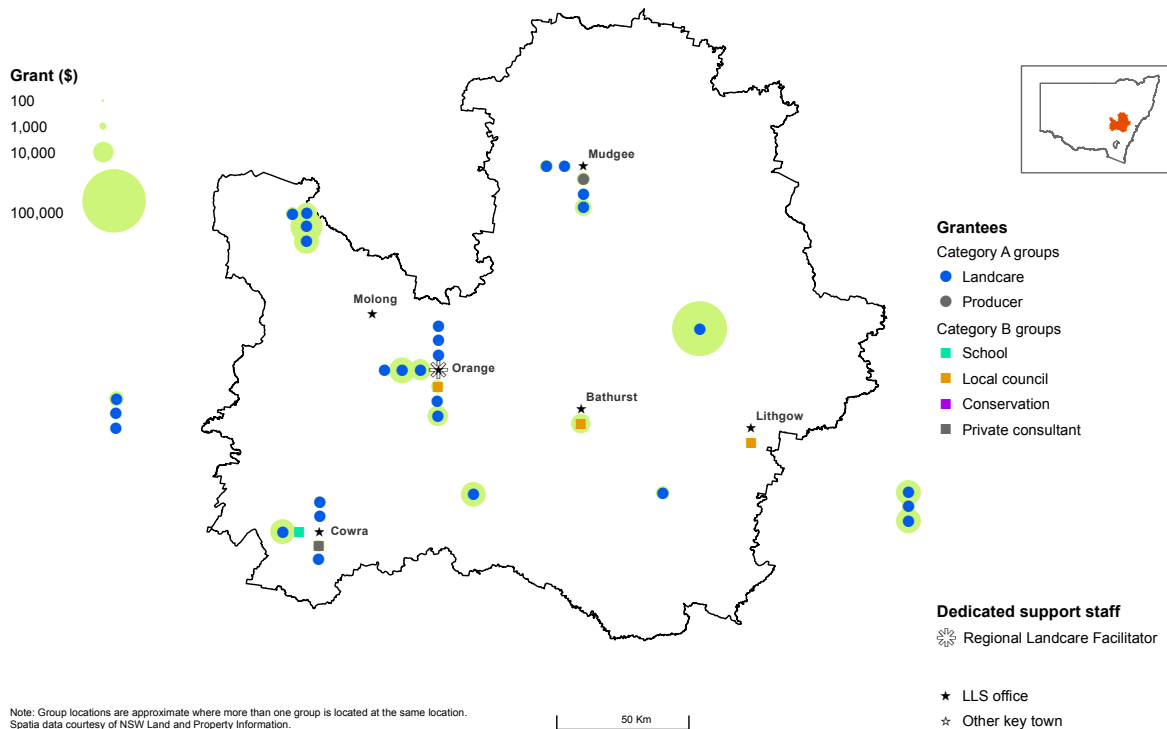


Figure 19. Distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff in Central Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

4.3.5. Other analysis

Central Tablelands LLS spent 12 percent of revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. Its spending of the remaining 88 percent of grants and contributions was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission could account for an additional 30 percent of spending of total grants and contributions revenue. Approximately 21 percent was provided as grants to individual land managers and government agencies, and 9 percent paid for LLS staff who supported Landcare and community groups. Other LLS staff may have also been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue, so the actual percentage may be higher than 9 percent.

5. Regional baseline: Central West LLS

5.1. Overview

In 2014-15, Central West LLS revenue was \$15.78 million, most of which came from rates (\$4.12 million), NSW Treasury (\$3.28 million) and grants and contributions (\$6.30 million).

Central West LLS spent \$0.58 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$0.39 million
- dedicated support staff (one Regional Landcare Facilitator), \$0.11 million
- other support staff (such as Land Services Officers), \$0.08 million.

Approximately 93 percent of this expenditure was paid for using grants and contributions revenue²⁵ from the Australian and NSW governments. The National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW paid for 89 percent of this expenditure.

The expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 4 percent of total revenue and 9 percent of revenue from grants and contributions²⁶.

5.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 5.3**).

Total revenue for Central West LLS was \$15.78 million in 2014-15 (**Figure 20**). Approximately 40 percent of total revenue came from grants and contributions, most of which was provided by the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 20**). Rates provided 26 percent of total revenue (**Figure 20**), but were not used to pay for any LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups. NSW Treasury funding provided 21 percent of total revenue (**Figure 20**), but was only used to pay for 7 percent of expenditure on groups. Other revenue sources made up 13 percent of total revenue (**Figure 20**) and consisted of levies and revenue from the sales of goods, rendering of services and other minor revenue streams.

25 Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other funding programs. It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay for salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue however, it is excluded from the grants and contributions revenue category in this report because it was only used to pay for a relatively small portion of expenditure on Landcare and community groups (7 percent).

26 For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue because most of the expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

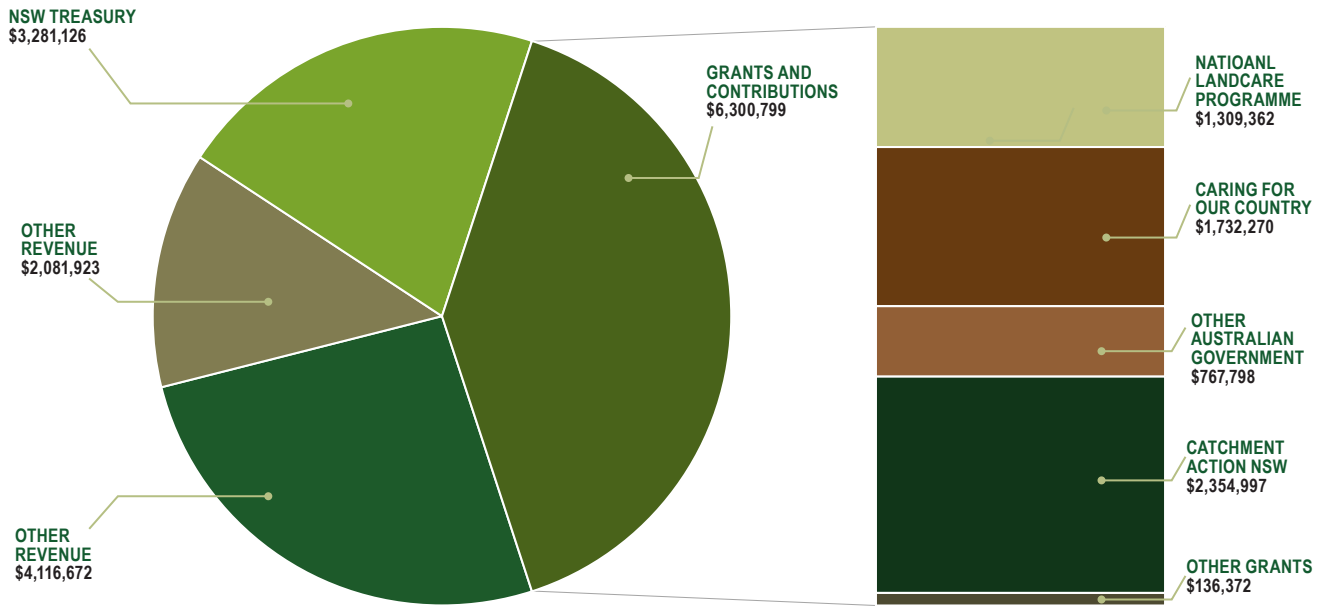


Figure 20. Total revenue, Central West LLS (2014-15)

5.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, Central West LLS spent \$0.58 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 67 percent of this was provided as grants, 20 percent as funding for dedicated support staff, and 13 percent as funding for other support staff (Figure 21). Central West LLS paid for 89 percent of this expenditure using funding received under the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW (Figure 21). This is discussed in Sections 5.3.1 to 5.3.3 below.

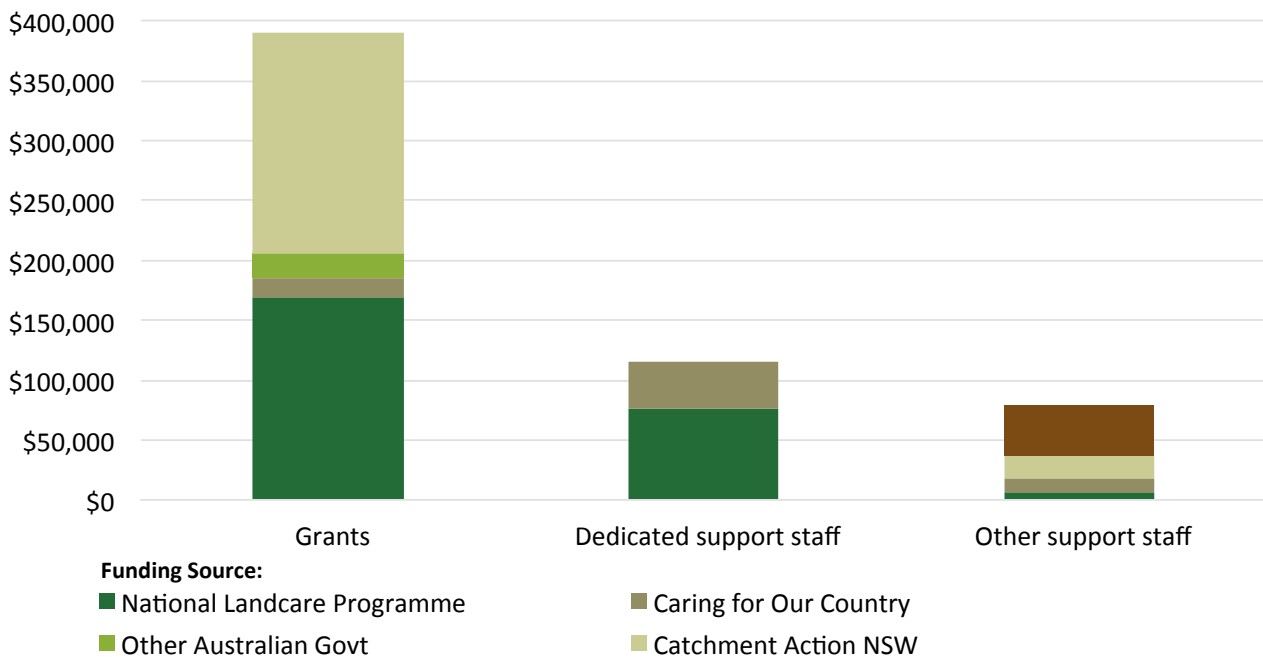


Figure 21. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups, Central West LLS (2014-15)

5.3.1. Grants

Central West LLS provided \$1.27 million in total grants in 2014-15, of which \$0.39 million went to Landcare and community groups (**Figure 22**). The remaining \$0.88 million was provided to government agencies²⁷ (9 percent of total grants), individuals for sustainable agriculture, natural resource management and other purposes (60 percent of total grants), and education institutions (1 percent of total grants) (**Figure 22**).

From the \$0.39 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, approximately 73 percent was for training events, workshops, field days and newsletters. The remaining 27% was used for other capacity building projects, cultural heritage, on-ground and community engagement projects.

Approximately 74 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of ‘Landcare and community groups’ in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (see **Table 1, Section 2.2.4** for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 26 percent of these grants (**Figure 22**).

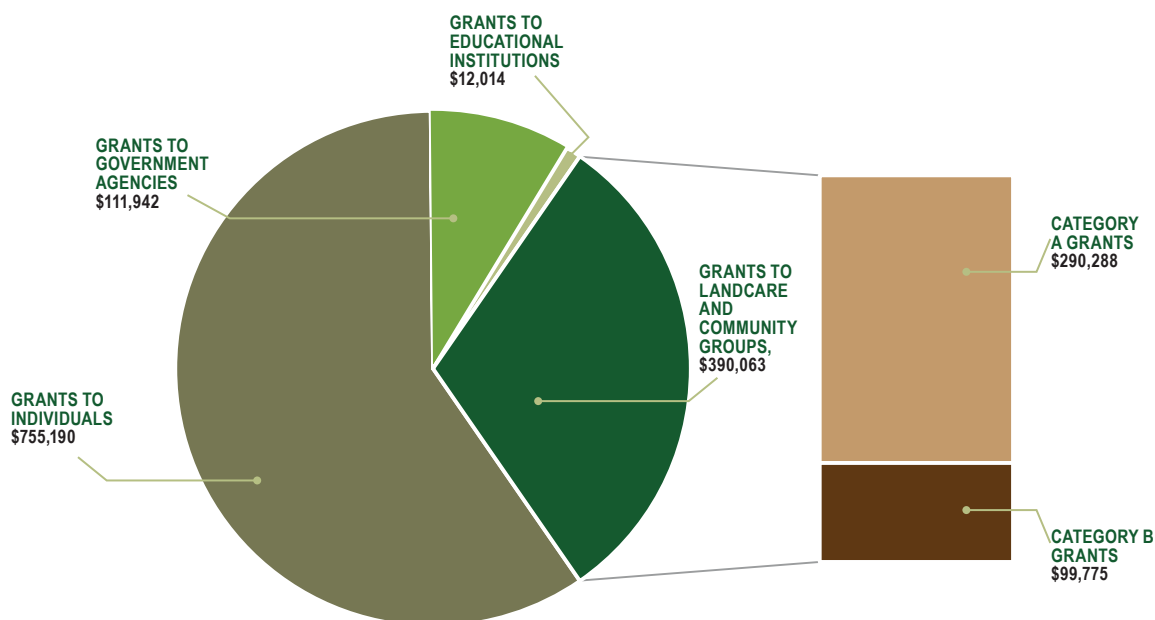


Figure 22. Total grants provided by Central West LLS (2014-15)

Table 4 shows the number, value and range for grants to Category A and B groups. In summary, Landcare groups received 91 percent of the value of grants to Category A groups, with the remaining 9 percent going to producer groups and Friends of Groups (**Table 4**). Private consultants and local councils received 30 percent and 23 percent of the value of grants to Category B groups, respectively, with the remaining 47 percent going to schools and other recipients (**Table 4**).

²⁷ Excludes grant to local councils or other government organisations (e.g. public schools) which were captured as grants to Landcare and community groups.

Table 4. Grants to Landcare and other community groups, Central West LLS (2014-15)

Group type	No. of grants	No. of recipients	Total cost	Range for individual grants	
				Low	High
Category A groups					
Landcare	39	13	\$264,388	\$150	\$22,500
Friends of Groups	2	1	\$1,000	\$200	\$800
Producer	2	1	\$24,900	\$2,400	\$22,500
Total (Category A)	43	15	\$290,288	N/A	N/A
Category B groups					
Other	3	3	\$43,080	\$2,400	\$21,850
School	3	3	\$4,302	\$582	\$2,400
Local council	1	1	\$22,500	\$22,500	\$22,500
Private consultant	1	1	\$29,893	\$29,893	\$29,893
Total (Category B)	8	8	\$99,775	N/A	N/A
Total (Categories A & B)	51	23	390,063	N/A	N/A

Central West LLS paid for all Category A and B grants to Landcare and community groups using funding received under the National Landcare Programme (\$252,118), Caring for Our Country (\$65,953), other Australian Government sources (\$20,942) and Catchment Action NSW (\$203,061) (Figure 23).

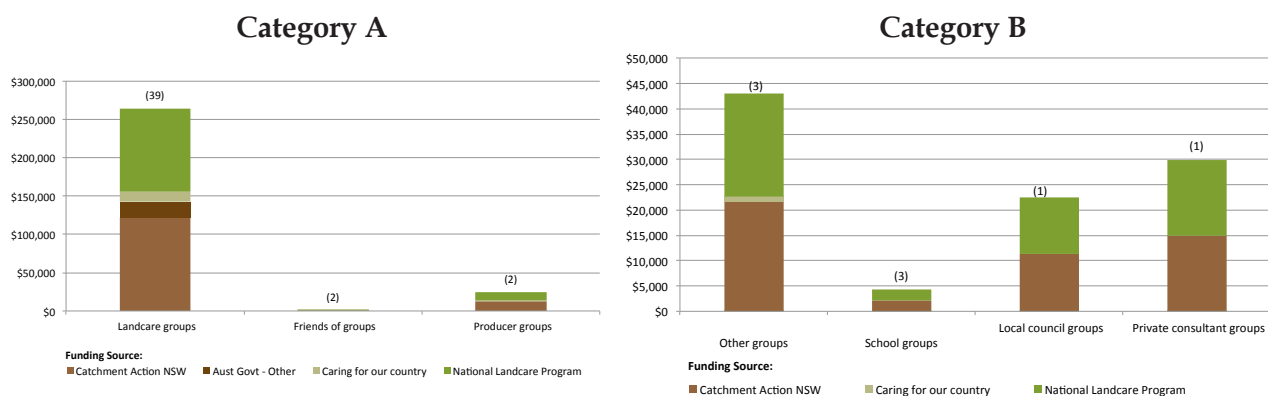


Figure 23. Grants to Category A and B groups, Central West LLS (2014-15)
(the number in brackets shows the number of grants)

5.3.2. Dedicated support staff

Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups, generally the Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) and Community Support Officer (CSO) positions (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

Central West LLS employed one RLF in 2014-15. This was a 1.0 FTE position and was filled for the full financial year. It cost approximately \$115,000, including salary and on costs, and was paid for using funding received under the National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country. The position was appointed directly by LLS and was based at the Dubbo and Wellington offices. The role included supporting and coordinating with community groups across the Central West region.

5.3.3. Other support staff

Other support staff are positions funded by LLS that provide a support function for Landcare and community groups but also have other roles (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, other support staff at Central West LLS included the General Manger, six Senior Land Services Officers and five Land Services Officers.

Central West LLS estimated that these staff spent between 5 percent (General Manager) and 10 percent (Land Services Officers) of their time supporting Landcare and other community groups. These estimates were based on the number of Landcare and community groups meetings attended, and time spent on Landcare grant applications and grant projects.

Based on these time estimates, the portion of these positions that contributed to supporting Landcare and other community groups cost \$79,474, including salary and on costs. They were paid for using funding received from both the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 24**). These costs may be indicative of some of the costs associated with administering grants to Landcare and community groups, as some of these staff had responsibilities for grant applications and projects.

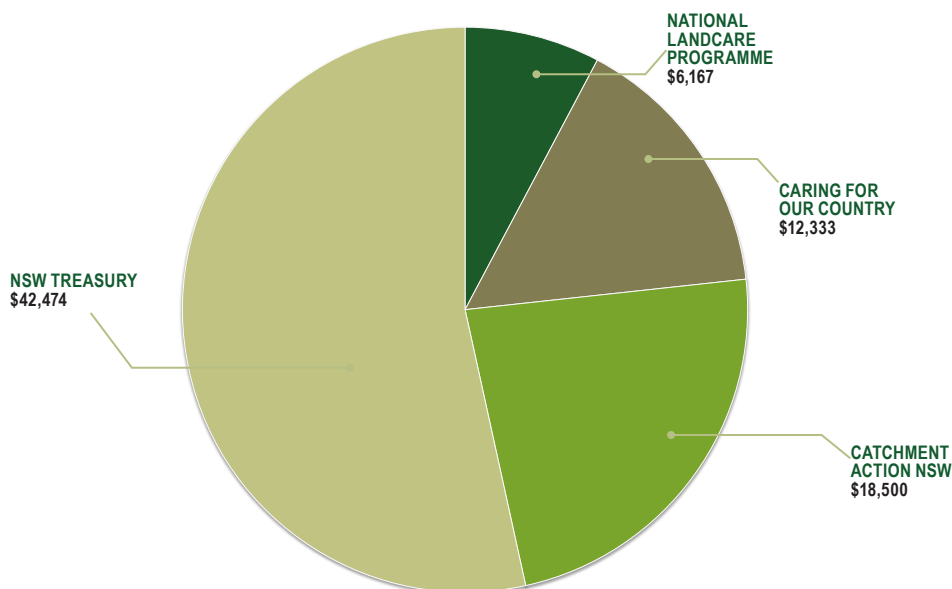


Figure 24. Cost of other support staff at Central West LLS (2014-15)

(This analysis is based on funding data provided by LLS for individual staff positions that provided support to Landcare and community groups in 2014-15)

5.3.4. Distribution of grants and dedicated support staff

Figure 25 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff positions across the Central West region. The majority of grants were concentrated around the regional centres. There were LLS offices in most of these centres, and an RLF staff position based in Dubbo and Wellington.

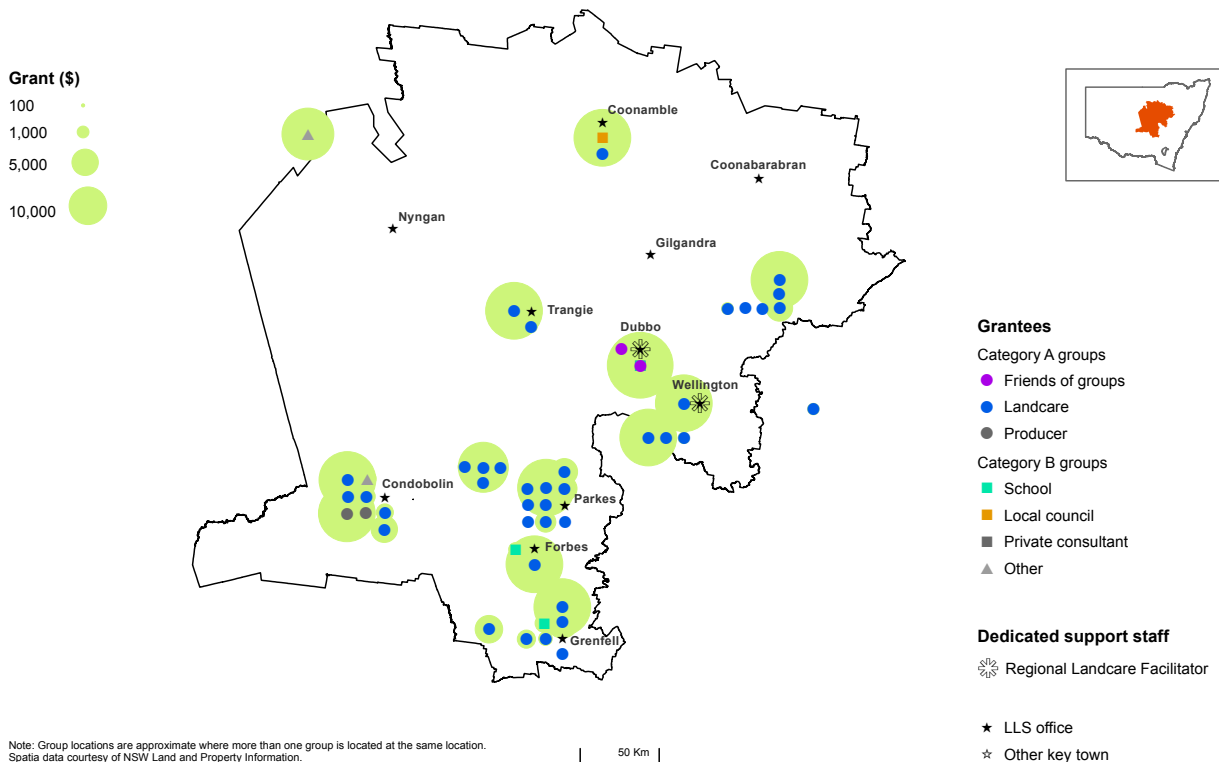


Figure 25. Distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff in Central West LLS (2014-15)
 (Note: The one RLF position was based at two office locations)

5.3.5. Other analysis

Central West LLS spent 9 percent of revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. Its spending of the remaining 91 percent of grants and contributions revenue was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission can account for an additional 15 percent of spending of total grants and contributions revenue. Approximately 14 percent was provided as grants to individual land managers, government agencies and educational institutions, and 1 percent paid for LLS staff who supported Landcare and community groups. Other LLS staff may have also been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue, so the actual percentage may be higher than 1 percent.

6. Regional baseline: Greater Sydney LLS

6.1. Overview

In 2014-15, Greater Sydney LLS revenue was \$10.68 million, most of which came from the NSW Treasury (\$2.60 million) and grants and contributions (\$6.67 million).

Greater Sydney LLS spent \$3.25 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$1.82 million
- dedicated support staff (one Regional Landcare Facilitator), \$0.12 million
- other support staff (such as Land Services Officers), \$1.24 million
- other support (e.g. provision of workshops, equipment and insurance for Landcare groups), \$0.05 million.

Approximately 83 percent of this expenditure was paid for using grants and contributions revenue²⁸ from the Australian and NSW governments. The National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW paid for 76 percent of this expenditure.

The expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 30 percent of total revenue and 49 percent of revenue from grants and contributions²⁹.

6.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 6.3**).

Total revenue for Greater Sydney LLS was \$10.68 million in 2014-15 (**Figure 26**). Approximately 62 percent of total revenue came from grants and contributions, most of which was provided by the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 26**). Rates only provided 6 percent of total revenue (**Figure 26**) and were not used to pay for any LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups. NSW Treasury funding provided 24 percent of total revenue (**Figure 26**), but was only used to pay for 14 percent of expenditure on groups, all of which was for other support staff. Other revenue sources made up 7 percent of total revenue (**Figure 26**) and consisted of revenue from sale of goods, rendering of services, levies and other minor revenue streams.

²⁸ Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other funding programs. It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay for salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue however, it is excluded from the grants and contributions revenue category in this report because it was only used to pay for a relatively small portion of expenditure on Landcare and community groups (14 percent, all of which was used to pay for other support staff salaries and on costs).

²⁹ For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue because most of the expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

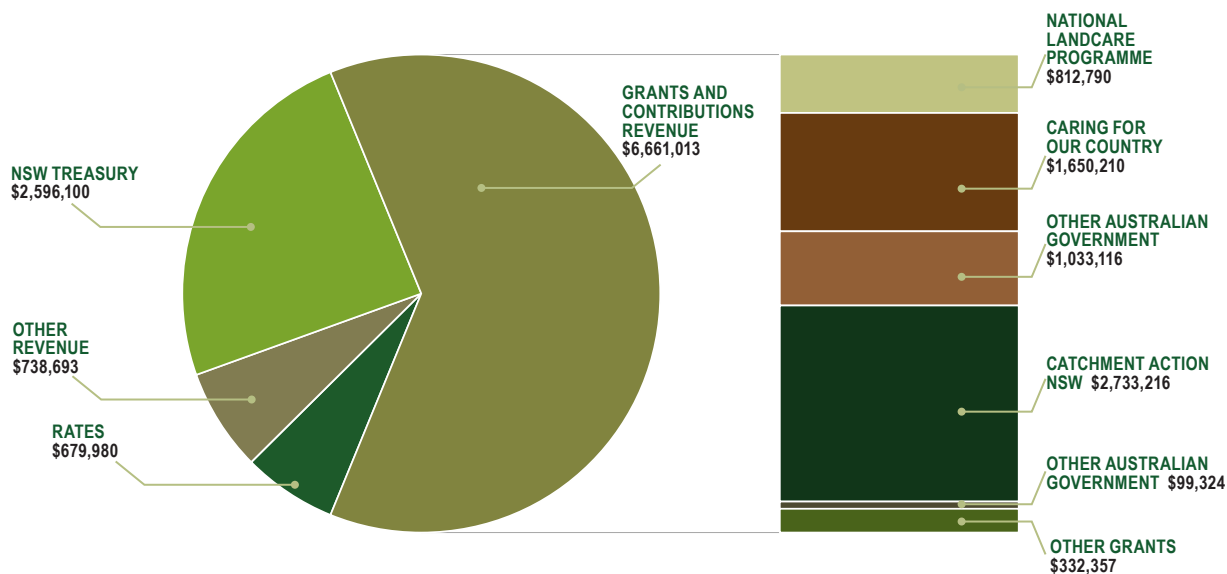


Figure 26. Total revenue, Greater Sydney LLS (2014-15)

6.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, Greater Sydney LLS spent \$3.25 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 56 percent of this was provided as grants, 4 percent as funding for dedicated support staff, 38 percent as funding for other support staff, and 2 percent as other forms of support (Figure 27). Greater Sydney LLS paid for 76 percent of this expenditure using funding received under the National Landcare Programme, Caring or Our Country and Catchment Action NSW (Figure 27). This is discussed in Sections 6.3.1 to 6.3.3 below.

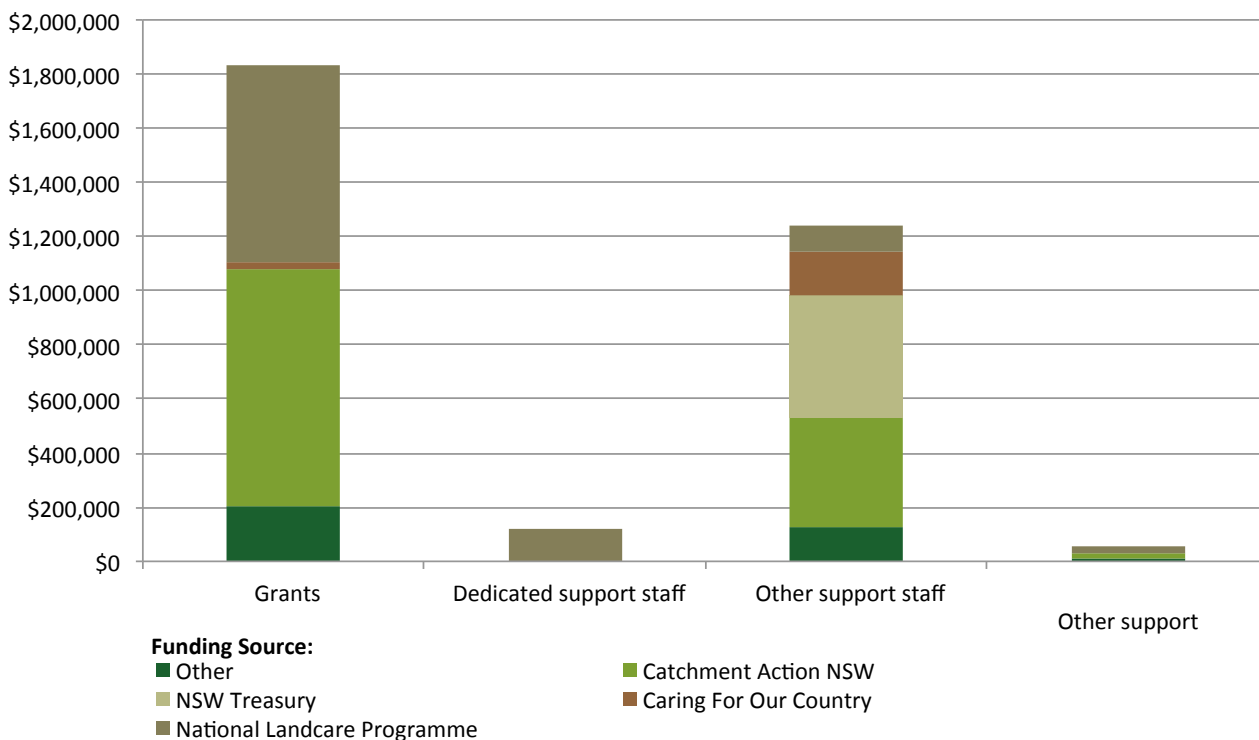


Figure 27. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups, Greater Sydney LLS (2014-15)

6.3.1. Grants

Greater Sydney LLS provided \$3.31 million in total grants in 2014-15, of which \$1.83 million went to Landcare and community groups (**Figure 28**). The remaining \$1.48 million was provided to individual land managers for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management projects, as well as NSW Government agencies, including the National Parks and Wildlife Service, to protect key biodiversity areas and work heritage sites (**Figure 28**).

From the \$1.83 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, Greater Sydney LLS reported that all grants were used to fund on-ground projects in the natural resource management sphere. These grants supported a range of activities, including habitat restoration, weed control, animal monitoring and bush regeneration.

Approximately 11 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of ‘Landcare and community groups’ in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (see **Table 1, Section 2.2.4** for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 89 percent of these grants (**Figure 28**).

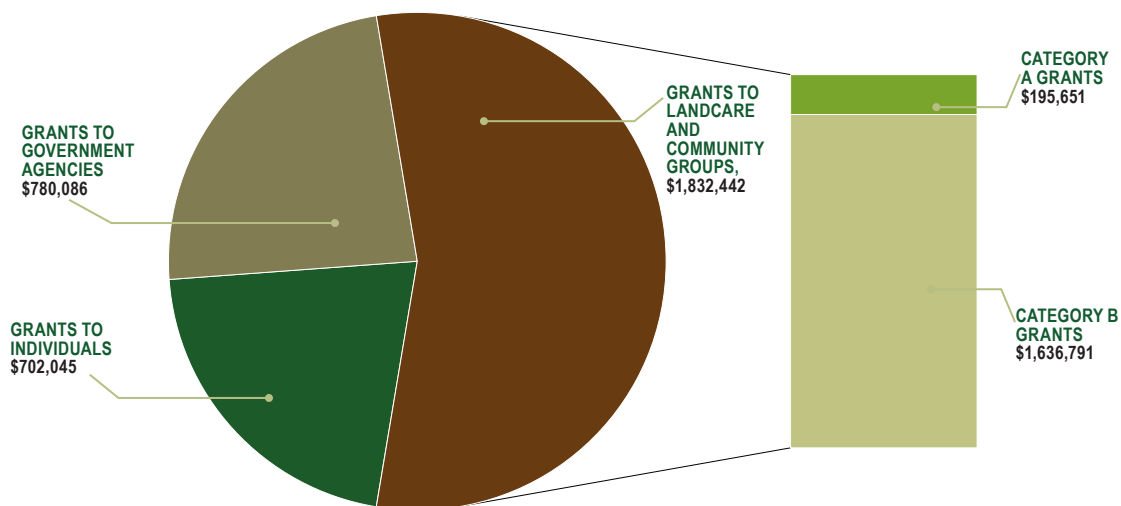


Figure 28. Total grants provided by Greater Sydney LLS (2014-15)

Table 5 shows the number, value and range for grants to Category A and B groups. In summary, Landcare and Bushcare groups received 57 percent and 30 percent, respectively, of the value of grants to Category A groups. The remaining 13 percent went to Friends of Groups, Dunecare groups and producer groups (**Table 5**). Local councils received 66 percent of the value of grants to Category B groups, with most of the remaining 34 percent going to Aboriginal groups, conservation groups and schools (**Table 5**).

Table 5. Grants to Landcare and other community groups, Greater Sydney LLS (2014-15)

Group type	No. of grants	No. of recipients	Total cost	Range for individual grants	
				Low	High
Category A groups					
Bushcare	5	5	\$58,007	\$1,291	\$35,000
Dunecare	2	1	\$ 9,100	\$1,500	\$7,600
Landcare	10	6	\$ 111,604	\$1,020	\$31,700
Friends of Groups	1	1	\$15,620	\$15,620	\$15,620
Producer	1	1	\$1,320	\$1,320	\$1,320
Total (Category A)	19	14	\$195,651	N/A	N/A
Category B groups					
Aboriginal	7	5	\$219,477	\$6,130	\$55,000
Conservation	11	10	\$107,473	\$500	\$36,365
Local council	42	20	\$1,080,474	\$1,100	\$115,000
Other	17	14	\$171,519	\$501	\$35,000
Private consultant	3	3	\$10,600	\$1,100	\$8,000
School	8	8	\$47,248	\$1,000	\$18,000
Total (Category B)	88	60	\$1,636,791	N/A	N/A
Total (Categories A & B)	107	74	\$1,832,442	N/A	N/A

Greater Sydney LLS paid for 99 percent of Category A and B grants to Landcare and community groups using funding received under Caring for Our Country (\$22,652), National Landcare Programme (\$727,586), Biodiversity fund (\$180,737) and Catchment Action NSW (\$877,787) (Figure 29).

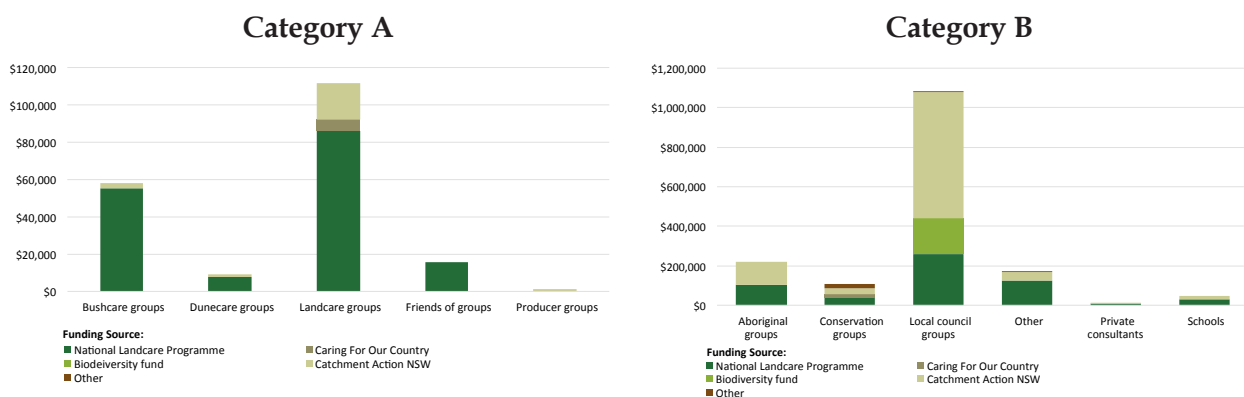


Figure 29. Grants to Category A and B groups, Greater Sydney LLS (2014-15)
(the number in brackets shows the number of grants)

6.3.2. Dedicated support staff

Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups, generally the Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) and Community Support Officer (CSO) positions (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

Greater Sydney LLS employed one RLF in 2014-15. This was a 1.0 FTE position and was filled for the full financial year. It cost approximately \$119,000, including salary and on costs, and was paid for using funding received under the National Landcare Programme. The position was appointed directly by LLS and was based at the Penrith office. The role included supporting Landcare groups and networks, organising Landcare events and running capacity building workshops.

6.3.3. Other support staff

Other support staff are positions funded by LLS that provide a support function for Landcare and community groups but also have other roles (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, other support staff at Greater Sydney LLS included the General Manager, three Land Servicers managers, 15 Senior Land Services Officer and five Land Services Officers.

Greater Sydney LLS estimated that these staff spent between 20 percent (General Manager) and 80 percent (Senior Land Services Officer) of their time supporting Landcare and other community groups.

Based on these time estimates, the portion of these positions that contributed to supporting Landcare and other community groups cost \$1.24 million, including salary and on costs. They were paid for using funding received from both the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 30**). These costs may be indicative of some of the costs associated with administering grants to Landcare and community groups, and conducting monitoring, evaluation and reporting on Landcare projects. This is because some of these staff had responsibilities for developing partnerships with Landcare groups, and evaluating and reporting on projects.

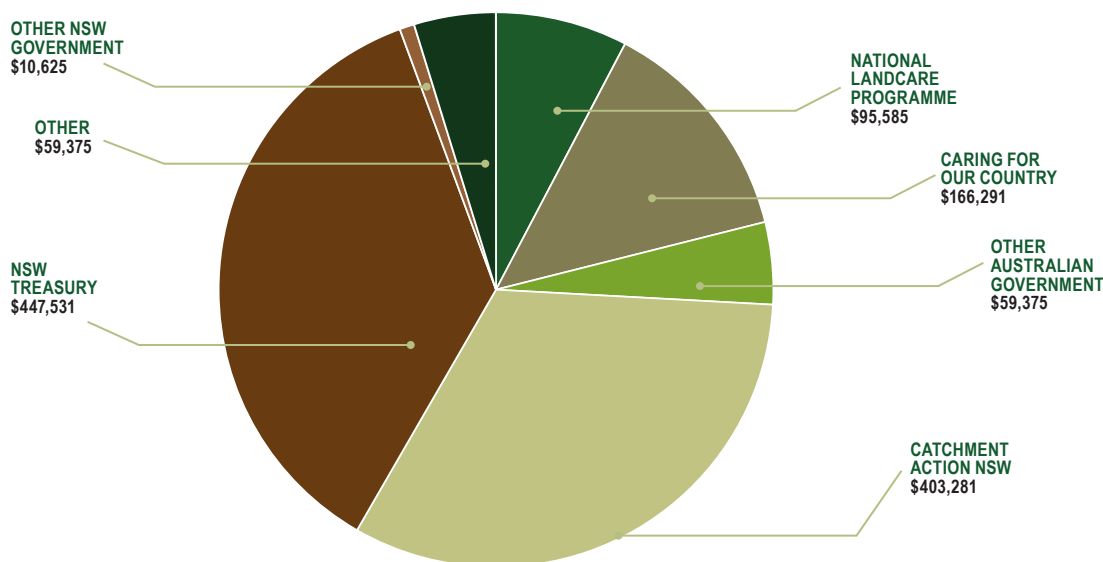


Figure 30. Cost of other support staff at Greater Sydney LLS (2014-15)

(This analysis is based on funding data provided by LLS for individual staff positions that provided support to Landcare and community groups in 2014-15)

6.3.4. Other support

Other support includes any additional LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups that is not already captured in the grants section (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, Greater Sydney LLS spent an additional \$54,000 on Landcare and community groups. This expenditure included \$18,000 to provide insurance cover for 74 Landcare groups, including public liability and general volunteers insurance. It also included capacity building support of \$36,000 to cover the cost of workshops run by the RLF, and specialist equipment for on-ground Landcare activities and events.

6.3.5. Distribution of grants and dedicated support staff

Figure 31 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS Offices and dedicated support staff positions across the Greater Sydney region. The majority of grants were concentrated on the coast and around Penrith and Katoomba. There was an RLF position based in the LLS Penrith office.

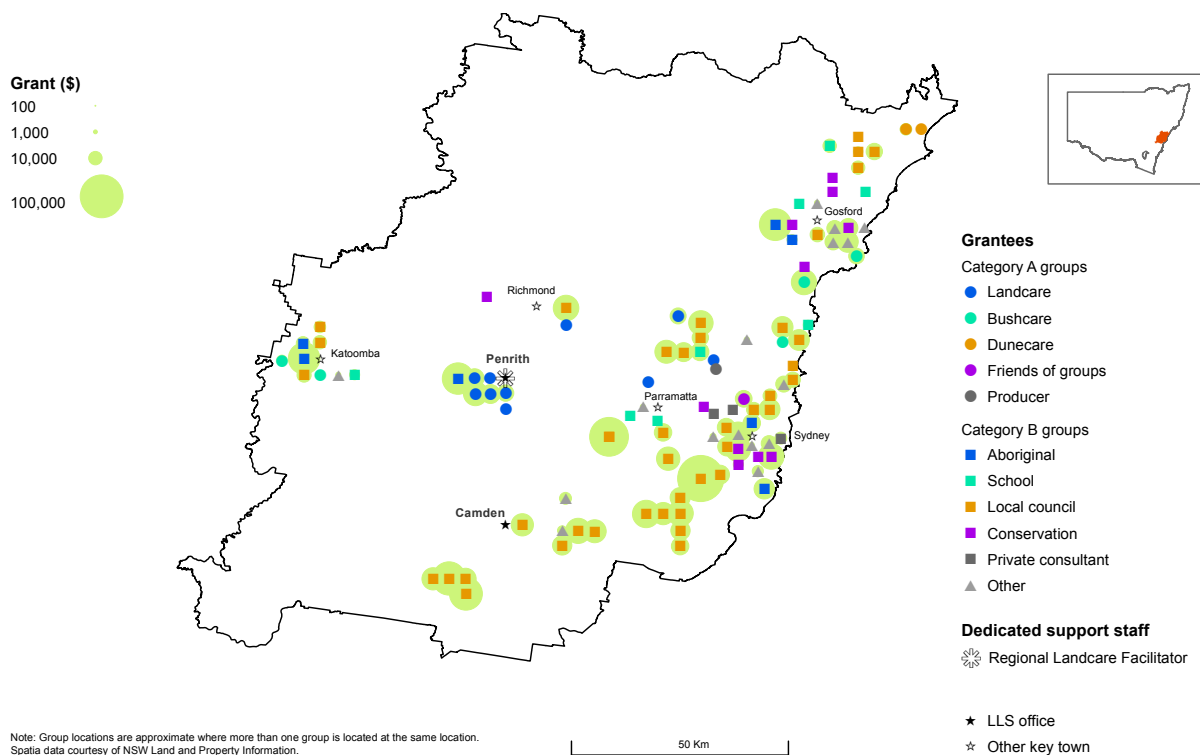


Figure 31. Distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff in Greater Sydney LLS (2014-15)

6.3.6. Other analysis

Greater Sydney LLS spent 49 percent of revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. Its spending of the remaining 51 percent of revenue from grants and contributions was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission can account for an additional 35 percent of spending of total grants and contribution revenue. Approximately 22 percent was provided as grants to individuals, and 13 percent paid for LLS staff who supported Landcare and community groups. Other LLS staff may have also been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue, so the actual percentage may be higher than 13 percent.

7. Regional baseline: Hunter LLS

7.1. Overview

In 2014-15, Hunter LLS revenue was \$17.47 million, most of which came from rates (\$2.91 million), NSW Treasury (\$2.28 million), grants and contributions (\$7.52 million), and levies (\$3.98 million).

Hunter LLS spent \$0.89 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$0.22 million
- dedicated support staff (one Regional Landcare Facilitator), \$0.12 million
- other support staff (such as Land Services Officers), \$0.56 million.

Approximately 94 percent of this expenditure was paid for using grants and contributions revenue³⁰ from the Australian and NSW governments. The National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW paid for 78 percent of this expenditure.

The expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 5 percent of total revenue and 12 percent of revenue from grants and contributions³¹.

7.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 7.3**).

Total revenue for Hunter LLS was \$17.47 million in 2014-15 (**Figure 32**). Approximately 43 percent of total revenue came from grants and contributions, most of which was provided by the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 32**). Rates provided 17 percent of total revenue (**Figure 32**), but were not used to pay for any of Hunter LLS' expenditure on Landcare and community groups. NSW Treasury funding provided 13 percent of total revenue (**Figure 32**), but was only used to pay for 7 percent of expenditure on groups. Other revenue sources made up 27 percent of total revenue (**Figure 32**) and consisted mostly of revenue from levies (\$3.98 million), as well as revenue from the sale of goods, rendering of services and other minor revenue streams.

30 Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other funding programs. It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay for salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue however, it is excluded from the grants and contributions revenue category in this report because it was only used to pay for a relatively small portion of expenditure on Landcare and community groups (7 percent).

31 For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue because most of the expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

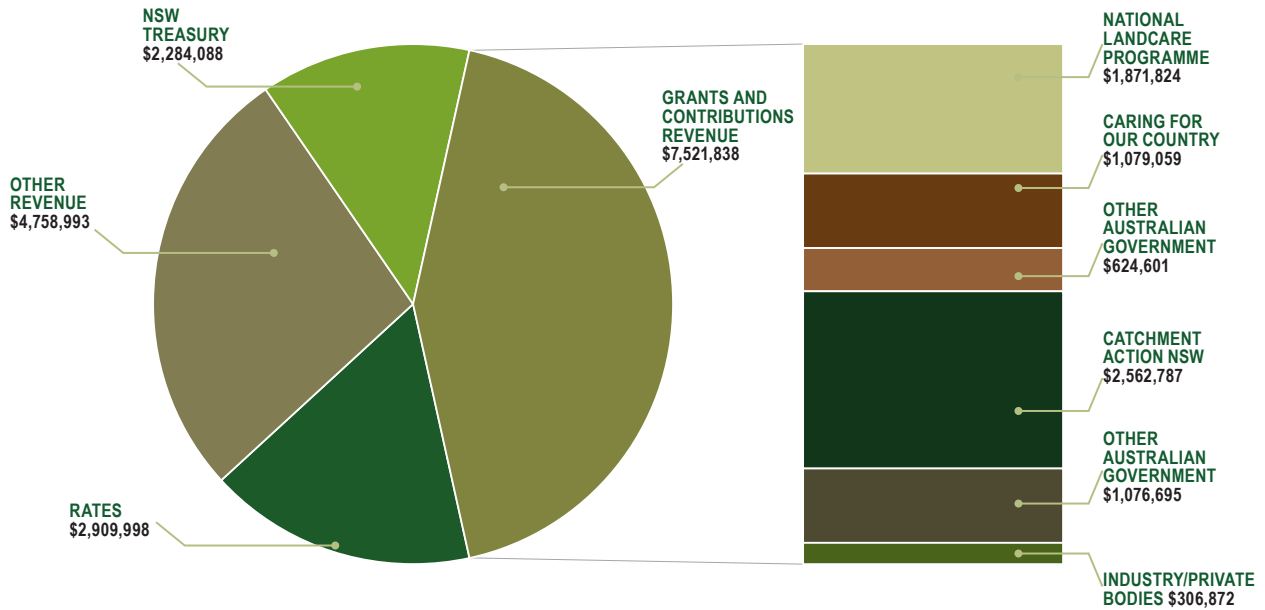


Figure 32. Total revenue, Hunter LLS (2014-15)

7.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, Hunter LLS spent \$0.89 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 25 percent of this was provided as grants, 13 percent as funding for dedicated support staff, and 62 percent as funding for other support staff (Figure 33). Hunter LLS paid for 78 percent of this expenditure using funding received under the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW (Figure 33). This is discussed in Sections 7.3.1 to 7.3.3.

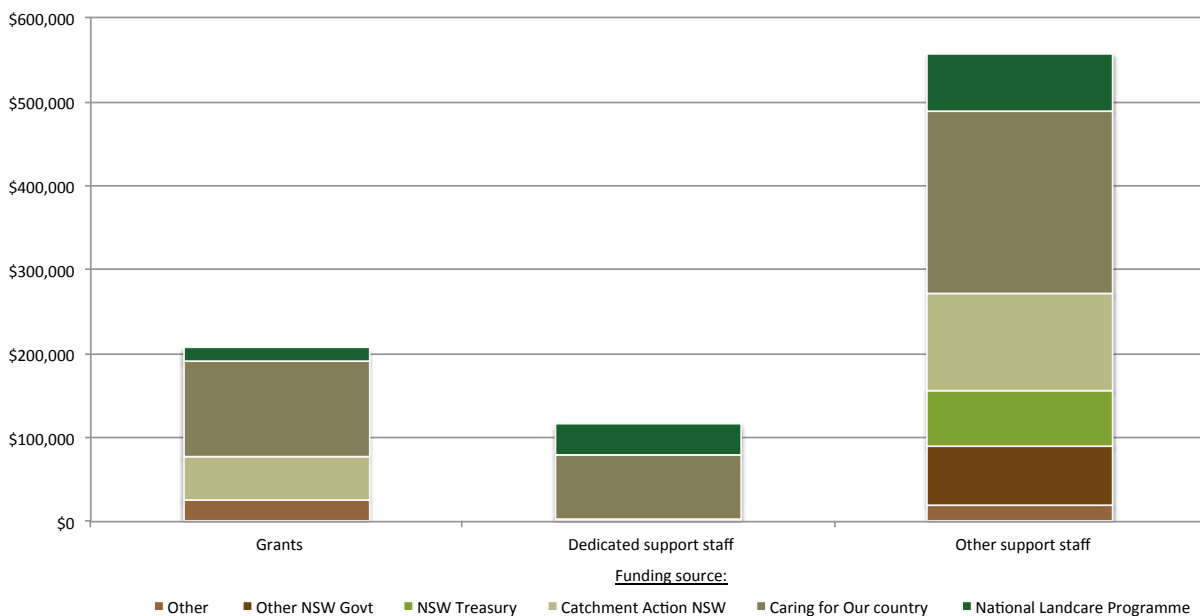


Figure 33. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups, Hunter LLS (2014-15)

7.3.1. Grants

Hunter LLS provided \$3.49 million in total grants in 2014-15, of which \$0.22 million went to Landcare and community groups (**Figure 34**). The remaining \$3.27 million was provided to government agencies³² (38 percent of total grants) and individuals for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management projects (55 percent of total grants) (**Figure 34**).

From the \$0.22 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, approximately 52 percent were used to fund on-ground projects, 21 percent were for network support and the remainder were for a mix of capacity building projects, events and the development of resource materials.

45 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of ‘Landcare and community groups’ in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (see **Table 1, Section 2.2.4** for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 55 percent of these grants (**Figure 34**).

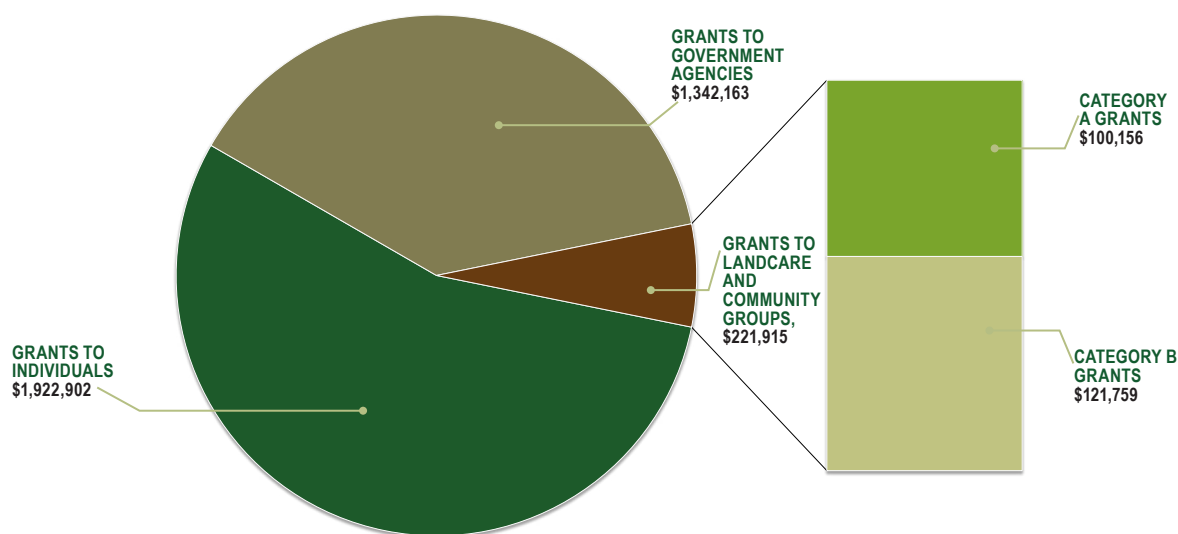


Figure 34. Total grants provided by Hunter LLS (2014-15)

Table 6 shows the number, value and range for grants to Category A and B groups. In summary, Landcare groups received 53 percent of the value of grants to Category A groups, with the remaining 47 percent going to Friends of Groups, Coastcare groups and producer groups (**Table 6**). Aboriginal groups received 37 percent of the value of grants to Category B groups, with the remaining 63 percent going to conservation groups (28 percent), local councils (26 percent), schools and other groups (**Table 6**).

³² Excludes grant to local councils or other government organisations (e.g. public schools) which were captured as grants to Landcare and community groups.

Table 6. Grants to Landcare and other community groups, Hunter LLS (2014-15)

Group type	No. of grants	No. of recipients	Total cost	Range for individual grants	
				Low	High
Category A groups					
Coastcare	2	1	\$17,500	\$2,500	\$15,000
Landcare	12	10	\$53,056	\$666	\$16,000
Friends of Groups	5	4	\$21,100	\$1,000	\$13,200
Producer	3	2	\$8,500	\$1,000	\$5,000
Total (Category A)	22	17	\$100,156	N/A	N/A
Category B groups					
Aboriginal	8	6	\$45,453	\$1,440	\$14,000
Conservation	8	7	\$34,346	\$1,496	\$11,150
Local council	3	1	\$31,500	\$1,500	\$15,000
Other	2	2	\$6,460	\$1,460	\$5,000
School	2	2	\$4,000	\$1,500	\$2,500
Total (Category B)	23	18	\$121,759	N/A	N/A
Total (Categories A & B)	45	35	\$221,915	N/A	N/A

Hunter LLS paid for the majority for Category A and B grants to Landcare and community groups (81 percent) using funding received under Caring for Our Country (\$115,297), National Landcare Programme (\$15,000) and Catchment Action NSW (\$50,346) (Figure 35).

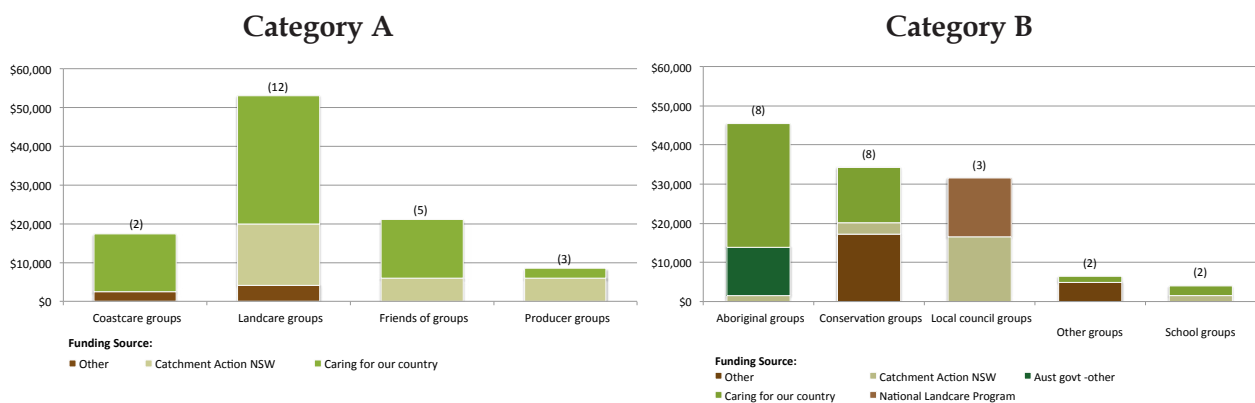


Figure 35. Grants to Category A and B groups, Hunter LLS (2014-15)
(the number in brackets shows the number of grants)

While Hunter LLS reported the lowest level of grant expenditure on Landcare and community groups across LLS, part of the Hunter Valley was adversely affected by heavy rainfall and damaging floods in April 2015. During this period, Hunter LLS provided livestock and property support services to affected landholders. As a consequence of the flooding, many grant-funded projects were put on hold and Hunter LLS suspended grant payments for a period of eight weeks. As a result, Hunter LLS' total grant expenditure was lower than expected and National Landcare Programme and Catchment Action NSW revenue was underspent in 2014-15.

7.3.2. Dedicated support staff

Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups, generally the Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) and Community Support Officer (CSO) positions (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

Hunter LLS employed one RLF in 2014-15. This was a 1.0 FTE position and was filled for the full financial year. It cost approximately \$116,000, including salary and on costs, and was 98 percent paid for using funding received under the National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country. The position was appointed directly by Hunter LLS and was based at the Tocal office. The role included engaging with Landcare networks in the Hunter region.

7.3.3. Other support staff

Other support staff are positions funded by LLS that provide a support function for Landcare and community groups but also have other roles (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, other support staff at Hunter LLS included two Aboriginal Communities Support Officers, two Education Coordinators, four Landholder Support Officers, 15 NRM Extension Officers, a Partnerships team leader and three other staff positions.

Hunter LLS estimated that these staff spent on average 24 percent of their time supporting Landcare and other community groups, with this ranging from 10 percent (e.g. a NRM Extension Officer) to 100 percent (e.g. a Land Support Officer).

Based on these time estimates, the portion of these positions that contributed to supporting Landcare and other community groups cost \$555,943, including salary and on costs. They were paid for using funding received from both the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 36**).

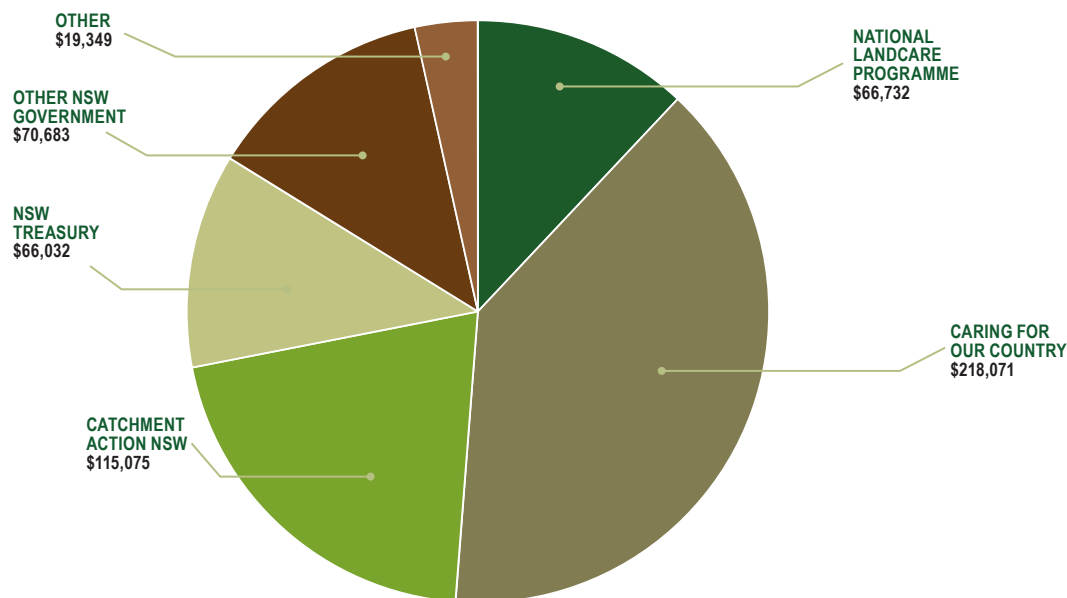


Figure 36. Cost of other support staff at Hunter LLS (2014-15)

(This analysis is based on funding data provided by LLS for individual staff positions that provided support to Landcare and community groups in 2014-15)

7.3.4. Distribution of grants and dedicated support staff

Figure 37 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS Offices and dedicated support staff positions across the Hunter region. The majority of grants were concentrated around Newcastle and Taree. There was an RLF based in Tocal, close to Newcastle.

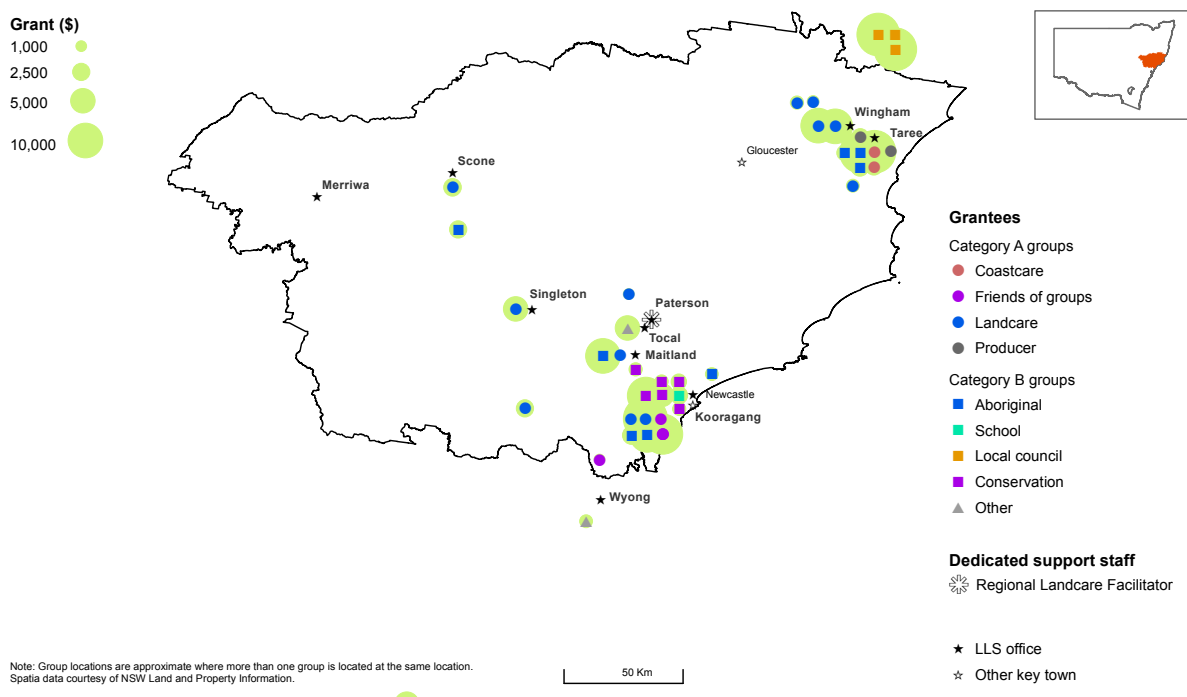


Figure 37. Distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff in Hunter LLS (2014-15)

7.3.5. Other analysis

Hunter LLS spent 12 percent of revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. Its spending of the remaining 88 percent of grants and contributions revenue was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission can account for additional 47-64 percent³³ of spending of total grants and contributions revenue. Approximately 27-43 percent was provided as grants to individuals and government agencies, and 20-21 percent paid for LLS staff who supported Landcare and community groups. Other LLS staff may have also been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue, so the actual percentage may be higher than 20-21 percent.

33 A range is given as it is unclear whether the 'other funding stream' category which paid for some of the expenditure on Landcare and community groups should be included as part of revenue from grants and contributions

8. Regional baseline: Murray LLS

8.1. Overview

In 2014-15, Murray LLS revenue was \$14.46 million, most of which came from rates (\$2.14 million), NSW Treasury (\$2.50 million) and grants and contributions (\$7.93 million).

Murray LLS spent \$2.41 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$2.00 million
- dedicated support staff (one Regional Landcare Facilitator and five Community Support Officers), \$0.29 million
- other support staff (such as a Land Services Officer), \$0.12 million.

Approximately 97 percent of expenditure on Landcare and community groups was paid for using grants and contributions revenue³⁴ from the Australian Government. The National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country paid for 68 percent of this expenditure.

The expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 17 percent of total revenue and 30 percent of revenue from grants and contributions³⁵.

8.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 8.3**).

Total revenue for Murray LLS was \$14.46 million in 2014-15 (**Figure 38**). Approximately 55 percent of total revenue came from grants and contributions, most of which was provided by the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 38**). Rates provided 15 percent of total revenue (**Figure 38**), but were not used to pay for any LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups. NSW Treasury funding provided 17 percent of total revenue (**Figure 38**), but was also not used to pay for any of the expenditure on groups. Other revenue sources made up 13 percent of total revenue (**Figure 38**) and consisted of revenue from the sale of goods, rendering of services, investments and other minor revenue streams.

34 Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other funding programs. It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay for salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue however, it is excluded from the grants and contributions revenue category in this report because it was not used to pay for any expenditure on Landcare and community groups by Murray LLS.

35 For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue because most of the expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

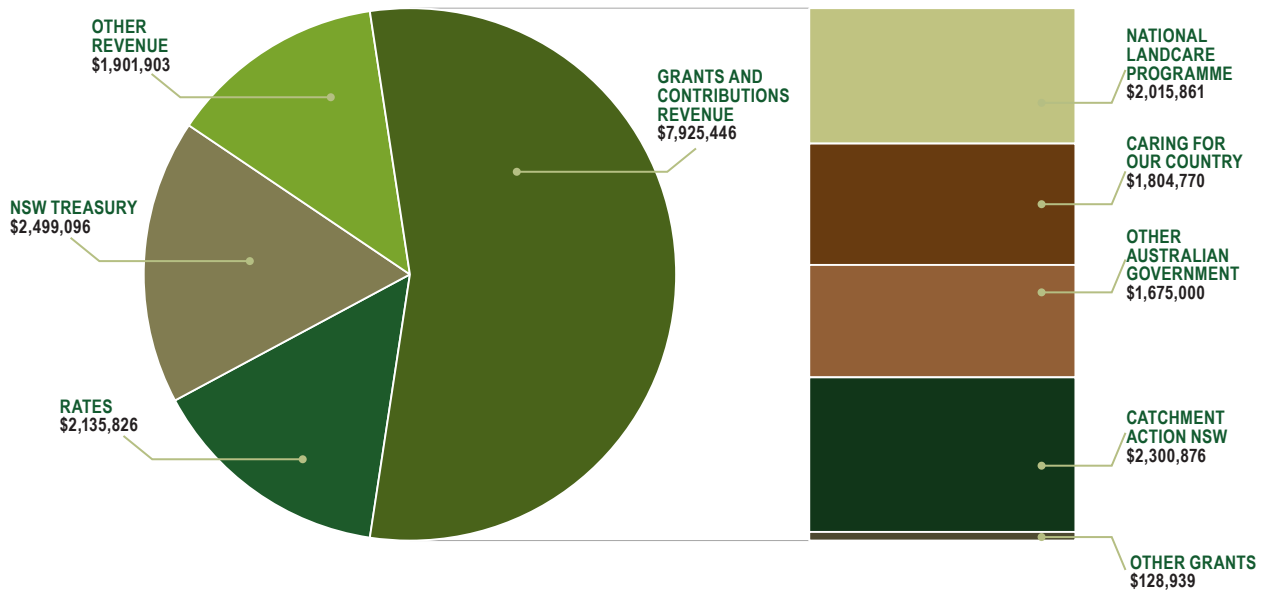


Figure 38. Total revenue, Murray LLS (2014-15)

8.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, Murray LLS spent \$2.41 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 83 percent of this was provided as grants, 12 percent as funding for dedicated support staff, and 5 percent as funding for other support staff (Figure 39). Murray LLS paid for 97 percent of this expenditure using funding received under the Australian Government’s National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and other funding programs (Figure 39). This is discussed in Sections 8.3.1 to 8.3.3 below.

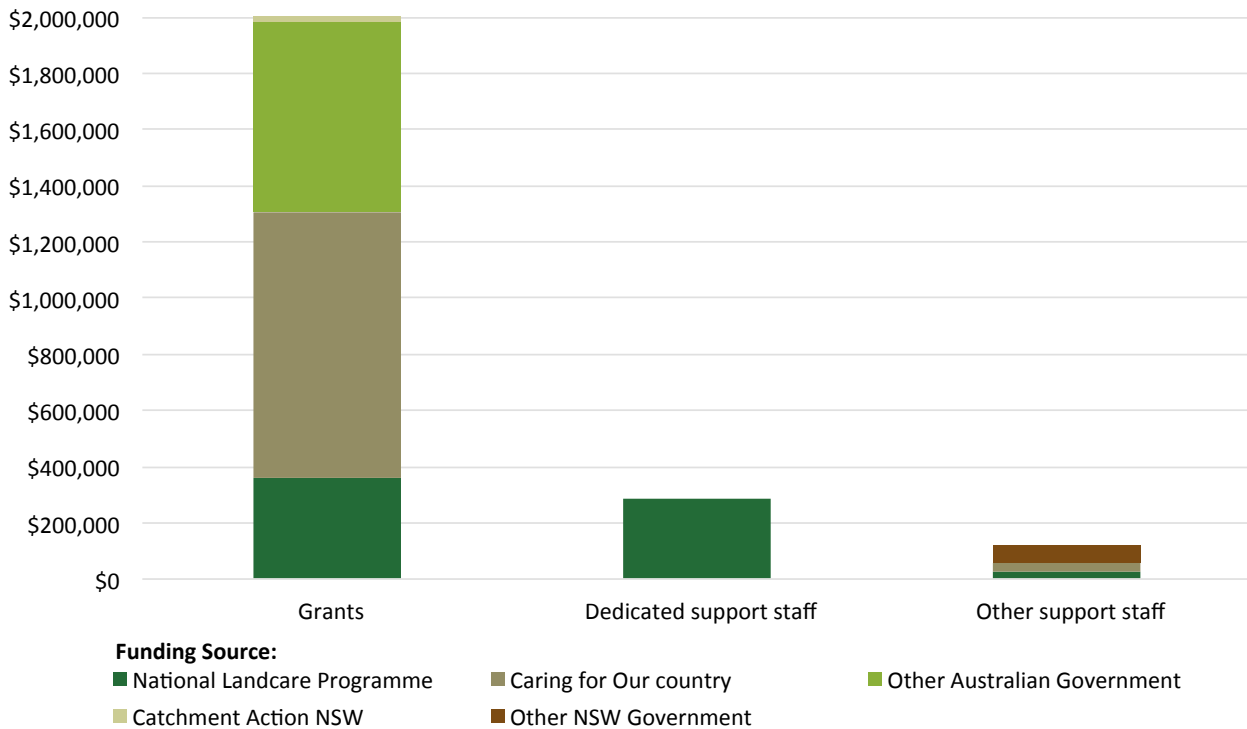


Figure 39. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups, Murray LLS (2014-15)

8.3.1. Grants

Murray LLS provided \$2.57 million in total grants in 2014-15, of which \$2.00 million³⁶ went to Landcare and community groups (**Figure 40**). The remaining \$0.57 million was provided to individuals (14 percent of total grants), government agencies³⁷ (6 percent of total grants) and other organisations for capacity building (2 percent) (**Figure 40**).

From the \$2.00 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, approximately 75 percent was used to fund on-ground projects, 13 percent was used for capacity building, and the remainder was used for events and developing resource materials.

Approximately 39 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of ‘Landcare and community groups’ in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (see **Table 1, Section 2.2.4** for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 61 percent of these grants (**Figure 40**).

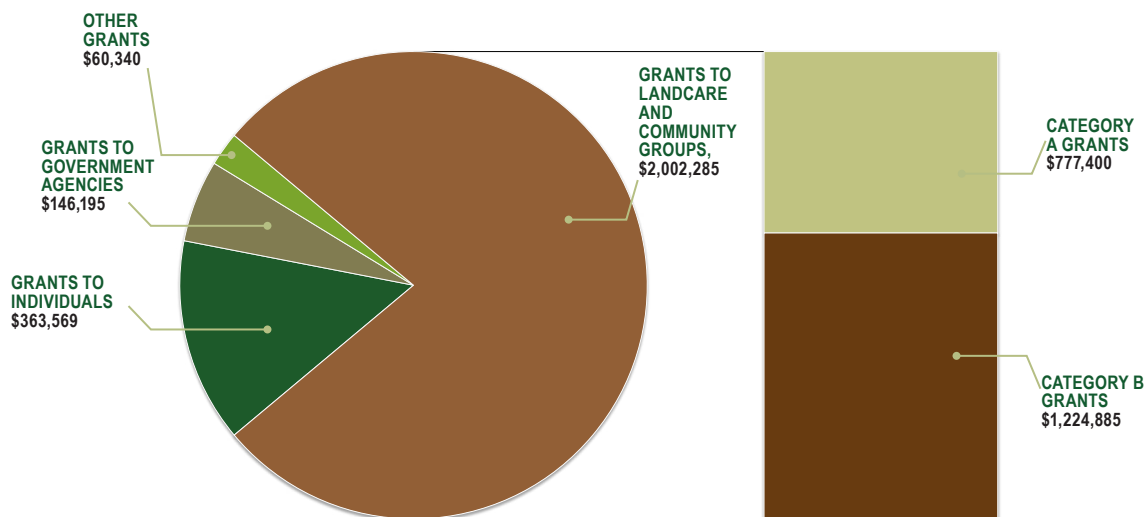


Figure 40. Total grants provided by Murray LLS (2014-15)

Table 7 shows the number, value and range for grants to Category A and B groups. In summary, Landcare groups received 34 percent of the value of grants to Category A groups, producer groups received 58 percent and Friends of Groups received 8 percent (**Table 7**). Conservation groups received 62 percent of the value of grants to Category B groups, and local councils and Aboriginal groups received 33 percent and 5 percent, respectively (**Table 7**).

³⁶ Murray LLS provided an additional \$285,000 in grant funding for an RLF and CSOs. This has been captured as dedicated support staff funding in **Section 8.3.2**.

³⁷ Excludes grant to local councils or other government organisations (e.g. public schools) which were captured as grants to Landcare and community groups.

Table 7. Grants to Landcare and other community groups, Murray LLS (2014-15)

Group type	No. of grants	No. of recipients	Total cost	Range for individual grants	
				Low	High
Category A groups					
Landcare	16	4	\$265,350	\$5,000	\$75,000
Friends of Groups	8	7	\$61,770	\$1,000	\$15,000
Producer	31	15	\$450,280	\$1,000	\$89,000
Total (Category A)	55	26	\$777,400	N/A	N/A
Category B groups					
Aboriginal	10	5	\$59,801	\$1,000	\$10,560
Conservation	14	3	\$765,458	\$4,000	\$350,000
Local council	21	12	\$399,626	\$1,480	\$89,500
Total (Category B)	45	20	\$1,224,885	N/A	N/A
Total (Categories A & B)	100	46	\$2,002,285	N/A	N/A

Murray LLS paid for all Category A and B grants to Landcare and community groups using funding received under Caring for Our Country (\$942,827), National Landcare Programme (\$361,670), other Australian Government sources (\$682,000) and Catchment Action NSW (\$15,788) (Figure 41).

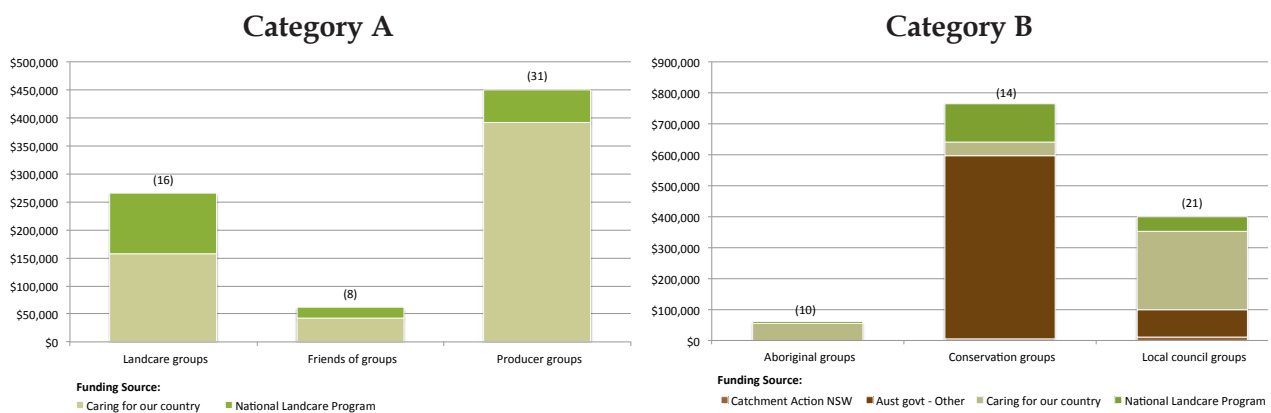


Figure 41. Grants to Category A and B groups Murray LLS (2014-15)
(the number in brackets shows the number of grants)

8.3.2. Dedicated support staff

Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups, generally the Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) and Community Support Officer (CSO) positions (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

Murray LLS employed one RLF in 2014-15. This was a 1.0 FTE position and was filled for the full financial year. It cost approximately \$95,000 and was paid for using funding received under the National Landcare Programme. The position contracted to a Landcare group and was based in Holbrook. Murray LLS also provided this Landcare group with a grant of \$75,000 to pay for costs associated with its RLF. This has been captured as a grant in **Section 1.3.1**.

Murray LLS also contracted five CSOs to Landcare and producer groups. \$190,000 in funding was provided however, the FTE number is not know.

8.3.3. Other support staff

Other support staff are positions funded by LLS that provide a support function for Landcare and community groups but also have other roles (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, other support staff at Murray LLS included a Senior Land Services Officer, a team leader and a manager in the strategic land services work area.

Murray LLS estimated that these staff spent between 15 percent (Manager, Strategic Land Services) and 50 percent (Senior Land Services Officer) of their time supporting Landcare and other community groups. Based on these time estimates, the portion of these positions that contributed to supporting Landcare and other community groups cost \$119,000. They were paid for using funding received from both the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 42**).

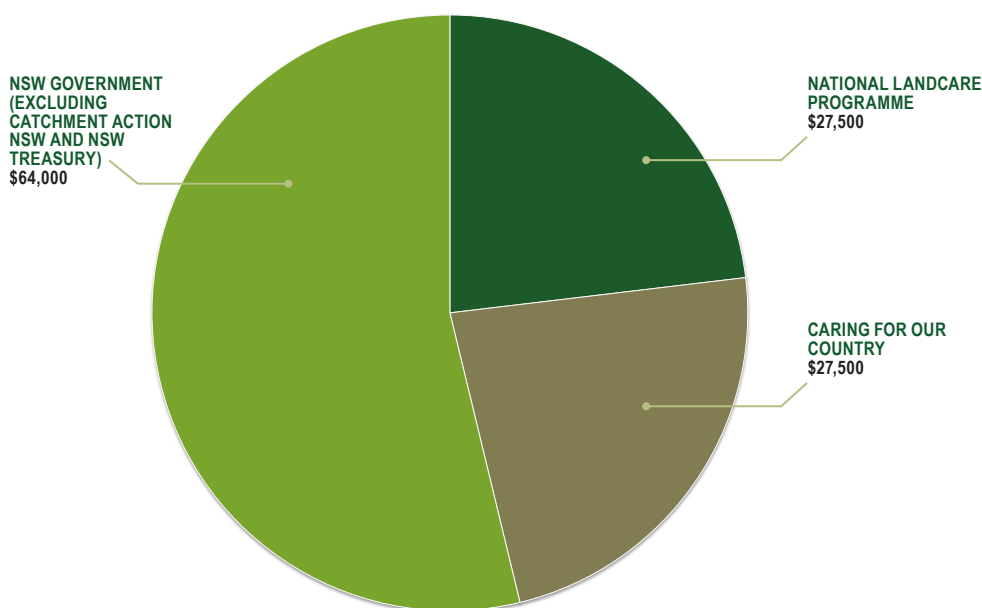


Figure 42. Cost of other support staff at Murray LLS (2014-15)

(This analysis is based on funding data provided by LLS for individual staff positions that provided support to Landcare and community groups in 2014-15)

8.3.4. Distribution of grants and dedicated support staff

Figure 34 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS Offices and dedicated support staff positions across the Murray region. Grants were spread throughout the region. CSOs were also spread across the region, and a RLF was based in Holbrook.

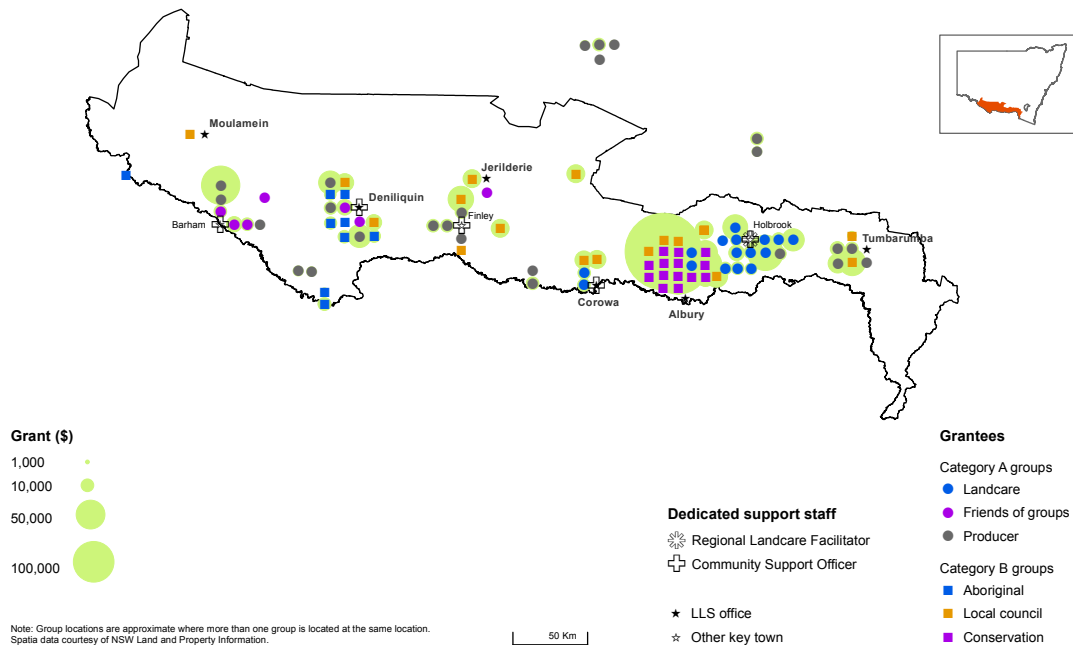


Figure 43. Distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff in Murray LLS (2014-15)

8.3.5. Other analysis

Murray LLS spent 30 percent of revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. Its spending of the remaining 70 percent of grants and contributions revenue was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission could account for an additional 7 percent of spending of total grants and contributions revenue. This 7 percent was provided as grants to individuals and government agencies. LLS staff positions may have also been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue however, this data was not collected for this project.

9. Regional baseline: North Coast LLS

9.1. Overview

In 2014-15, North Coast LLS revenue was \$13.43 million, most of which came from rates (\$2.67 million), NSW Treasury (\$3.00 million) and grants and contributions (\$6.58 million).

North Coast LLS spent \$4.56 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$3.34 million
- dedicated support staff (three Regional Landcare Facilitators and six Community Support Officers), \$0.41 million
- other support staff (such as Land Services Officers), \$0.81 million.

Approximately 88 percent of this expenditure was paid for using grants and contributions revenue³⁸ from the Australian and NSW governments. The National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW paid for 73 percent of this expenditure.

The expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 34 percent of total revenue and 69 percent of revenue from grants and contributions³⁹.

9.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 9.3**).

Total revenue for North Coast LLS was \$13.43 million in 2014-15 (**Figure 44**). Approximately 49 percent of total revenue came from grants and contributions, most of which was provided by the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 44**). Rates provided 20 percent of total revenue (**Figure 44**), but were not used to pay for any LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups. NSW Treasury funding provided 22 percent of total revenue (**Figure 44**), but was only used to pay for 12 percent of expenditure on groups, all of which was for other support staff. Other revenue sources made up 9 percent of total revenue (**Figure 44**) and consisted of revenue from levies and the sale of goods, rendering of services and other minor revenue streams.

³⁸ Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other funding programs. It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay for salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue however, it is excluded from the grants and contributions revenue category in this report because it was only used to pay for a relatively small portion of expenditure on Landcare and community groups (12 percent, all of which was for other support staff).

³⁹ For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue because most of the expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

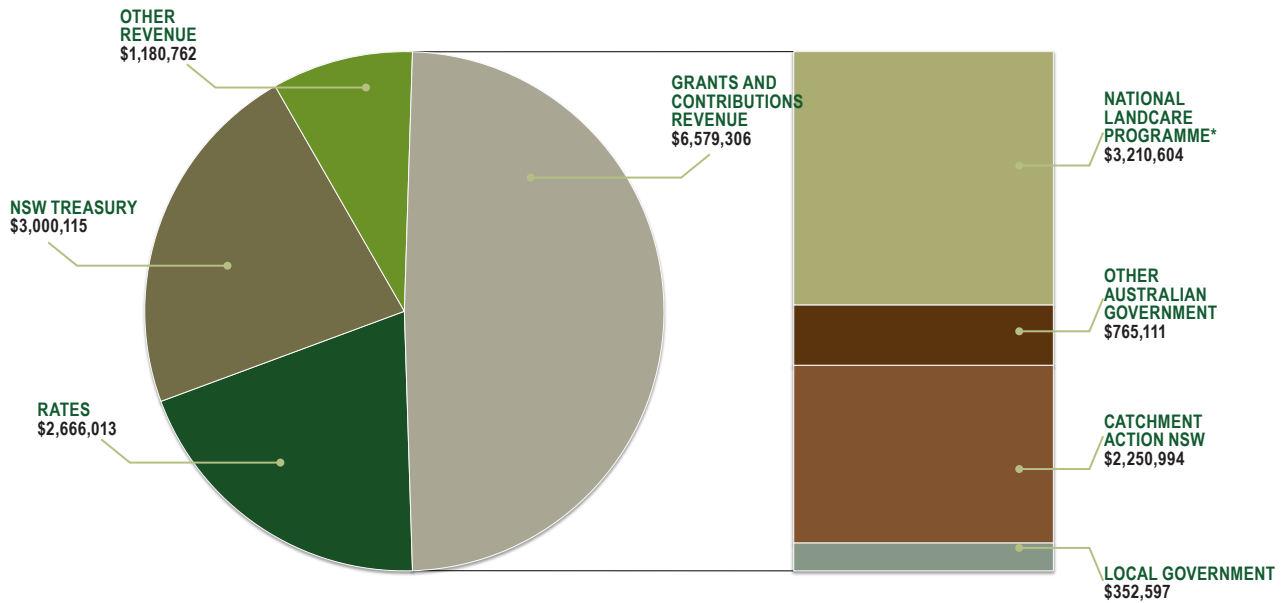


Figure 44. Total revenue, North Coast LLS (2014-15)

* Caring for Our Country revenue has been combined with National Landcare Programme revenue.

9.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, North Coast LLS spent \$4.56 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 73 percent of this was provided as grants, 9 percent as funding for dedicated support staff, and 18 percent as funding for other support staff (Figure 45). North Coast LLS paid for 73 percent of this expenditure using funding received under the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW (Figure 45). This is discussed in Sections 9.3.1 to 9.3.3 below.

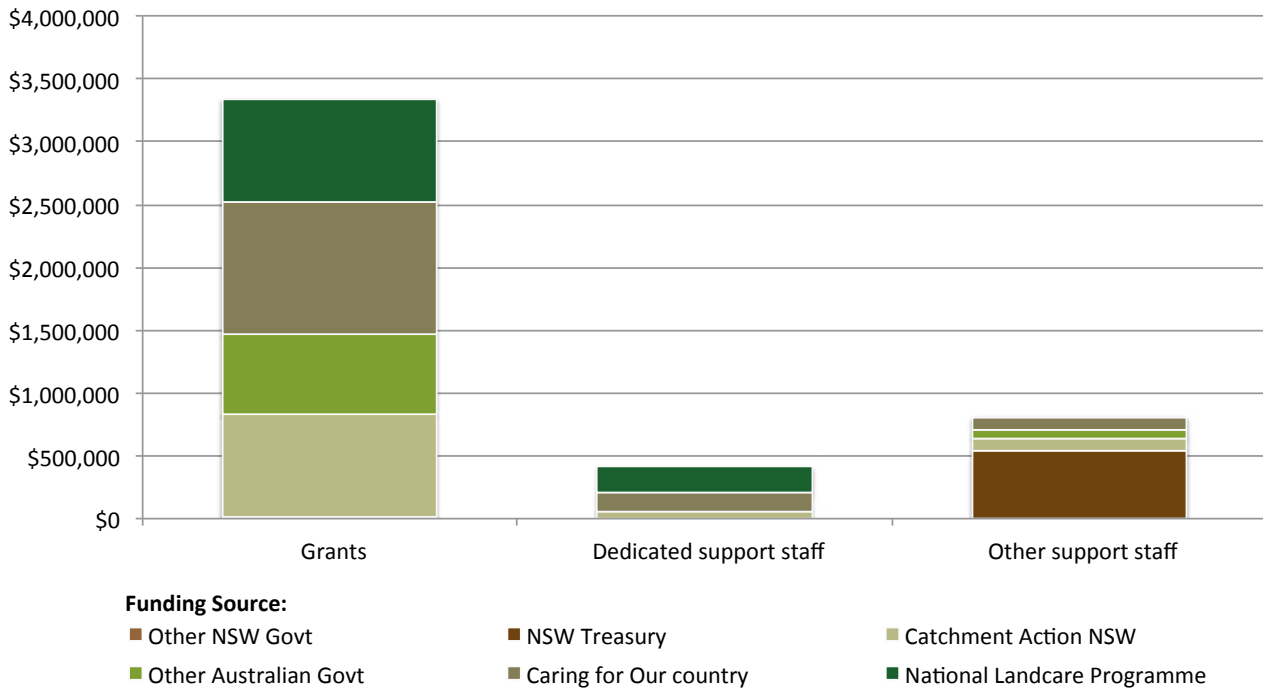


Figure 45. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups, North Coast LLS (2014-15)

9.3.1. Grants

North Coast LLS provided \$3.52 million in total grants in 2014-15, of which \$3.34 million⁴⁰ went to Landcare and community groups (**Figure 46**). The remaining \$0.18 million was provided to government agencies⁴¹ (3 percent of total grants) and individuals for sustainable agriculture purposes (2 percent of total grants) (**Figure 46**).

From the \$3.34 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, approximately 73 percent was used to fund on-ground projects, 11 percent was for the development of resource materials, and the remaining 16 percent was for network support, capacity building and small grants programs.

Approximately 28 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of ‘Landcare and community groups’ in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (see **Table 1, Section 2.2.4** for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 72 percent of these grants (**Figure 46**).

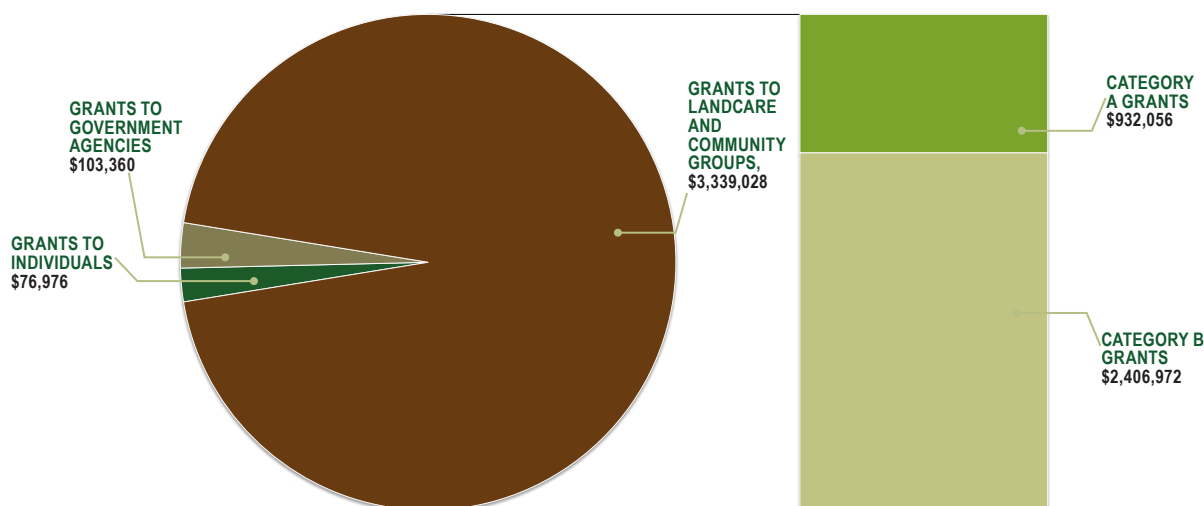


Figure 46. Total grants provided by North Coast LLS (2014-15)

Table 8 shows the number, value and range for grants to Category A and B groups. In summary, Landcare groups received 86 percent of the value of grants to Category A groups, with the remaining 14 percent going to Bushcare and producer groups (**Table 8**). Local councils and conservation groups received 51 percent and 23 percent, respectively, of the value of grants to Category B groups (**Table 8**). The remaining 26 percent went to Aboriginal groups, private consultants and other groups (**Table 8**).

⁴⁰ North Coast LLS provided an additional \$412,500 in grant funding for RLF and CSO positions. This expenditure has been captured as dedicated support staff funding in **Section 9.3.2**.

⁴¹ Excludes grant to local councils or other government organisations (e.g. public schools) which were captured as grants to Landcare and community groups.

Table 8. Grants to Landcare and other community groups, North Coast LLS (2014-15)

Group type	No. of grants	No. of recipients	Total cost	Range for individual grants	
				Low	High
Category A groups					
Landcare	16	10	\$803,356	\$1,000	\$100,000
Bushcare	2	2	\$46,750	\$10,750	\$36,000
Producer Group	4	4	\$81,950	\$5,000	\$60,700
Total (Category A)	22	16	\$932,056	N/A	N/A
Category B groups					
Aboriginal	6	6	\$166,065	\$1,500	\$80,000
Conservation	13	8	\$560,345	\$520	\$180,000
Local council	15	9	\$1,215,900	\$2,500	\$291,900
Private consultant	12	8	\$364,662	\$1,800	\$70,480
School	1	1	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Other	1	1	\$99,000	\$99,000	\$99,000
Total (Category B)	48	33	\$2,406,972	N/A	N/A
Total (Categories A & B)	70	49	\$3,339,028	N/A	N/A

North Coast LLS paid for over 99 percent of Category A and B grants to Landcare and community groups using funding received under Caring for Our Country (\$1,048,991), National Landcare Programme (\$824,183), other Australian Government sources (\$640,582) and Catchment Action NSW (\$815,516) (Figure 47).

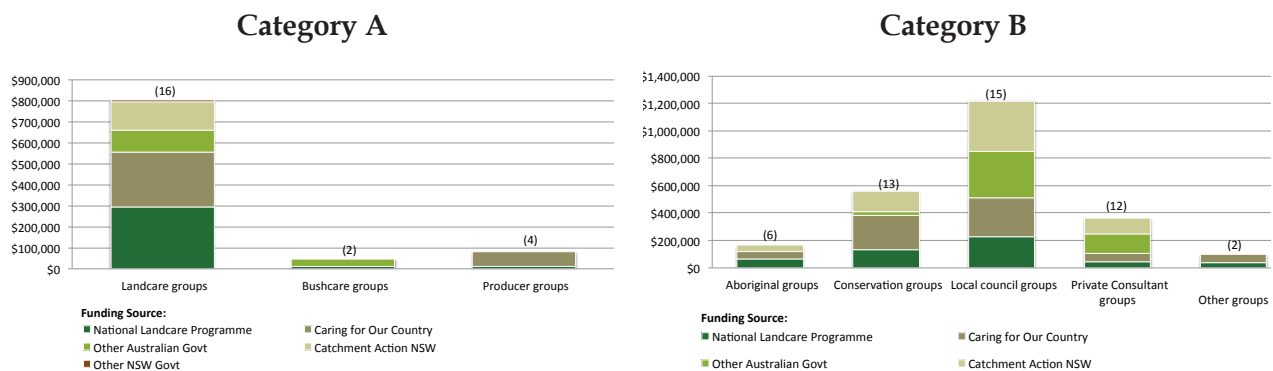


Figure 47. Grants to Category A and B groups North Coast LLS (2014-15)
(the number in brackets shows the number of grants)

9.3.2. Dedicated support staff

Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups, generally the Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) and Community Support Officer (CSO) positions (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

North Coast LLS funded three RLFs in 2014-15 (1.4 FTEs). The appointment of these positions was contracted to three Landcare groups. Together, these positions cost \$140,000, with two of them filled for the full financial year one filled for half the year. They were paid for using funding

received under the National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country. The RLF role included supporting Landcare networks to deliver sustainable agriculture and natural resource management projects.

North Coast also funded six CSOs in 2014-15 (3.2 FTEs). The appointment of these positions was contracted to three Landcare groups and three Aboriginal Corporations. Together, these positions cost \$272,500, with all of them filled for the full financial year. Their roles included facilitating community capacity building, collaboration and on ground works, as well as providing Aboriginal extension.

9.3.3. Other support staff

Other support staff are positions funded by LLS that provide a support function for Landcare and community groups but also have other roles (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, there were 28 other support staff positions at North Coast LLS, including Land Services Officers, Senior Land Services Officers and Land Services managers.

North Coast LLS estimated that these staff spent between 10 percent (e.g. Manager Land Services) and 80 percent (Senior Land Services Officer) of their time supporting Landcare and other community groups. These estimates were determined by reference to the position roles and workplans.

Based on these time estimates, the portion of these positions that contributed to supporting Landcare and other community groups cost \$808,703, including salary and on costs. They were paid for using funding received from both the Australian and NSW governments, including NSW Treasury (**Figure 48**).

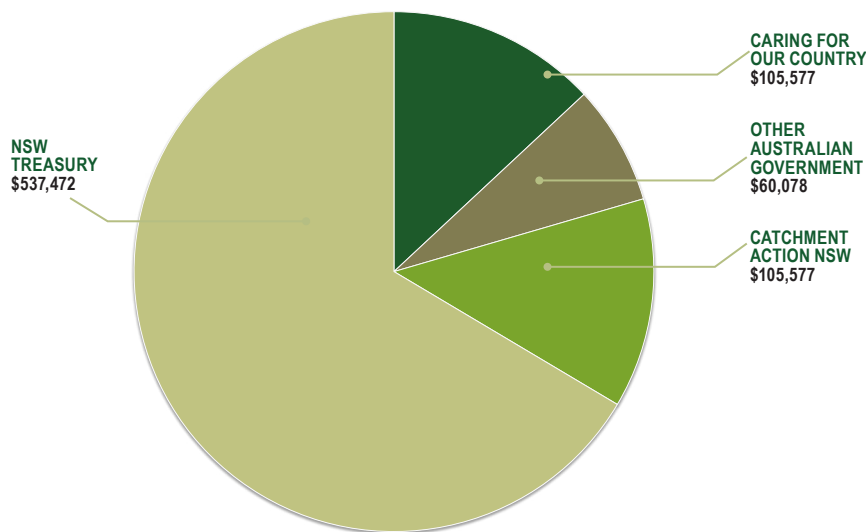


Figure 48. Cost of other support staff at North Coast LLS (2014-15)

(This analysis is based on funding data provided by LLS for individual staff positions that provided support to Landcare and community groups in 2014-15)

9.3.4. Distribution of grants and dedicated support staff

Figure 49 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS Offices and dedicated support staff positions across the North Coast region. Grants were distributed fairly evenly across the region, particularly around the main regional centres. There were also dedicated support staff distributed across these centres.

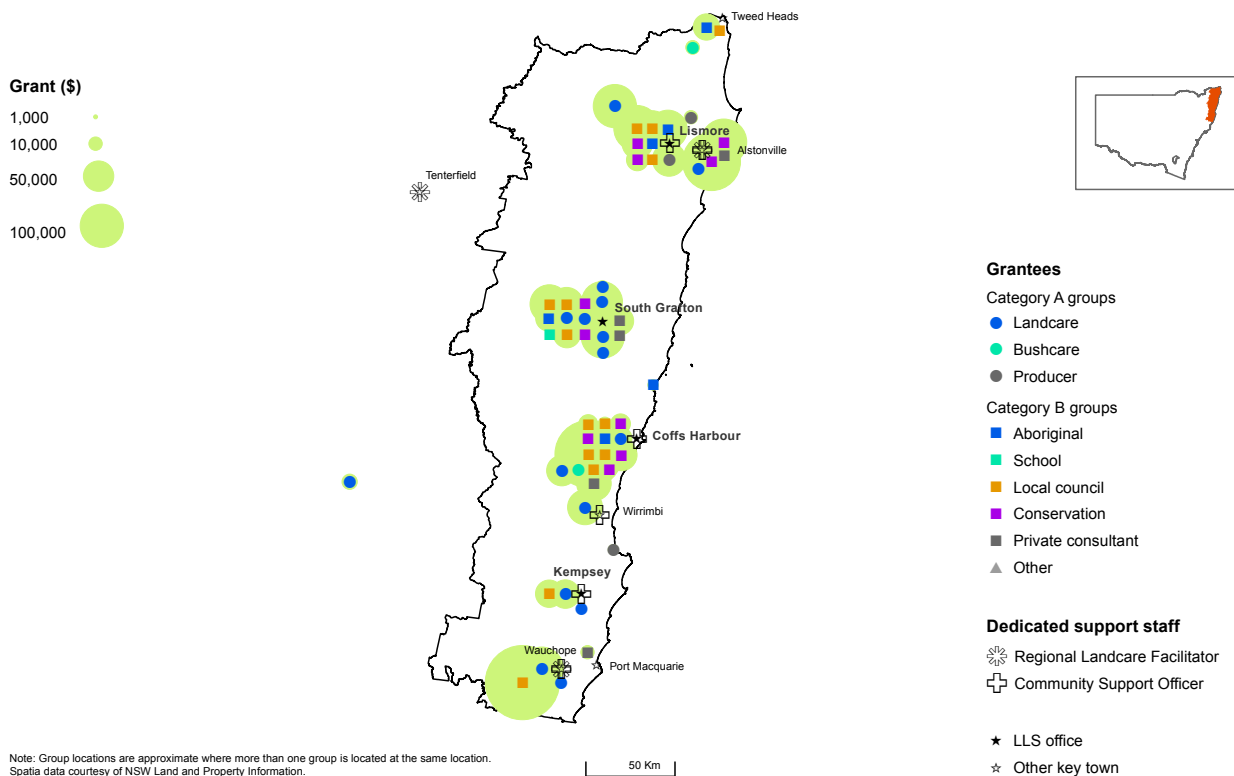


Figure 49. Distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff in North Coast LLS (2014-15)

9.3.5. Other analysis

North Coast LLS spent 69 percent of revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. Its spending of the remaining 31 percent of grants and contributions revenue was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission could account for an additional 13 percent of spending of total grants and contributions revenue. Approximately 3 percent was provided as grants to individual land managers and government agencies, and 10 percent paid for LLS staff who supported Landcare and community groups. Other LLS staff may have also been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue, so the actual percentage may be higher than 10 percent.

10. Regional baseline: North West LLS

10.1. Overview

In 2014-15, North West LLS revenue was \$16.34 million, most of which came from rates (\$3.71 million), NSW Treasury (\$3.25 million) and grants and contributions (\$6.87 million).

North West LLS spent \$2.27 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$1.57 million
- dedicated support staff (Regional Landcare Facilitators), \$0.14 million
- other support staff (such as Land Services Officers), \$0.56 million.

Approximately 86 percent of this expenditure was paid for using grants and contributions revenue⁴² from the Australian and NSW governments. The National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW paid for 81 percent of this expenditure.

The expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 14 percent of total revenue and 33 percent of revenue from grants and contributions⁴³.

10.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 10.3**).

Total revenue for North West LLS was \$16.34 million in 2014-15 (**Figure 50**). Approximately 42 percent of total revenue came from grants and contributions, most of which was provided by the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 50**). Rates provided 23 percent of total revenue (**Figure 50**), but were not used to pay for any LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups. NSW Treasury funding provided 20 percent of total revenue (**Figure 50**), but was only used to pay for 14 percent of expenditure on groups (7 percent for grants and 7 percent for other support staff positions). Other revenue sources made up 15 percent of total revenue (**Figure 50**) and consisted of revenue from levies and the sale of goods, rendering of services and other minor revenue streams.

42 Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other funding programs. It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay for salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue however, it is excluded from the grants and contributions revenue category in this report because it was only used to pay for a relatively small portion of expenditure on Landcare and community groups (14 percent).

43 For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue because most of the expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

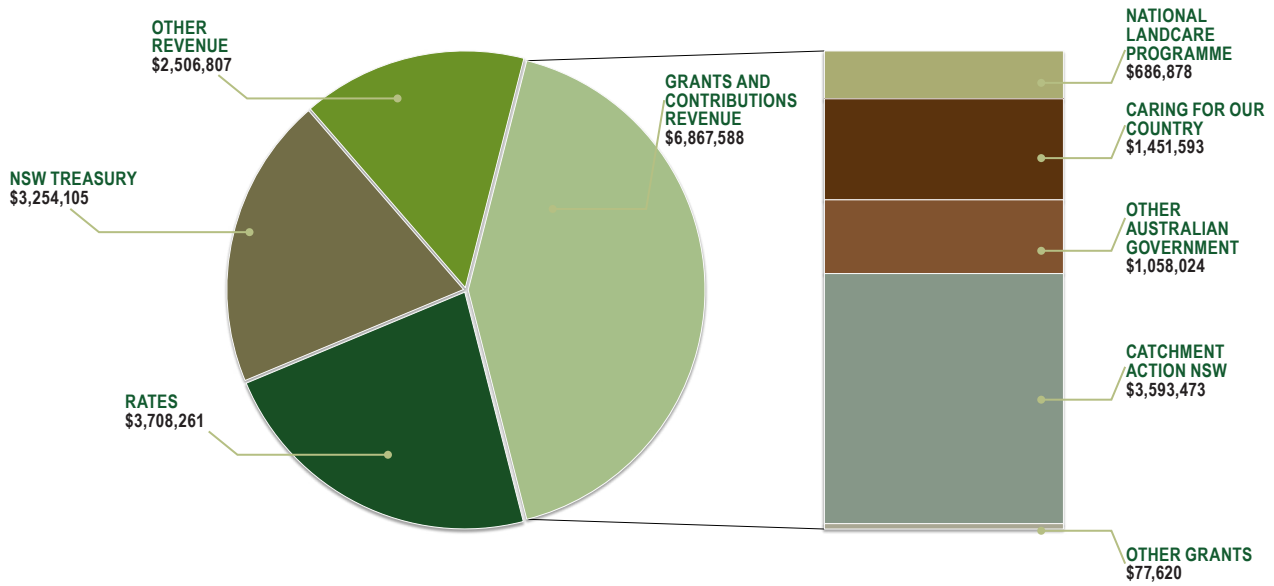


Figure 50. Total revenue, North West LLS (2014-15)

10.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, North West LLS spent \$2.27 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 69 percent of this was provided as grants, 6 percent as funding for dedicated support staff, and 25 percent as funding for other support staff (Figure 51). North West LLS paid for 81 percent of this expenditure using funding received under the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW (Figure 51). This is discussed in Sections 10.3.1 to 10.3.3.

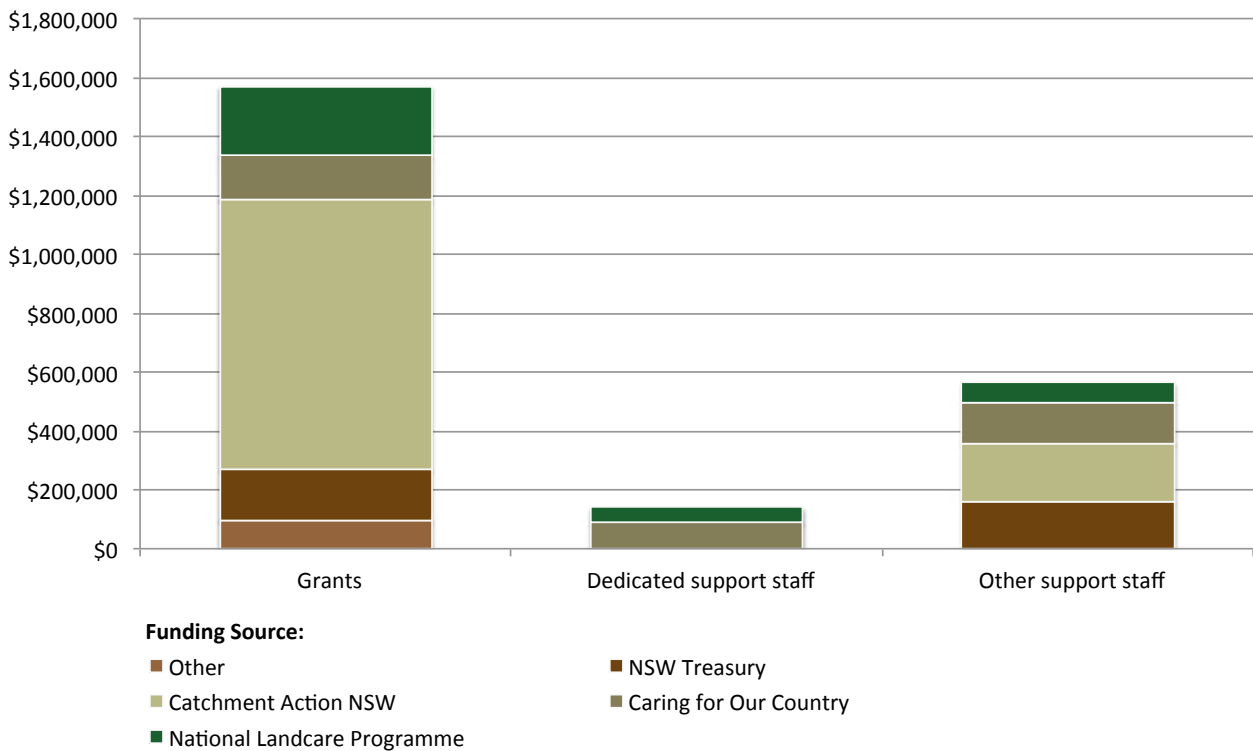


Figure 51. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups, North West LLS (2014-15)

10.3.1. Grants

North West LLS provided \$3.53 million in total grants in 2014-15, of which \$1.57 million⁴⁴ went to Landcare and community groups (**Figure 52**). The remaining \$1.96 million was provided to government agencies⁴⁵ (8 percent of total grants) and individuals for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management purposes (48 percent of total grants) (**Figure 52**).

From the \$1.57 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, approximately 65 percent were used to fund on-ground projects, 32 percent were for capacity building and 3 percent were for providing Landcare network support.

Approximately 63 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of ‘Landcare and community groups’ in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (see **Table 1, Section 2.2.4** for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 37 percent of these grants (**Figure 52**).

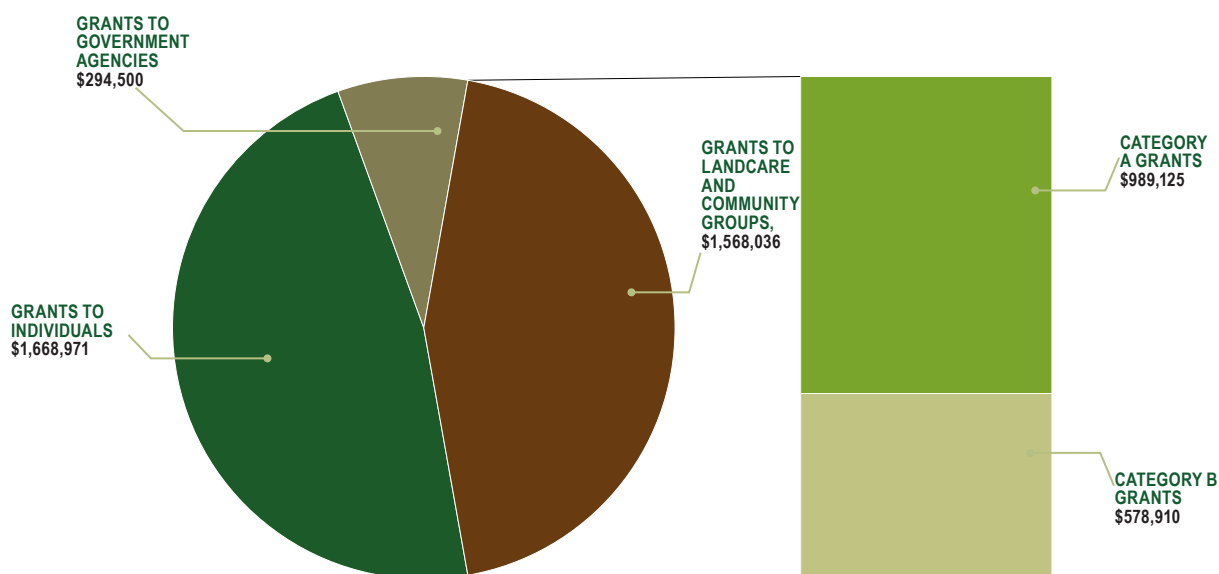


Figure 52. Total grants provided by North West LLS (2014-15)

Table 9 shows the number, value and range for grants to Category A and B groups. In summary, Landcare groups received 70 percent of the value of grants to Category A groups, producer groups received 24 percent and Bushcare groups received 6 percent (**Table 9**). Local councils received 89 percent of the value of grants to Category B groups, with the remaining 11 percent going to Aboriginal groups and schools (**Table 9**).

⁴⁴ North West LLS provided an additional \$141,000 in grant funding for RLF positions. This expenditure has been captured as dedicated support staff funding in **Section 10.3.2**

⁴⁵ Excludes grant to local councils or other government organisations (e.g. public schools) which were captured as grants to Landcare and community groups.

Table 9. Grants to Landcare and other community groups, North West LLS (2014-15)

Group type	No. of grants	No. of recipients	Total cost	Range for individual grants	
				Low	High
Category A groups					
Landcare	23	10	\$687,805	\$9,230	\$80,000
Bushcare	1	1	\$59,500	\$59,500	\$59,500
Producer	4	3	\$241,820	\$25,000	\$100,000
Total (Category A)	28	14	\$989,125	N/A	N/A
Category B groups					
Aboriginal	2	2	\$34,000	\$14,000	\$20,000
Local council	11	6	\$517,510	\$7,585	\$140,000
School	2	1	\$27,400	\$12,400	\$15,000
Total (Category B)	15	9	\$578,910	N/A	N/A
Total (Categories A & B)	43	23	\$1,568,035	N/A	N/A

North West LLS paid for 89 percent of Category A and B grants to Landcare and community groups using funding received under Caring for Our Country (\$149,917), National Landcare Programme (\$234,200), other Australian Government sources (\$87,585) and Catchment Action NSW (\$916,333) (Figure 53).

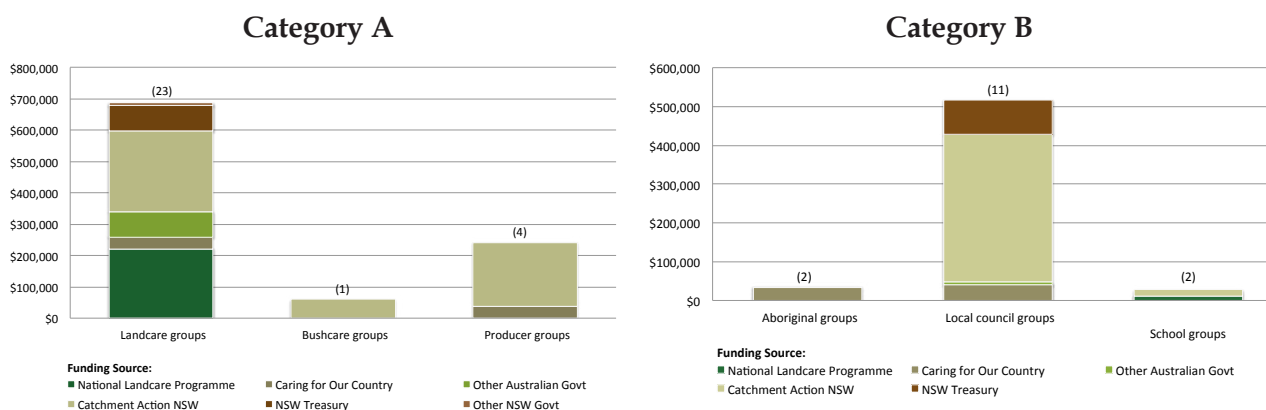


Figure 53. Grants to Category A and B groups North West LLS (2014-15)
(the number in brackets shows the number of grants)

10.3.2. Dedicated support staff

Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups, generally the Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) and Community Support Officer (CSO) positions (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

North West LLS funded four RLFs (1.6 FTE) in 2014-15. The appointment of these positions was contracted to three different Landcare groups in the region. These position cost \$141,327 and were paid for using funding received under the National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country.

10.3.3. Other support staff

Other support staff are positions funded by LLS that provide a support function for Landcare and community groups but also have other roles (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, other support staff at North West LLS included five Senior Land Services Officers, two Senior Strategic Land Services Officers, two Land Services Officers, two Administration Officers, two business and finance staff, and a team leader in the Strategic Land Services work area.

North West LLS estimated that these staff spent between 10 percent (Administration Officer) and 100 percent (e.g. Land Services Officer, Aboriginal Communities) of their time supporting Landcare and other community groups. These time estimates were based on advice from team leaders regarding work undertaken by each staff member during 2014-15.

Based on these time estimates, the portion of these positions that contributed to supporting Landcare and other community groups cost \$564,148, including salary and on costs. They were paid for using funding received from both the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 54**).

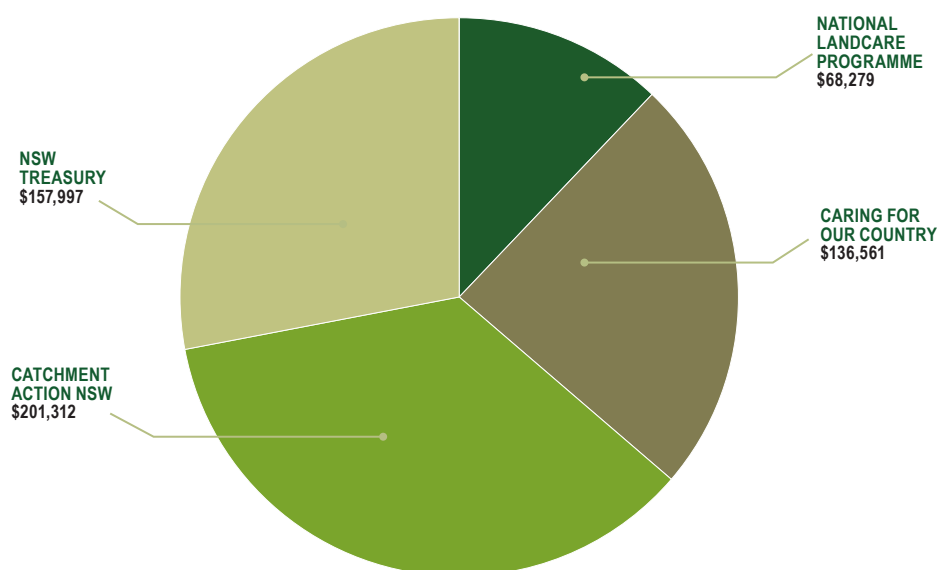


Figure 54. Cost of other support staff at North West LLS (2014-15)

(This analysis is based on funding data provided by LLS for individual staff positions that provided support to Landcare and community groups in 2014-15)

10.3.4. Distribution of grants and dedicated support staff

Figure 55 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS Offices and dedicated support staff positions across the North West region. The majority of grants were concentrated around the regional centres of Tamworth and Moree. There were three RLFs spread across the region, with two in Tamworth, one in Bingarra and one based in two locations, Walgett and Tamworth.

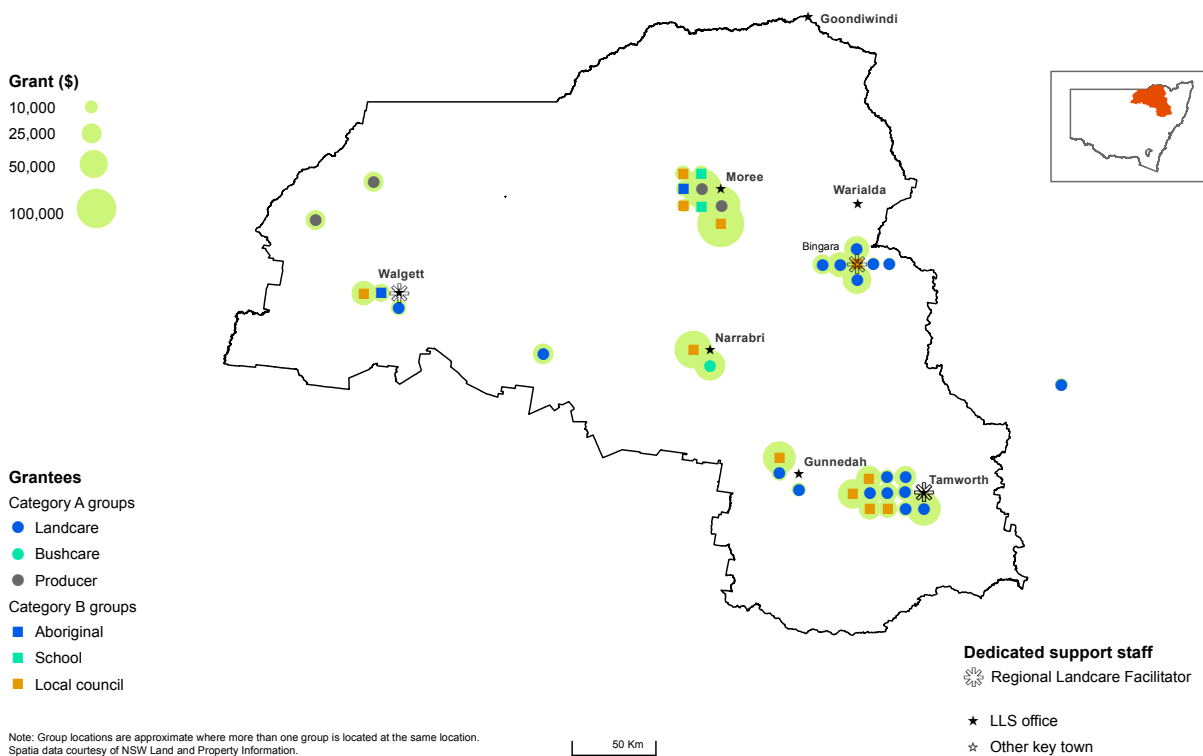


Figure 55. Distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff in North West LLS (2014-15)

10.3.5. Other analysis

North West LLS spent 33 percent of revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. Its spending of the remaining 67 percent of grants and contributions revenue was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission can account for an additional 36 percent of spending of total grants and contributions revenue. Approximately 27 percent was provided as grants to government agencies and individuals for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management, and 9 percent paid for LLS staff who supported Landcare and community groups. Other LLS staff may have also been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue, so the actual percentage may be higher than 9 percent.

11. Regional baseline: Northern Tablelands LLS

11.1. Overview

In 2014-15, Northern Tablelands LLS revenue was \$11.73 million, most of which came from rates (\$2.70 million), NSW Treasury (\$2.18 million) and grants and contributions (\$5.47 million).

Northern Tablelands LLS spent \$1.47 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$1.27 million⁴⁶
- other support staff (such as Land Services Officers), \$0.20 million.

Approximately 90 percent of this expenditure was paid for using grants and contributions revenue⁴⁷ from the Australian and NSW governments. The National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW paid for 90 percent of this expenditure.

The expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 13 percent of total revenue and 27 percent of revenue from grants and contributions⁴⁸.

11.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 11.2**).

Total revenue for Northern Tablelands LLS was \$11.73 million in 2014-15 (**Figure 56**).

Approximately 47 percent of total revenue came from grants and contributions, most of which was provided by the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 56**). Rates provided 23 percent of total revenue (**Figure 56**), but were not used to pay for any LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups. NSW Treasury funding provided 19 percent of total revenue (**Figure 56**), but was only used to pay for 13 percent of expenditure on groups, all of which was for other LLS support staff positions. Other revenue sources made up 12 percent of total revenue (**Figure 56**) and consisted of revenue from levies, and the sale of goods and rendering of services.

46 Northern Tablelands LLS funded dedicated support staff positions (Regional Landcare Facilitators and Community Support Officers) through these grants to Landcare groups.

47 Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other funding programs. It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay for salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue however, it is excluded from the grants and contributions revenue category in this report because it was only used to pay for a relatively small portion of expenditure on Landcare and community groups (13 percent, all of which was used to pay for other support staff).

48 For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue because most of the expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

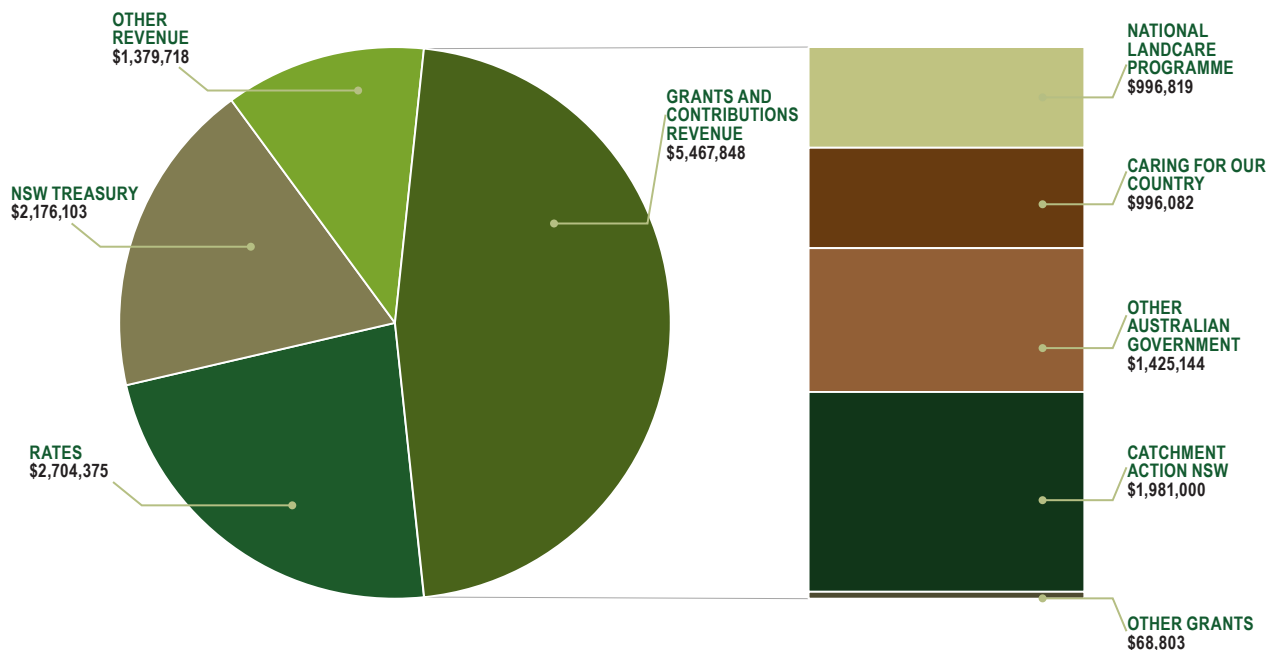


Figure 56. Total revenue, Northern Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

11.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, Northern Tablelands LLS spent \$1.47 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 86 percent of this was provided as grants and 14 percent as funding for other support staff (Figure 57). Northern Tablelands LLS paid for 89 percent of this expenditure using funding received under the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW (Figure 57). This is discussed in Sections 11.3.1 to 11.3.3.

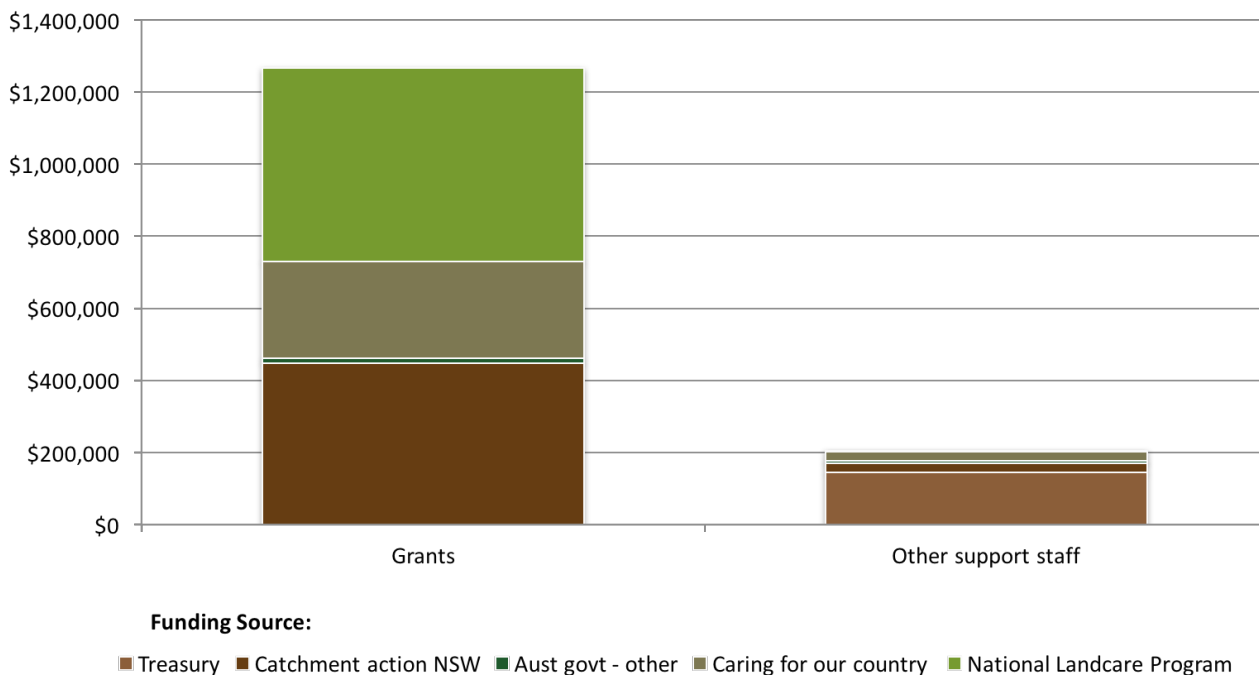


Figure 57. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups, Northern Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

11.3.1. Grants

Northern Tablelands LLS provided \$2.41 million in total grants in 2014-15, of which \$1.27 million went to Landcare and community groups⁴⁹ (**Figure 58**). The remaining \$1.14 million was provided to universities and other organisations for research, monitoring, evaluation and other projects (24 percent of total grants), to individuals for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management (15 percent of total grants), and to government agencies⁵⁰ (8 percent of total grants) (**Figure 58**).

From the \$1.27 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, approximately 51 percent were used to fund Landcare network support, mostly Community Support Officer positions hosted by Landcare groups. The remaining 49 percent were used to fund capacity building, on-ground and other projects.

Approximately 63 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of ‘Landcare and community groups’ in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (see **Table 1, Section 2.2.4** for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 37 percent of these grants (**Figure 58**).

In 2014-15, Northern Tablelands LLS also provided over \$280,000 in funding to North West LLS to continue former Catchment Management Authority projects in the North West region. This grant expenditure has been captured in the North West LLS chapter.

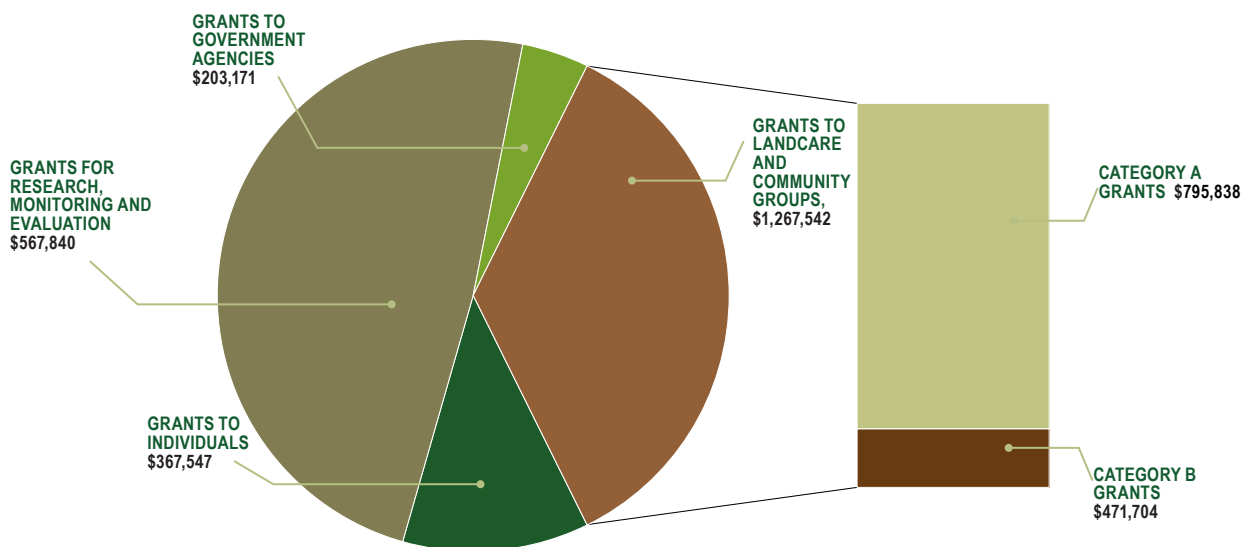


Figure 58. Total grants provided by Northern Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

49 This includes two devolved grants to New England Weeds Authority (\$105,000). While these grants funded Landcare groups, some of the funding was also provided to other land manager groups.

50 Excludes grant to local councils or other government organisations (e.g. public schools) which were captured as grants to Landcare and community groups

Table 10 shows the number, value and range for grants to Category A and B groups. In summary, Landcare groups received all of grants to Category A groups (**Table 10**). Aboriginal groups received 87 percent of the value of grants to Category B groups, with the remaining 13 percent going to local councils (**Table 10**).

Table 10. Grants to Landcare and other community groups, Northern Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

Group type	No. of grants	No. of recipients	Total cost	Range for individual grants	
				Low	High
Category A groups					
Landcare	12	6	\$795,838	\$10,000	\$321,313
Total (Category A)	12	6	\$795,838	N/A	N/A
Category B groups					
Aboriginal	7	6	\$243,659	\$4,096	\$99,500
Local council	1	1	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000
Other	3	2	\$210,045	\$5,000	\$105,045
Total (Category B)	11	9	\$471,704	N/A	N/A
Total (Categories A & B)	23	15	\$1,267,542	N/A	N/A

Northern Tablelands LLS paid for all Category A and B grants to Landcare and community groups using funding received under Caring for Our Country (\$266,948), National Landcare Programme (\$537,411), other Australian Government sources (\$14,096) and Catchment Action NSW (\$448,087) (**Figure 59**).

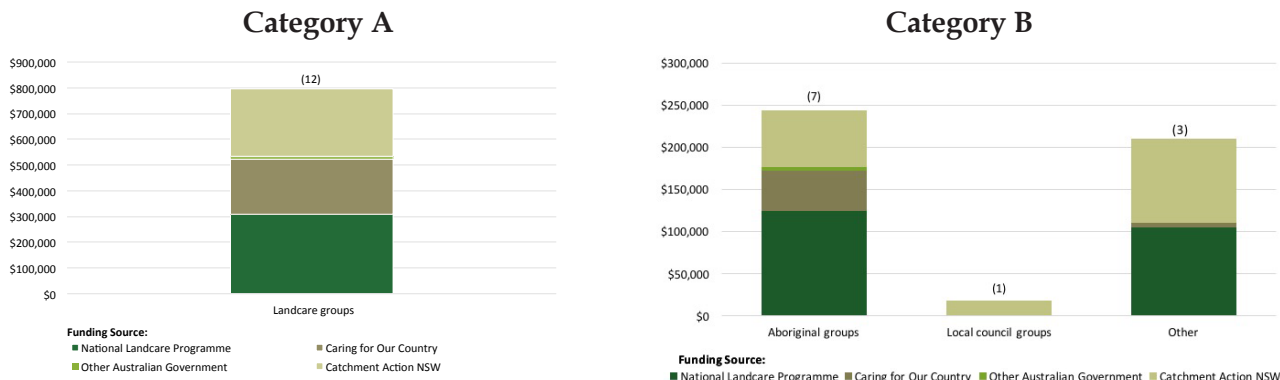


Figure 59. Grants to Category A and B groups Northern Tablelands LLS (2014-15)
(the number in brackets shows the number of grants)

11.3.2. Dedicated support staff

Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups, generally the Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) and Community Support Officer (CSO) positions (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, Northern Tablelands LLS did not appoint any RLF or CSO positions. However, it provided 13 grants to Landcare groups and Aboriginal Land Councils to contribute to the cost of RLFs (5.5 FTE⁵¹) and CSOs (3.8 FTE⁵²) hosted by those groups. Grants for RLF and CSO positions were valued at \$414,261 and \$115,095, respectively, and has been captured in this baseline as grants (**Section 11.3.1**)⁵³.

⁵¹ These positions delivered a combination of RLF and other community support functions.

⁵² A small additional amount of administrative support was also provided but is not captured in this FTE figure.

⁵³ Approximately 90 percent of these grants were used to pay for RLF and CSO positions.

11.3.3. Other support staff

Other support staff are positions funded by LLS that provide a support function for Landcare and community groups but also have other roles (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, other support staff at Northern Tablelands LLS included six Senior Land Services Officers, two Land Services Officers, a manager and two team leaders in the Land services work area, a Business and Finance Officer, and a Senior Administration Officer (Projects).

Northern Tablelands LLS estimated that these staff spent between 5 percent (e.g. Business and Finance Officer) and 60 percent (e.g. Senior Land Services Officer) of their time supporting Landcare and other community groups. These time estimates were based on a review of staff workplans.

Based on these time estimates, the portion of these positions that contributed to supporting Landcare and other community groups cost \$204,956, including salary and on costs. They were paid for using funding received from both the Australian and NSW governments, including NSW Treasury (**Figure 60**). These costs may be indicative of some of the costs associated with administering grants to Landcare and community groups, as some of these staff positions had responsibilities for contract administration and investor reporting.

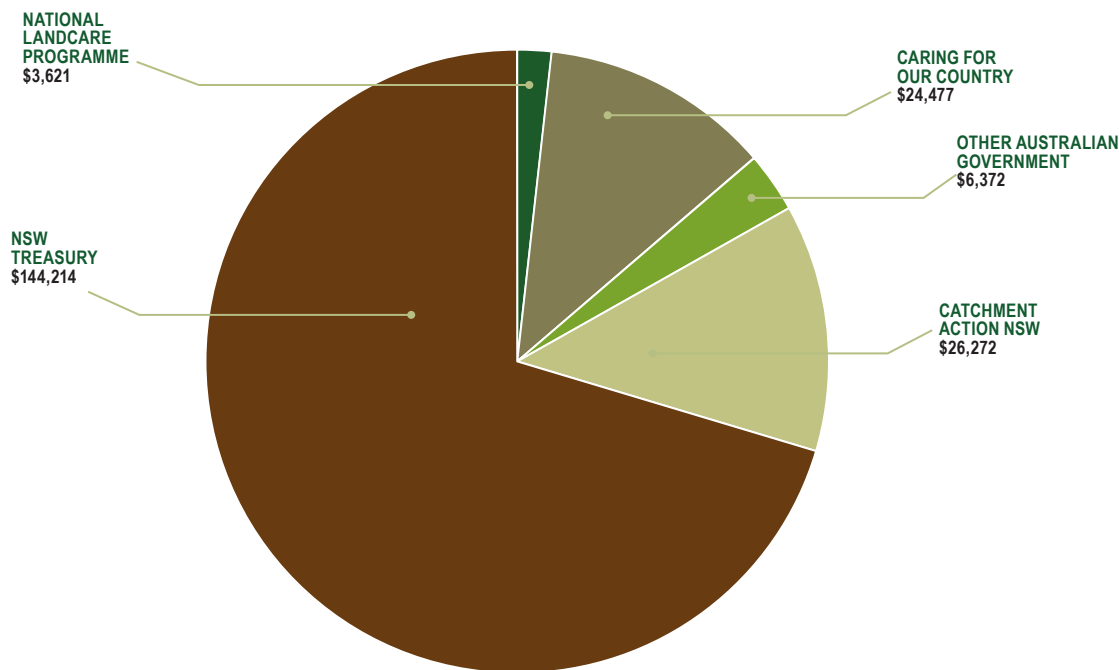


Figure 60. Cost of other support staff at Northern Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

(This analysis is based on funding data provided by LLS for individual staff positions that provided support to Landcare and community groups in 2014-15)

11.3.4. Distribution of grants

Figure 61 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants and LLS offices across the Northern Tablelands region. The majority of grants were concentrated around Armidale, with others around Glen Innes and Tenterfield

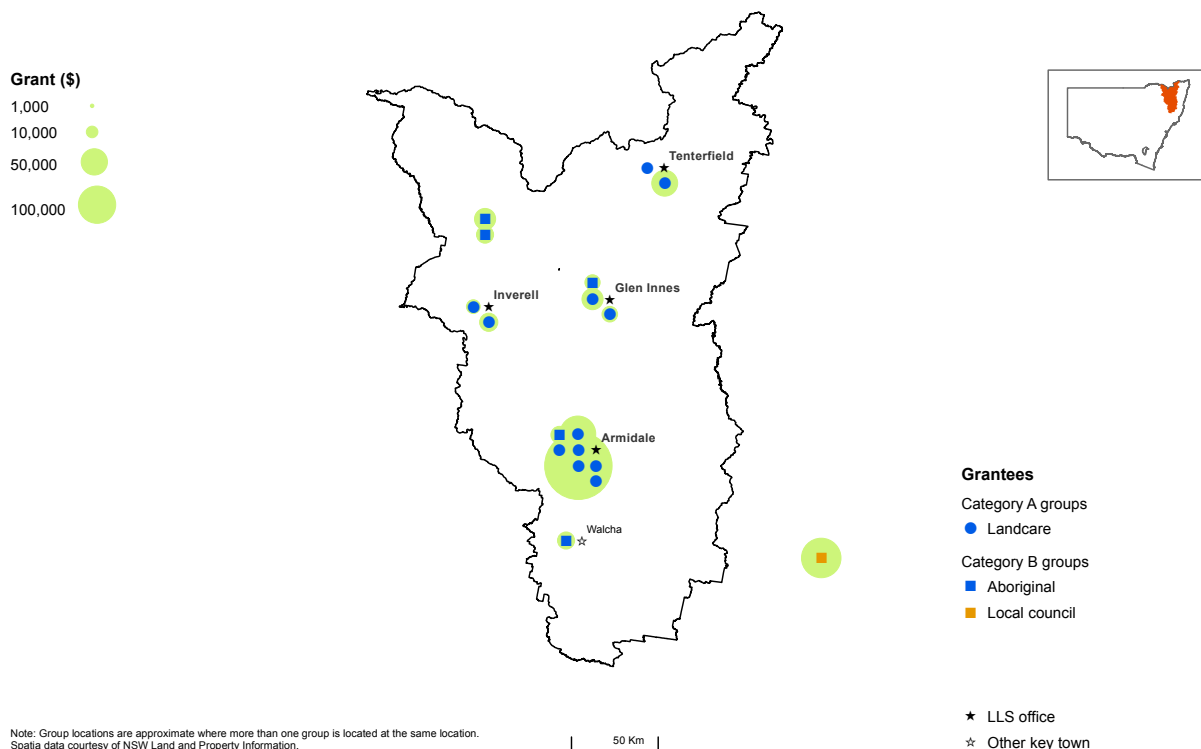


Figure 61. Distribution of Landcare and community group grants and LLS offices, Northern Tablelands LLS (2014-15)

11.3.5. Other analysis

Northern Tablelands LLS spent 27 percent of revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. Its spending of the remaining 73 percent of revenue from grants and contributions was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission could account for an additional 28 percent of spending of total grants and contributions revenue. Approximately 21 percent was provided as grants to individuals, government agencies, and organisations for research, monitoring and evaluation, and 7 percent paid for LLS staff who supported Landcare and community groups. Other LLS staff may have also been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue, so the actual percentage may be higher than 7 percent.

12. Regional baseline: Riverina LLS

12.1. Overview

In 2014-15, Riverina LLS revenue was \$16.31 million, most of which came from rates (\$3.88 million), NSW Treasury (\$3.57 million) and grants and contributions (\$6.64 million).

Riverina LLS spent \$1.21 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$0.89 million
- dedicated support staff (one Regional Landcare Facilitator), \$0.18 million
- other support staff (seven Land Services Officers), \$0.14 million.

All of this expenditure was paid for using grants and contributions revenue⁵⁴ from the Australian and NSW governments. The National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW paid for over 99 percent of this expenditure.

The expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 7.4 percent of total revenue and 18 percent of revenue from grants and contributions⁵⁵.

12.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 12.3**).

Total revenue for Riverina LLS was \$16.31 million in 2014-15 (**Figure 62**). Approximately 41 percent of total revenue came from grants and contributions, most of which was provided by the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 62**). Rates provided 24 percent of total revenue (**Figure 62**), but were not used to pay for any LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups. NSW Treasury funding provided 22 percent of total revenue (**Figure 62**), but was not used to pay for any of the expenditure on groups. Other revenue sources made up 14 percent of total revenue (**Figure 62**) and consisted of revenue from levies and the sale of goods, rendering of services and other minor revenue streams.

54 Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other funding programs. It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay for salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue however, it is excluded from the grants and contributions category in this report because it was not used to pay for any of the Riverina LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups.

55 For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue because most of the expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

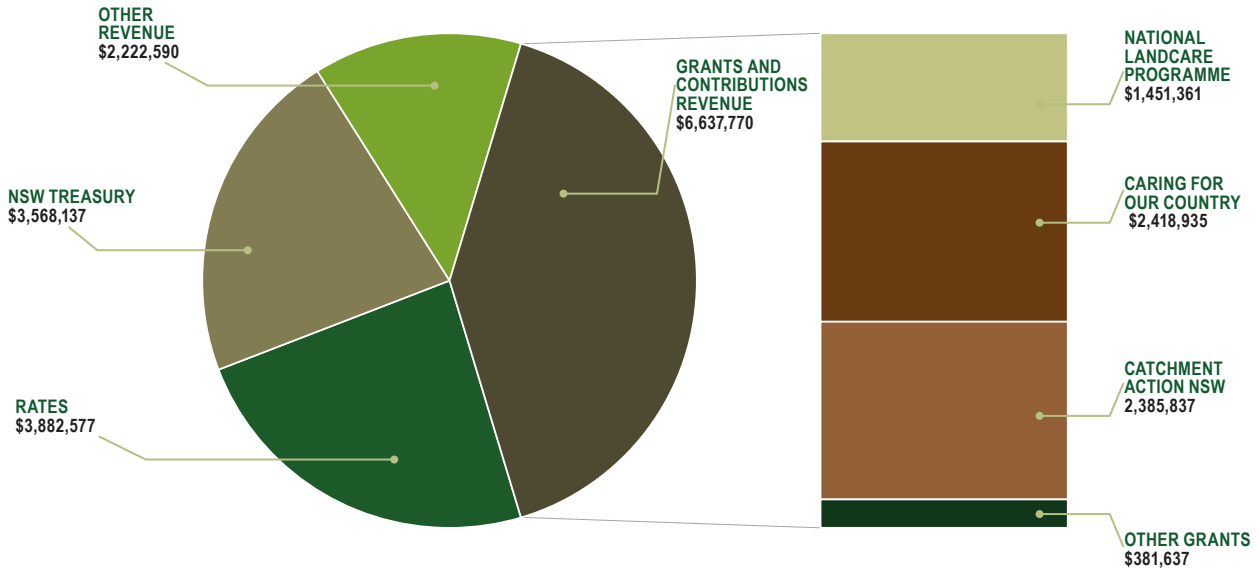


Figure 62. Total revenue, Riverina LLS (2014-15)

12.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, Riverina LLS spent \$1.21 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 74 percent of this was provided as grants, 15 percent as funding for dedicated support staff, and 11 percent as funding for other support staff (Figure 63). Riverina LLS paid for over 99 percent of this expenditure using funding received under the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW (Figure 63). This is discussed in Sections 12.3.1 to 12.3.3.

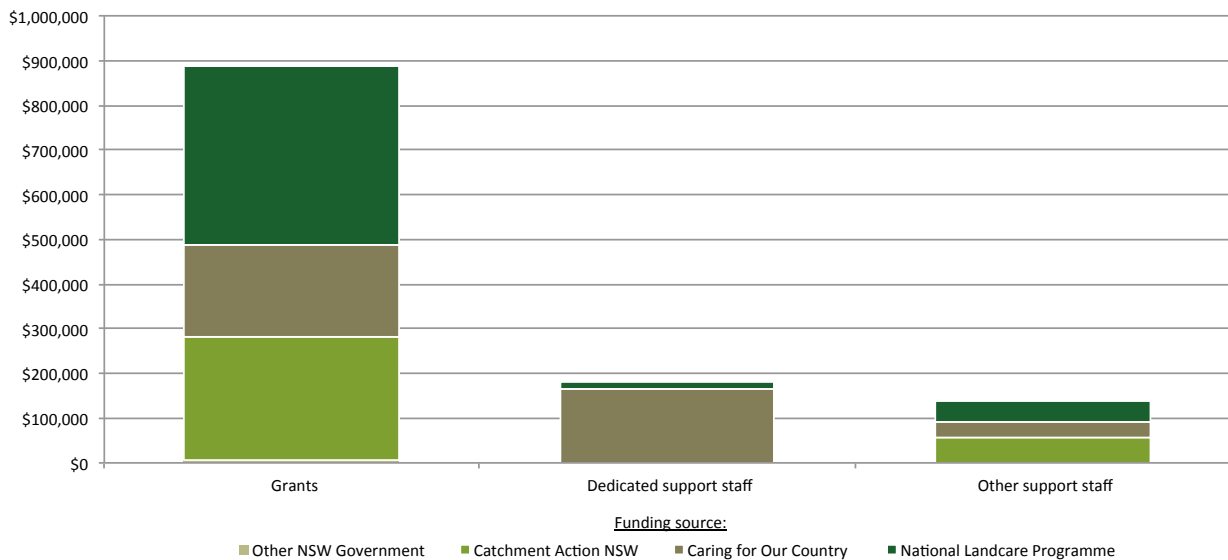


Figure 63. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups, Riverina LLS (2014-15)

12.3.1. Grants

Riverina LLS provided \$3.01 million in total grants in 2014-15, of which \$0.89 million⁵⁶ went to Landcare and community groups (**Figure 64**). The remaining \$2.12 million was provided to government agencies⁵⁷ (15 percent of total grants) and individuals for sustainable agriculture, natural resource management and other purposes (56 percent of total grants) (**Figure 64**).

From the \$0.89 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, approximately 52 percent were used to fund on-ground projects, 17 percent were for capacity building, and the remaining 31 percent were for events, information days, Landcare network support and other projects.

Approximately 74 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of 'Landcare and community groups' in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (see **Table 1, Section 2.2.4** for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 26 percent of these grants (**Figure 64**).

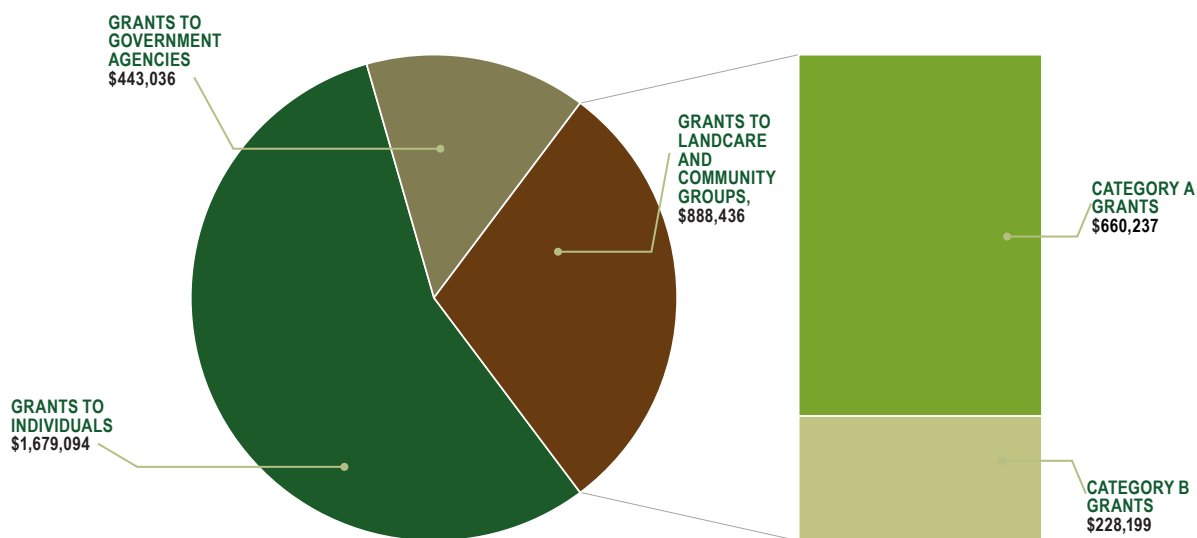


Figure 64. Total grants provided by Riverina LLS (2014-15)

Table 11 shows the number, value and range for grants to Category A and B groups. In summary, Landcare groups received 76 percent of the value of grants to Category A groups, with the remaining 24 percent going to producer groups and Friends of Groups (**Table 11**). Conservation groups received 58 percent of the value of grants to Category B groups, with the remaining 42 percent going to Aboriginal and other groups (**Table 11**).

⁵⁶ Riverina LLS provided an additional \$171,000 in grant funding for RLF and CSO positions, after adjustments for offsetting entries. This expenditure has been captured as dedicated support staff funding in **Section 12.3.2**

⁵⁷ Excludes grant to local councils or other government organisations (e.g. public schools) which were captured as grants to Landcare and community groups.

Table 11. Grants to Landcare and other community groups, Riverina LLS (2014-15)

Group type	No. of grants	No. of recipients	Total cost	Range for individual grants	
				Low	High
Category A groups					
Landcare	20	10	\$499,781	\$265	\$85,000
Friends of Groups	5	5	\$31,057	\$1,530	\$12,700
Producer	11	8	\$129,399	\$ (11,000)	\$40,000
Total (Category A)	36	23	\$660,237	N/A	N/A
Category B groups					
Aboriginal	3	2	\$45,689	\$2,000	\$39,689
School	2	2	\$2,800	\$800	\$2,000
Conservation	4	2	\$132,210	\$20,000	\$50,000
Other	2	2	\$45,500	\$3,000	\$42,500
Local council	1	1	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000
Total (Category B)	12	9	\$228,199	N/A	N/A
Total (Categories A & B)	48	32	\$888,436	N/A	N/A

Riverina LLS paid for all Category A and B grants to Landcare and community groups using funding received under Caring for Our Country (\$205,969), National Landcare Programme (\$400,237), Catchment Action NSW (\$276,407) and other NSW Government sources (\$5,823) (Figure 65).



Figure 65. Grants to Category A and B groups, Riverina LLS (2014-15)
(the number in brackets shows the number of grants)

12.3.2. Dedicated support staff

Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups, generally the Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) and Community Support Officer (CSO) positions (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

Riverina LLS funded one RLF (1.0 FTE) in 2014-15. The appointment of this position was contracted to a Landcare groups in the region. This position cost \$180,000 and was paid for using funding received under the National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country.

12.3.3. Other support staff

Other support staff are positions funded by LLS that provide a support function for Landcare and community groups but also have other roles (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, other support staff at Riverina LLS included seven Land Services Officer positions in the natural resource management work area. Riverina LLS estimated that each of these positions spent 20 percent of their time supporting Landcare and other community groups. These estimates were based on historical average time estimates in position workplans.

Based on these time estimates, the portion of these positions that contributed to supporting Landcare and other community groups cost \$138,274, including salary and on costs. They were paid for using funding received from both the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 66**).

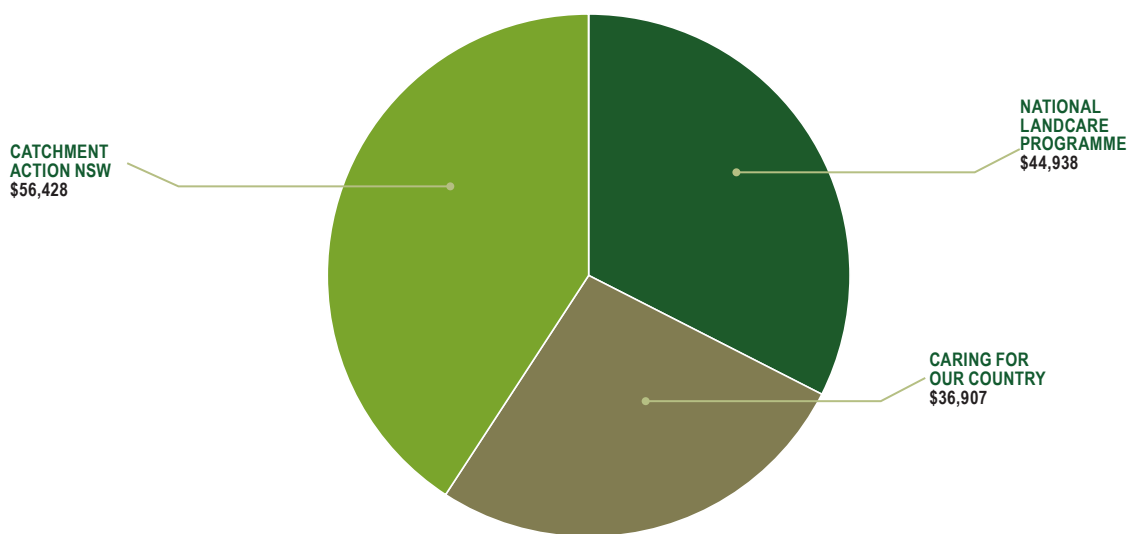


Figure 66. Cost of other support staff at Riverina LLS (2014-15)

(This analysis is based on funding data provided by LLS for individual staff positions that provided support to Landcare and community groups in 2014-15)

12.3.4. Distribution of grants and dedicated support staff

Figure 67 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS Offices and dedicated support staff positions across the Riverina region. Grants were spread fairly evenly across the regions, particularly in the regional centres. There was one RLF in this region, based in Wagga Wagga.

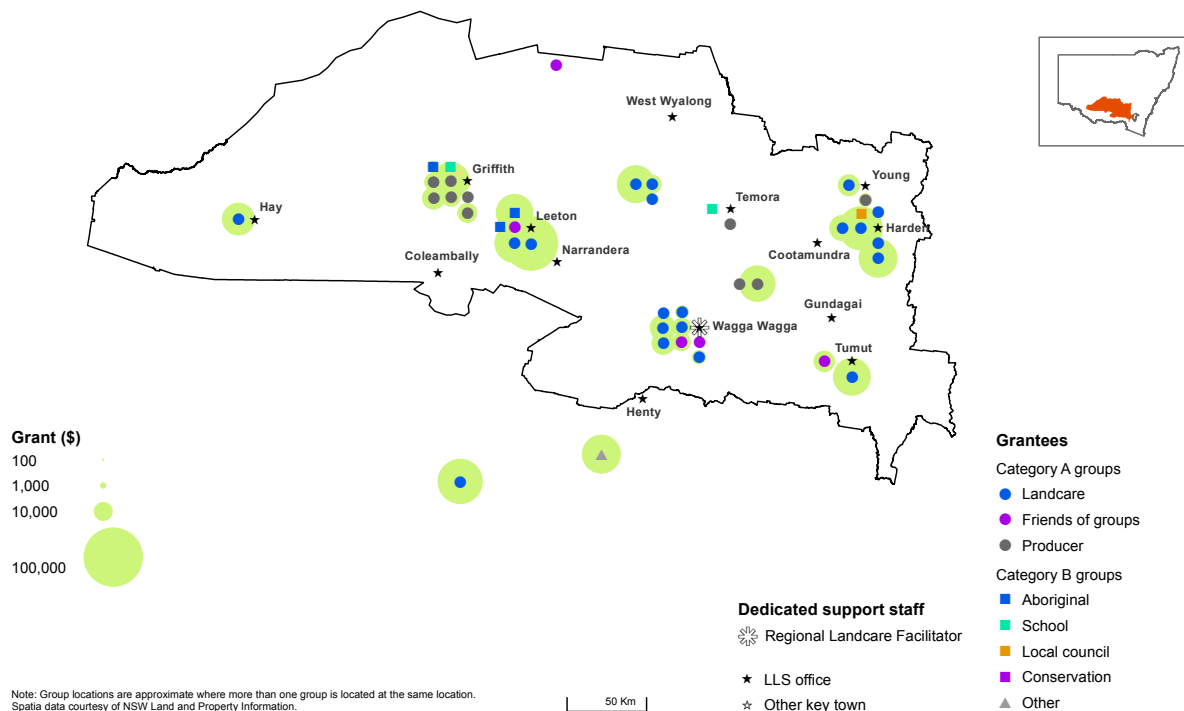


Figure 67. Distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff in Riverina LLS (2014-15)

12.3.5. Other analysis

Riverina LLS spent 18 percent of revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. Its spending of the remaining 82 percent of revenue from grants and contributions was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission could account for an additional 37 percent of spending of total grants and contributions revenue. Approximately 29 percent was provided as grants to individuals and government agencies, and 8 percent paid for LLS staff who supported Landcare and community groups. Other LLS staff may have also been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue, so the actual percentage may be higher than 8 percent.

13. Regional baseline: South East LLS

13.1. Overview

In 2014-15, South East LLS revenue was \$25.56 million, most of which came from rates (\$4.86 million), NSW Treasury (\$5.04 million) and grants and contributions (\$13.74 million).

South East LLS spent \$4.05 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$2.38 million
- dedicated support staff (one Regional Landcare Facilitator, six Community Support Officers, and two Land Services Officers who worked with Aboriginal communities), \$0.95 million
- other support staff (such as Land Services Officers), \$0.71 million.

Approximately 29 percent of this expenditure was paid for using grants and contributions revenue⁵⁸ from the Australian and NSW governments. The National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, other Australian Government grants and Catchment Action NSW paid for 85 percent of this expenditure.

The expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 16 percent of total revenue and 29 percent of revenue from grants and contributions⁵⁹.

13.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 13.3**).

Total revenue for South East LLS was \$25.56 million in 2014-15 (**Figure 68**). Approximately 54 percent of total revenue came from grants and contributions, most of which was provided by the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 68**). Rates provided 19 percent of total revenue (**Figure 68**), but were only used to pay for 4 percent LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups, all of which was for other support staff. NSW Treasury funding provided 20 percent of total revenue (**Figure 68**), but was only used to pay for 9 percent of expenditure on groups. Other revenue sources made up about 7 percent of total revenue (**Figure 68**) and consisted of revenue from levies, the sale of goods and services, and other minor revenue streams.

⁵⁸ Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other funding programs. It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay for salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue however, it is excluded from the grants and contributions category in this report because it was only used to pay for a relatively small portion of expenditure on Landcare and community groups (9 percent).

⁵⁹ For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue because most of the expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

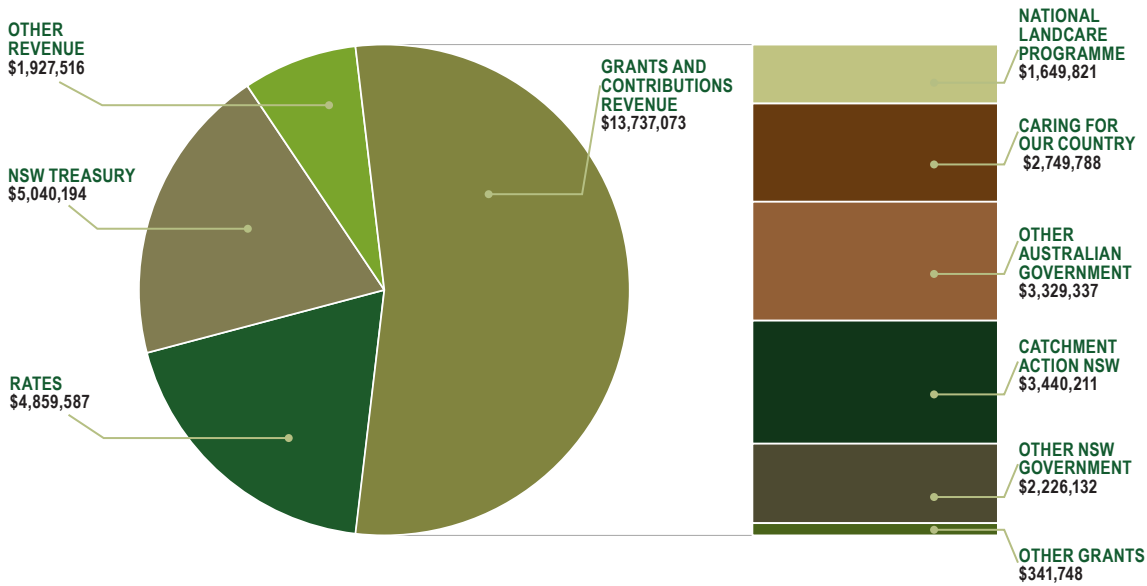


Figure 68. Total revenue, South East LLS (2014-15)

13.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, South East LLS spent \$4.05 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 59 percent of this was provided as grants, 23 percent as funding for dedicated support staff, and 18 percent as funding for other support staff (Figure 69). South East LLS paid for 62 percent of this expenditure using funding received under the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW (Figure 69). This is discussed in Sections 13.3.1 to 13.3.3.

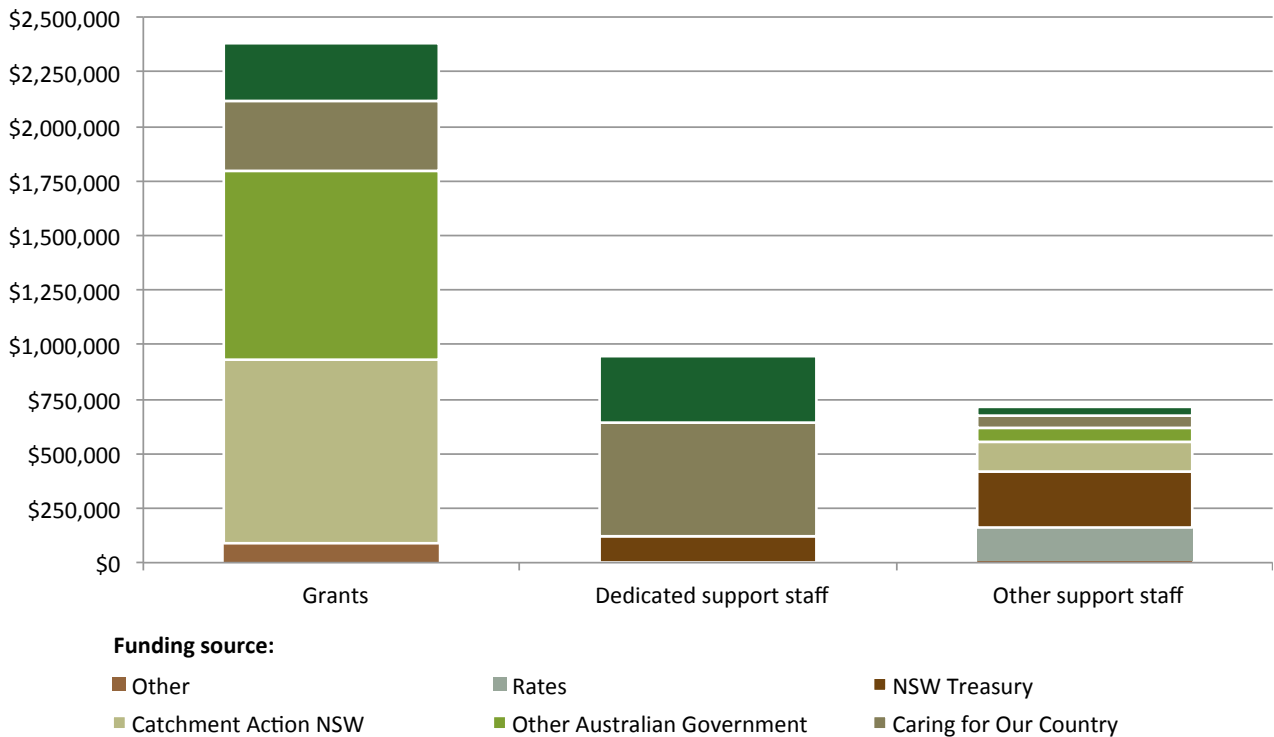


Figure 69. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups, South East LLS (2014-15)

13.3.1. Grants

South East LLS provided \$5.04 million in total grants in 2014-15, of which \$2.38 million went to Landcare and community groups (**Figure 70**). The remaining \$2.66 million was provided to government agencies⁶⁰ (6 percent of total grants), individuals for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management (29 percent of total grants), and other grantees (including educational institutions, Australia River Restoration Centre, Bega Cheese Ltd and suppliers) (**Figure 70**).

From the \$2.38 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, approximately 45 percent were used to fund on-ground projects, 25 percent were for network support, and the remaining 30 percent were mostly for capacity building, staff funding for groups, and development of resource materials.

Approximately 29 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of ‘Landcare and community groups’ in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (see **Table 1, Section 2.2.4** for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 71 percent of these grants (**Figure 70**).

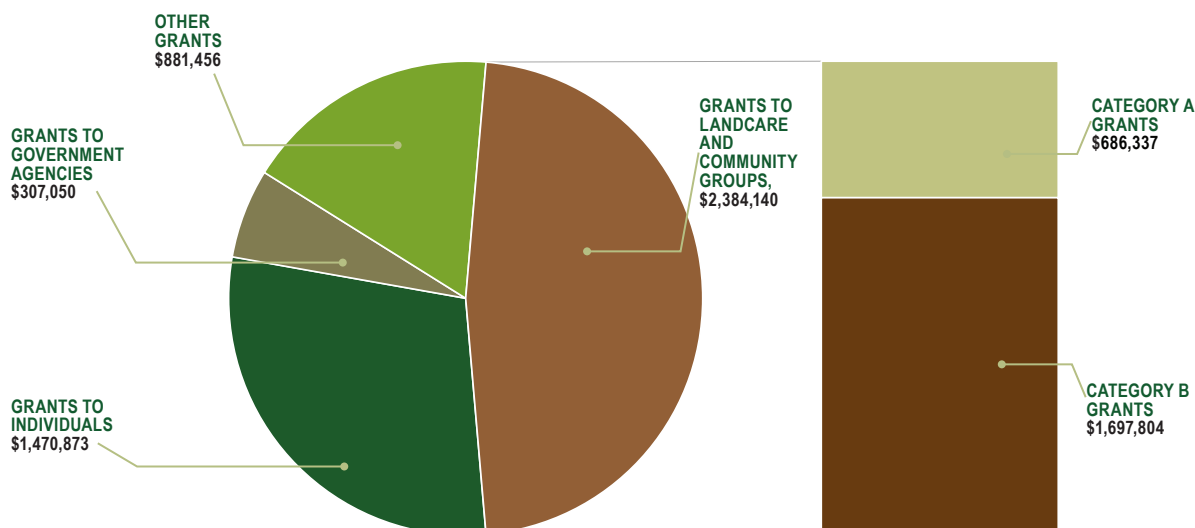


Figure 70. Total grants provided by South East LLS (2014-15)

Table 12 shows the number, value and range for grants to Category A and B groups. In summary, Landcare groups received 70 percent of the value of grants to Category A groups, with the remaining 30 percent going to producer groups (**Table 12**). Local councils received 57 percent of the value of grants to Category B groups, with the remaining 43 percent going to Aboriginal, conservation and other groups (**Table 12**).

⁶⁰ Excludes grant to local councils or other government organisations (e.g. public schools) which were captured as grants to Landcare and community groups.

Table 12. Grants to Landcare and other community groups, South East LLS (2014-15)

Group type	No. of grants	No. of recipients	Total cost	Range for individual grants	
				Low	High
Category A groups					
Landcare	34	13	\$479,794	\$245	\$60,000
Producer	11	6	\$206,543	\$5,075	\$60,018
Total (Category A)	45	19	\$686,337	N/A	N/A
Category B groups					
Aboriginal	14	6	\$407,101	\$2,400	\$99,300
Conservation	11	7	\$228,000	\$2,000	\$60,000
Local council	41	12	\$972,794	\$45	\$180,000
Other	3	1	\$89,909	\$5,909	\$44,000
Total (Category B)	69	26	\$1,697,804	N/A	N/A
Total (Categories A & B)	114	45	\$2,384,141	N/A	N/A

South East LLS paid for 96 percent of Category A and B grants to Landcare and community groups using funding received under Caring for Our Country (\$325,007), National Landcare Programme (\$264,500), other Australian Government sources (\$860,535) and Catchment Action NSW (\$845,962) (Figure 71).

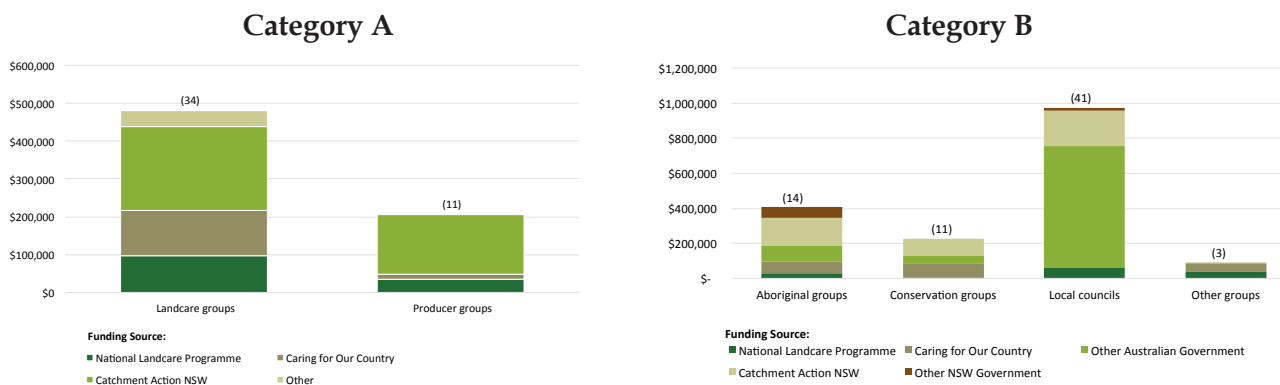


Figure 71. Grants to Category A and B groups, South East LLS (2014-15)
(the number in brackets shows the number of grants)

13.3.2. Dedicated support staff

Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups, generally the Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) and Community Support Officer (CSO) positions (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

South East LLS employed one RLF in 2014-15. This was a 1.0 FTE position and was filled for the full financial year. It cost approximately \$119,000, including salary and on costs, and was paid for using funding received under the National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country. The position was appointed directly by LLS and was based at the Berry office. The role included coordinating with Landcare and community groups across the South East.

South East LLS employed six CSOs (6.0 FTEs), a Land Services Officer – Aboriginal Support Officer (1.0 FTE), and a Senior Land Services Officer– Aboriginal Communities (1.0 FTE). These positions were filled for the full financial year and cost approximately \$829,000, including salary and on-costs. They were appointed directly by LLS and were paid for in full using funding received under the National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country.

While South East LLS provided data for Land Services Officers who work with Aboriginal communities, other LLS regions also employed staff to work with Aboriginal communities but did not categorise these positions as ‘dedicated support staff’. As such, care should be taken when comparing this data across regions.

South East LLS also provided grants of \$284,300 to Aboriginal, Landcare and conservation groups to fund support staff. The Commission has captured this support in the grants section of the baseline (**Section 13.3.1**).

13.3.3. Other support staff

Other support staff are positions funded by LLS that provide a support function for Landcare and community groups but also have other roles (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, there were 88 other support staff positions at South East LLS. These included Land Services Officers, Senior Land Services Officers and Biosecurity Officers.

South East LLS estimated that these staff spent between 2 percent (e.g. Biosecurity Officer) and 25 percent (Land Services Officer, NRM) of their time supporting Landcare and other community groups. These estimates were based on time estimates from staff workplans.

Based on these time estimates, the portion of these positions that contributed to supporting Landcare and other community groups cost \$714,539, including salary and on costs. They were paid for using funding received from both the Australian and NSW governments, including NSW Treasury, as well as rates (**Figure 72**).

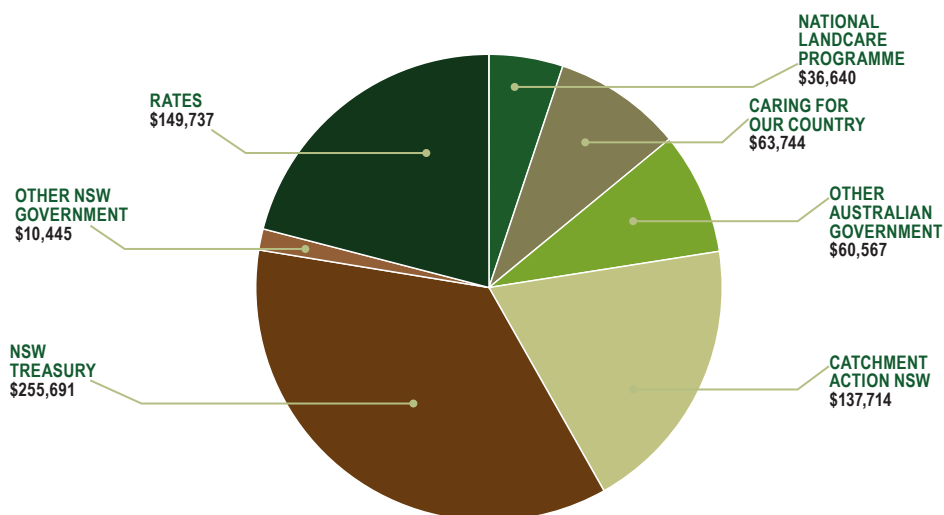


Figure 72. Cost of other support staff at South East LLS (2014-15)

(This analysis is based on funding data provided by LLS for individual staff positions that provided support to Landcare and community groups in 2014-15)

13.3.4. Distribution of grants and dedicated support staff

Figure 73 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS Offices and dedicated support staff positions across the South East region. The majority of grants were concentrated around Wollongong and the regional centres of Bega, Batemans Bay and Berry. CSOs were spread evenly across the region, with an RLF based in Berry.

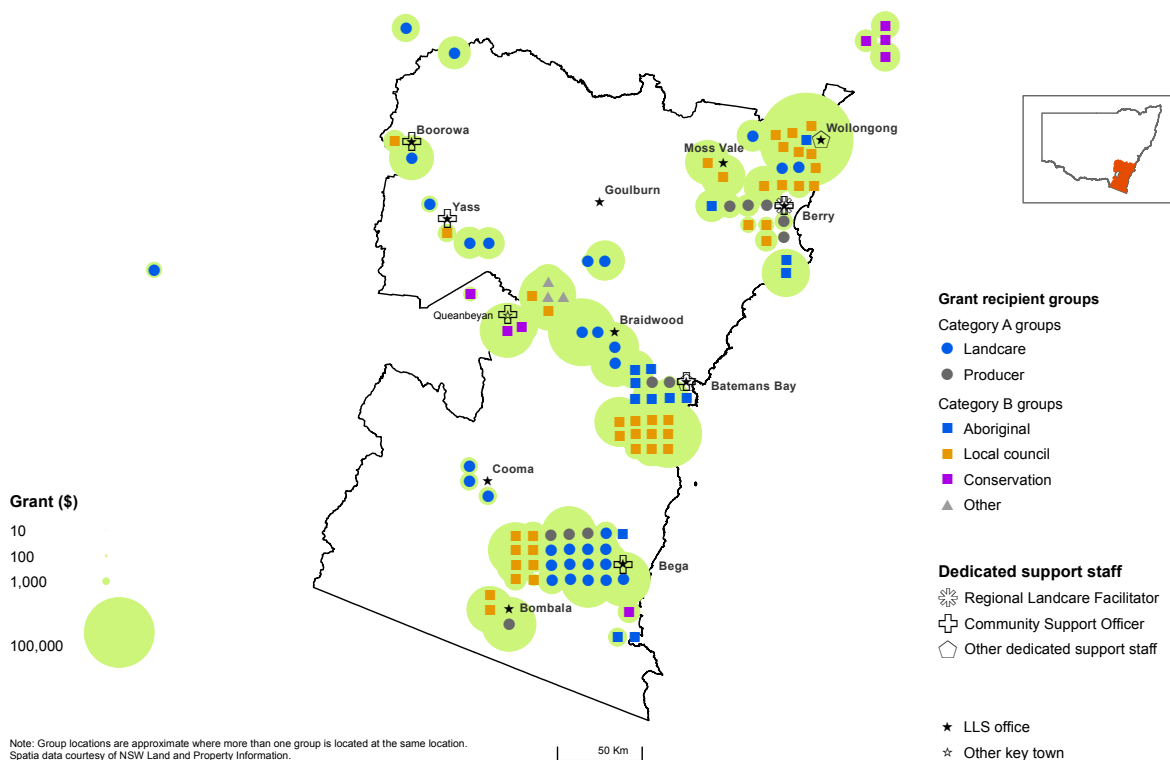


Figure 73. Distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff in South East LLS (2014-15)

13.3.5. Other analysis

South East LLS spent 29 percent of revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. Its spending of the remaining 71 percent of revenue from grants and contributions was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission could account for an additional 40 percent of spending of total grants and contributions revenue. Approximately 19 percent was provided as grants to individual land managers and government agencies, and 21 percent paid for LLS staff who supported Landcare and community groups. Other LLS staff may have also been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue, so the actual percentage may be higher than 21 percent.

14. Regional baseline: Western LLS

14.1. Overview

In 2014-15, Western LLS revenue was \$12.28 million, most of which came from rates (\$1.27 million), NSW Treasury (\$2.63 million) and grants and contributions (\$7.43 million).

Western LLS spent \$1.21 million on Landcare and other community groups as:

- grants, \$0.48 million
- dedicated support staff (two Regional Landcare Facilitators), \$0.20 million
- other support staff (such as Land Services Officers), \$0.52 million
- other support (e.g. provision of advertising, events, catering and insurance for Landcare groups), \$0.02 million.

Approximately 71 percent of this expenditure was paid for using grants and contributions revenue⁶¹ from the Australian and NSW governments. The National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW paid for all of this expenditure.

The expenditure on Landcare and community groups represents 10 percent of total revenue and 16 percent of revenue from grants and contributions⁶².

14.2. Revenue

LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups is influenced by the amount of revenue it receives. LLS revenue data for the baseline year is presented below. The portion of this revenue that is spent on Landcare and community groups is analysed in the next section (**Section 14.3**).

Total revenue for Western LLS was \$12.28 million in 2014-15 (**Figure 74**). Approximately 61 percent of total revenue came from grants and contributions, most of which was provided by the Australian and NSW governments (**Figure 74**). Rates provided 10 percent of total revenue (**Figure 74**), but were not used to pay for 9 percent of LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups, all of which was for other support staff. NSW Treasury funding provided 21 percent of total revenue (**Figure 74**), but was only used to pay for 20 percent of expenditure on groups, all of which was for other support staff. Other revenue sources made up 8 percent of total revenue (**Figure 74**) and consisted of revenue from levies, the sale of goods and services, and other minor revenue streams.

61 Grants and contributions revenue includes funding from the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country, Catchment Action NSW, and other funding programs. It excludes NSW Treasury funding which is largely used to pay for salaries and operational expenses. In the LLS Annual Report 2014-15, NSW Treasury funding is categorised as grants and contributions revenue however, it is excluded from the grants and contributions category in this report because it was only used to pay for a relatively small portion of expenditure on Landcare and community groups across LLS. For Western LLS, NSW Treasury funding was used to pay for 20 percent of expenditure on Landcare and community groups, all of which was used to pay for other support staff salaries and on costs.

62 For the purposes of this baseline, it is more meaningful to consider expenditure on Landcare and community groups as a percentage of grants and contributions revenue because most of the expenditure was funded from this revenue, rather than from rates or NSW Treasury funding.

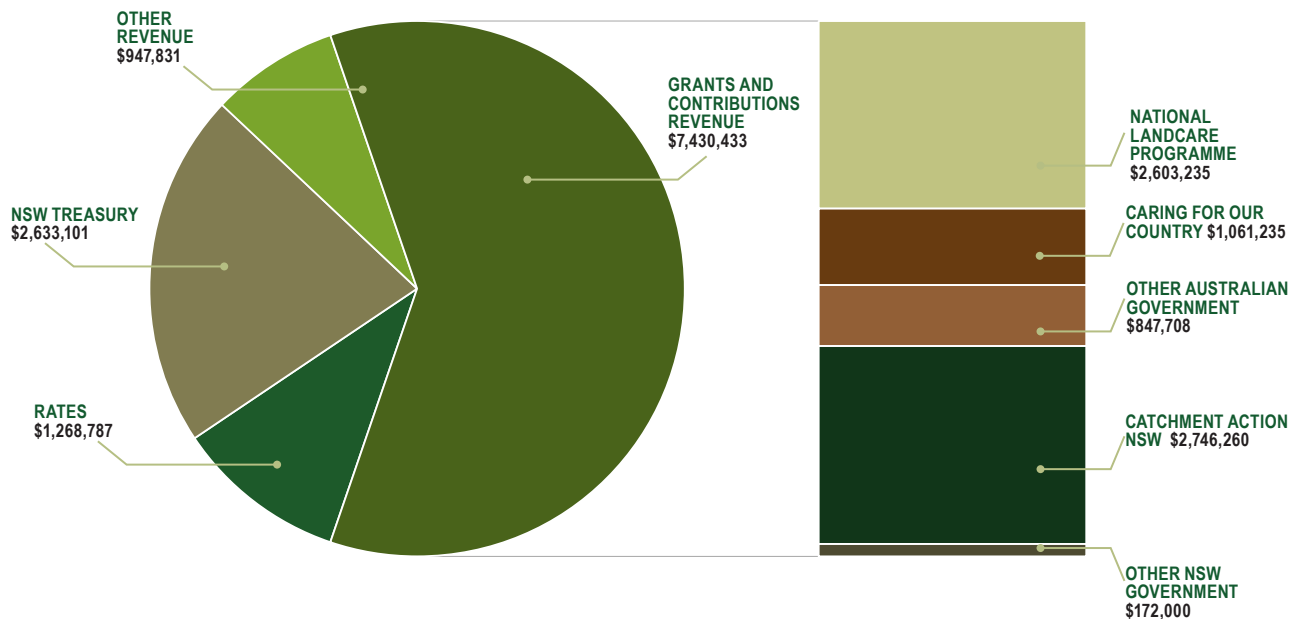


Figure 74. Total revenue, Western LLS (2014-15)

14.3. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups

In 2014-15, Western LLS spent \$1.21 million on Landcare and other community groups. About 40 percent of this was provided as grants, 16 percent as funding for dedicated support staff, 43 percent as funding for other support staff, and 2 percent as other support (Figure 75). Western LLS paid for 71 percent of this expenditure using funding received under the National Landcare Programme, Caring for Our Country and Catchment Action NSW (Figure 75). This is discussed in Sections 14.3.1 to 14.3.3.

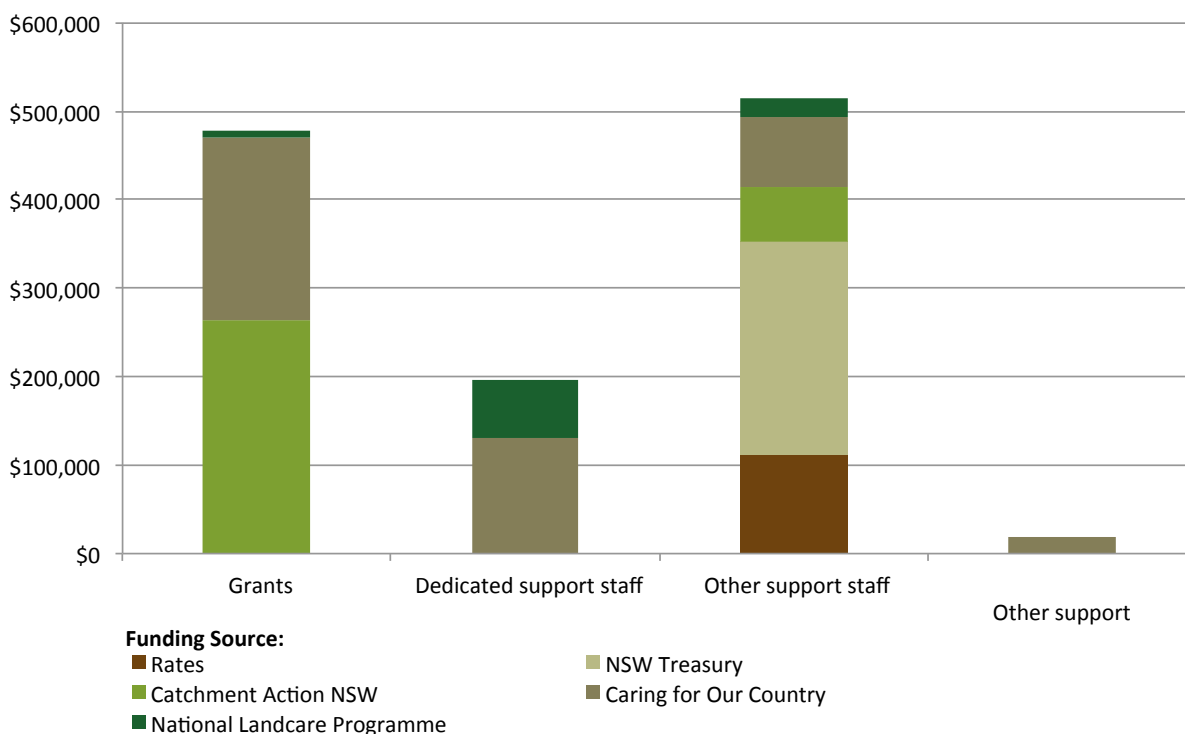


Figure 75. Expenditure on Landcare and community groups, Western LLS (2014-15)

14.3.1. Grants

Western LLS provided \$2.90 million in total grants in 2014-15, of which \$0.48 million went to Landcare and community groups (**Figure 76**). The remaining \$2.42 million was provided to local councils (4 percent of total grants), individuals for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management purposes (67 percent of total grants) and other grantees (13 percent of total grants) (**Figure 76**).

From the \$0.48 million in grants to Landcare and community groups, approximately 73 percent were used to fund on-ground projects and 27 percent were for capacity building projects.

Approximately 73 percent of grants to Landcare and community groups went to Category A groups, which include those groups explicitly listed in the definition of ‘Landcare and community groups’ in the LLS/Landcare NSW Memorandum of Understanding (see **Table 1, Section 2.2.4** for further details on Category A and B groups). Category B groups received 27 percent of these grants (**Figure 76**).

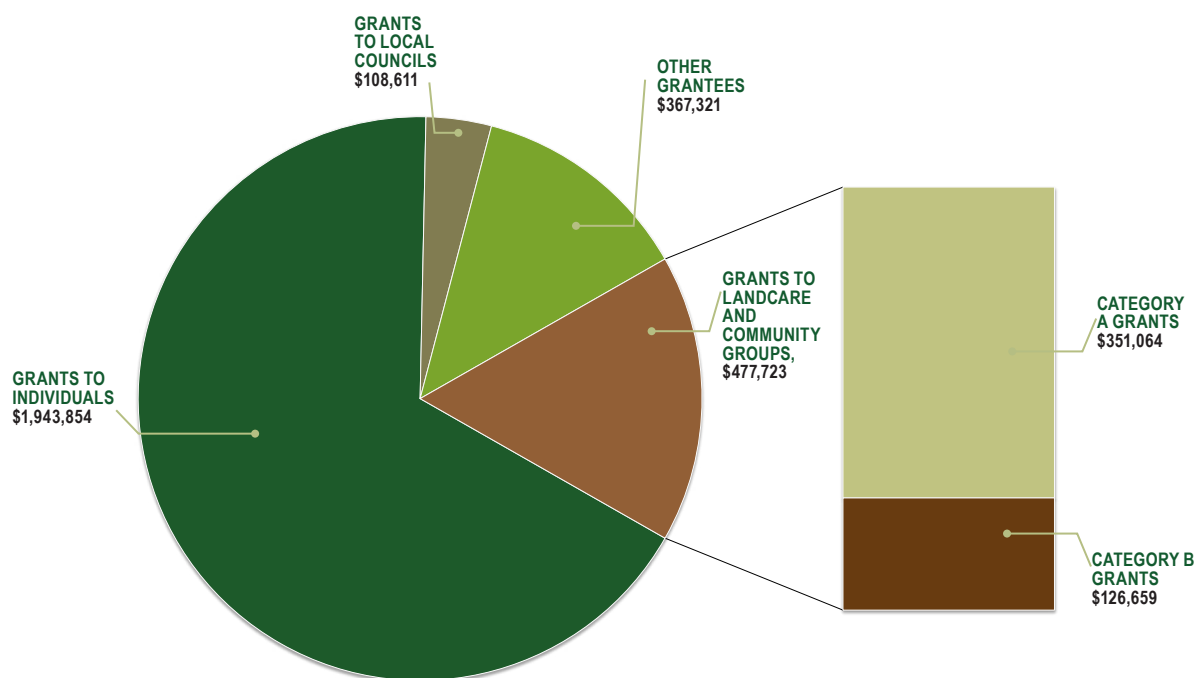


Figure 76. Total grants provided by Western LLS (2014-15)

Table 13 shows the number, value and range for grants to Category A and B groups. In summary, Landcare groups received 78 percent of the value of grants to Category A groups, with the remaining 22 percent going to producer groups and Friends of Groups (**Table 13**). Aboriginal groups and private consultants each received 39 percent of the value of grants to Category B groups, with the remaining 22 percent going to conservation groups (**Table 13**).

Table 13. Grants to Landcare and other community groups, Western LLS (2014-15)

Group type	No. of grants	No. of recipients	Total cost	Range for individual grants	
				Low	High
Category A groups					
Landcare	7	6	\$273,114	\$2,000	\$146,750
Friends of Groups	1	1	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Producer	1	1	\$72,950	\$72,950	\$72,950
Total (Category A)	9	8	\$351,064	N/A	N/A
Category B groups					
Aboriginal	7	6	\$49,881	\$3,317	\$11,168
Conservation	4	4	\$27,982	\$1,100	\$15,614
Private consultant	2	2	\$48,797	\$8,967	\$39,830
Total (Category B)	13	12	\$126,660	N/A	N/A
Total (Categories A & B)	22	20	\$477,724	N/A	N/A

Western LLS paid for all Category A and B grants to Landcare and community groups using funding received under Caring for Our Country (\$205,677), National Landcare Programme (\$8,068) and Catchment Action NSW (\$263,979) (Figure 77).

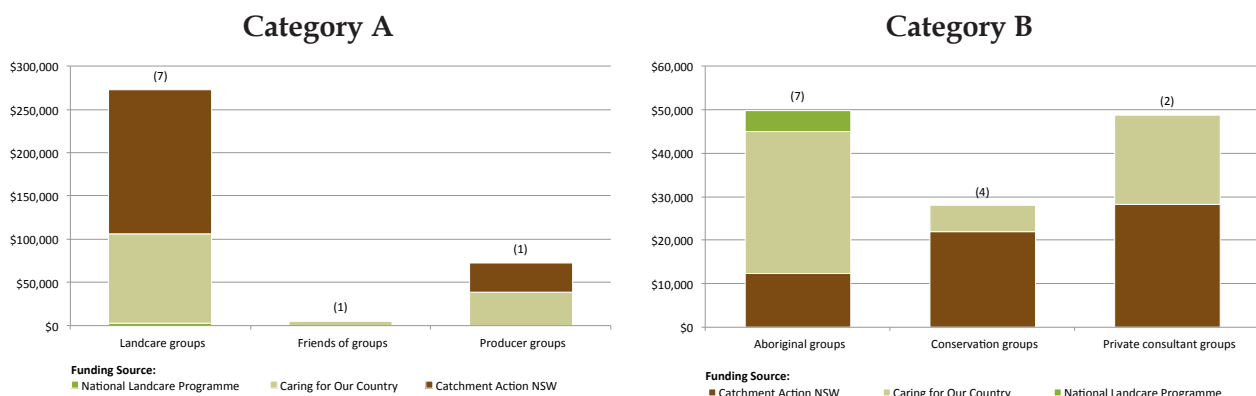


Figure 77. Grants to Category A and B groups, Western LLS (2014-15)
(the number in brackets shows the number of grants)

14.3.2. Dedicated support staff

Dedicated support staff are positions funded by LLS that are fully dedicated to supporting Landcare and other community groups, generally the Regional Landcare Facilitator (RLF) and Community Support Officer (CSO) positions (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

Western LLS employed two RLFs (2.0 FTEs) in 2014-15, which were based in Buronga and Bourke. These positions were filled for the full financial year and cost approximately \$196,000, including salary and on costs. They were paid for using funding received under the National Landcare Programme and Caring for Our Country.

14.3.3. Other support staff

Other support staff are positions funded by LLS that provide a support function for Landcare and community groups but also have other roles (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, Western LLS funded 30 other support staff positions. These included other support staff at Western LLS included Land Services Officer, Senior Land Services Officers, Managers of Land Services and Biosecurity Officers.

Western LLS estimated that these staff spent between 1 percent (e.g. Scholarship Officer) and 50 percent (e.g. Senior Land services Officer, Aboriginal Communities) of their time supporting Landcare and other community groups. These estimates were based on time estimates from the General Manager.

Based on these time estimates, the portion of these positions that contributed to supporting Landcare and other community groups cost \$515,093, including salary and on costs. They were paid for using funding received from the Australian and NSW governments, including NSW Treasury, as well as rates (**Figure 78**).

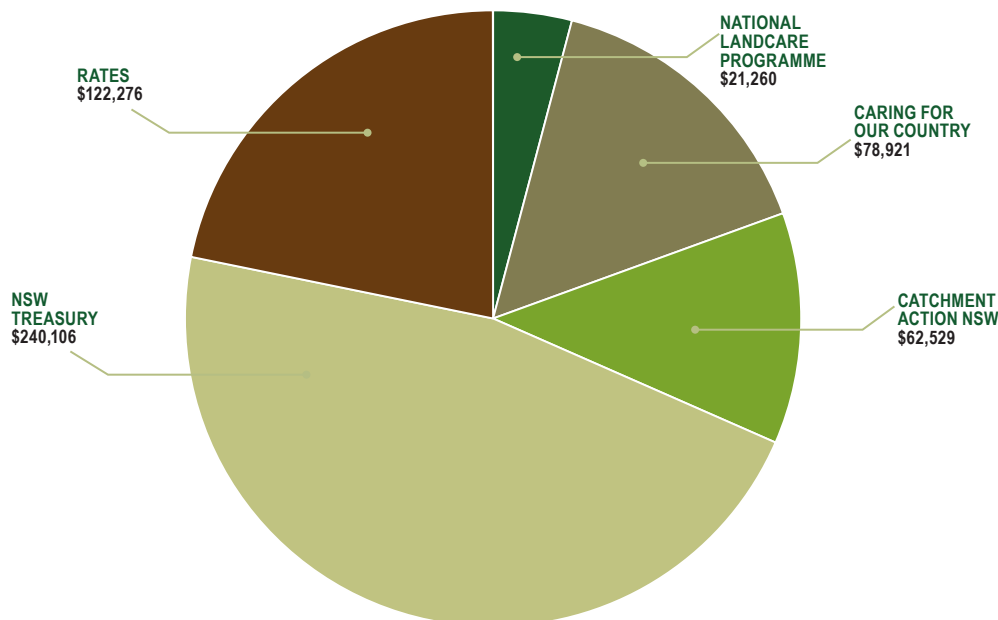


Figure 78. Cost of other support staff at Western LLS (2014-15)

(This analysis is based on funding data provided by LLS for individual staff positions that provided support to Landcare and community groups in 2014-15)

14.3.4. Other support

Other support includes any additional LLS expenditure on Landcare and community groups that is not already captured in the grants section (see **Box 3, Section 2.2.3** for further details).

In 2014-15, Western LLS spent an additional \$18,463 on Landcare and community groups. This expenditure included insurance⁶³, advertising, travel, catering and event support for a Landcare groups in the Western region. It was paid for in full using funding received under Caring for Our Country.

⁶³ Insurance included: public liability, Landcare association insurance, and volunteer worker insurance. The total cost of this insurance was \$1,600.

14.3.5. Distribution of grants and dedicated support staff

Figure 79 shows the distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS Offices and dedicated support staff positions across the Western region. Grants were spread evenly across the region, with RLFs based in Bourke and Buronga.

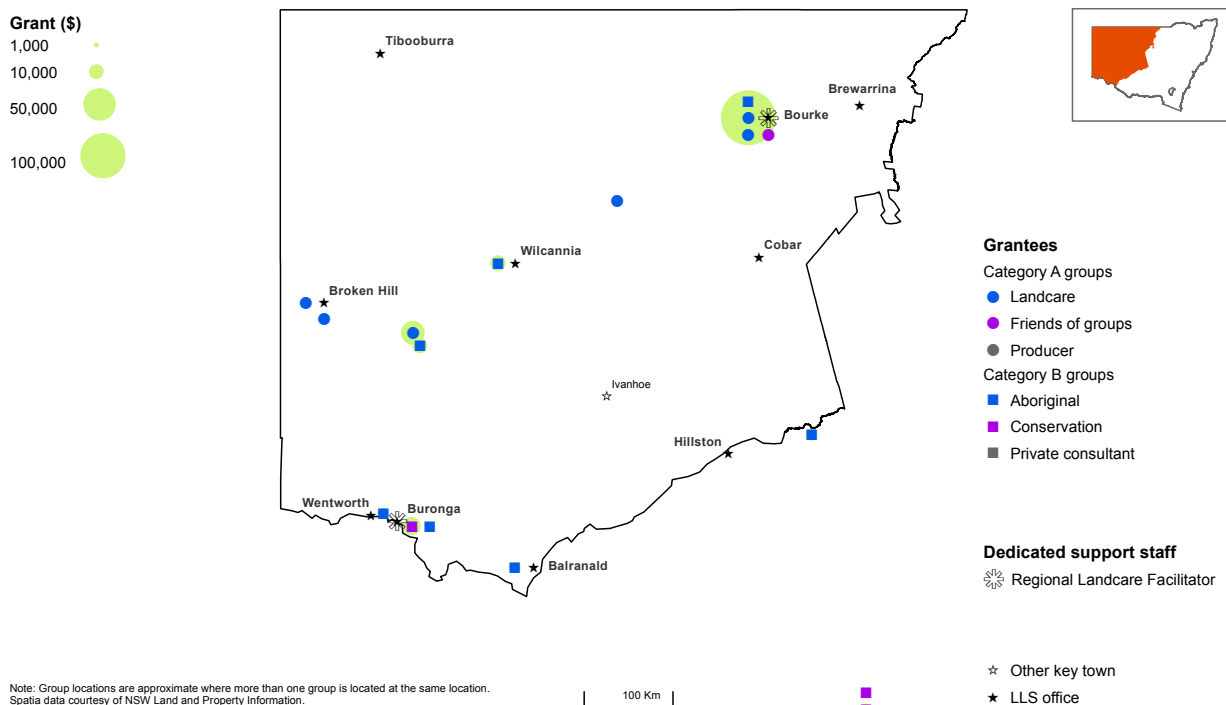


Figure 79. Distribution of Landcare and community group grants, LLS offices and dedicated support staff in Western LLS (2014-15)

14.3.6. Other analysis

Western LLS spent 16 percent of revenue from grants and contributions on Landcare and community groups. Its spending of the remaining 84 percent grants and contributions revenue was not the focus of this project and the Commission did not collect data to specifically assess this spending. However, from the data collected, the Commission could account for an additional 37 percent of spending of total grants and contributions revenue. Approximately 28 percent was provided as grants to individual land managers and local councils, and 9 percent paid for LLS staff who supported Landcare and community groups. Other LLS staff may have also been partially funded using grants and contributions revenue, so the actual percentage may be higher than 9 percent.

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Attachment 1: Joint Management Committee response



Local Land
Services



Landcare
New South Wales

Joint Management Committee response to Natural Resources Commission Baseline Study – Local Land Services Investment in Support of Landcare

Response from the Chairs of the Joint Management Committee

Forging an ongoing, successful and collaborative partnership into the future is the goal of the Local Land Services and Landcare NSW partnership Joint Management Committee (JMC). As we build the NSW Local Landcare Coordinator Initiative, a key focus for the joint Chairs of the JMC will be identifying what is **best practice in partnership**.

The JMC thanks the Commission for its work in the development of this report. The JMC plans on utilising the baseline as one part of its efforts to identify best practice in partnership.

The JMC is pleased to be involved in undertaking a broad investigative program, working with regional Local Land Services, Landcare groups and communities to determine; *what makes a great relationship between community and government? What are the hurdles? And, what are the steps that can be put in place to ensure that the future of the relationship between community and government is not only successful but also vibrant?* The goal is; continuous improvement in how we partner at both the state and regional scales.

The report primarily delivers information about the investment Local Land Services makes into community support programs at regional scales. The JMC acknowledges that while this report does only provide a snap shot of financial investment by Local Land Services in relation to Landcare and community group support and not grants to individual land carers, it will be instrumental in guiding the JMC in terms of identifying different engagement models – looking at the arrangements that work, those that may not be as effective as they could be, and the decisions and influencing factors behind each model.

The JMC strives to build a culture of improvement in partnership between Local Land Services and community. Recognizing areas of success and where Local Land Services, Landcare or other community groups may require further work. We want to address issues of capacity, culture, knowledge and any other shortfalls responsible for limiting partnership or investment between government, community and Landcare.

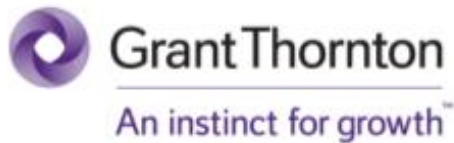
The JMC would ask the reader to consider this report in that broad and longer term context rather than focus on the data and discussion held within to smaller scale and shorter time frame considerations. As noted in the discussion, there are many factors at play in all regions - above and beyond pure financial considerations.

Alex Anthony – Chair's Delegate, Local Land Services

Robert Dulhunty – Chair Landcare NSW

Prepared: 12/01/2017 by Chris McCulloch: NSW Landcare Program Manager with input from Landcare NSW

Attachment 2: Grant Thornton Letter of Attestation



Mr Bryce Wilde
Executive Director
Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

24 January 2017

Dear Mr Wilde,

Landcare Baseline Study – Grant Thornton Attestation

We refer to the standard form of agreement dated 17 May 2016. I am pleased to state that the Landcare Baseline Study Report ('Report') has been reviewed and compared with the consolidated workbook created by Grant Thornton Australia Limited ('Grant Thornton') based on information provided by the Local Land Services regions.

As a result of this review, we confirm the factual accuracy of the figures in the report based on the information provided by the 11 regions of Local Land Services. It should be noted, Grant Thornton was not engaged to validate the information provided by Local Land Services.

It is our understanding that this report has been prepared exclusively for the Joint Management Committee of Local Land Services and Landcare NSW. Whilst the report may be made available to other parties, we stress that, to the fullest extent permitted by law, we cannot accept any responsibility whatsoever in respect of any reliance that these parties may place on the report in any decision that they may make in relation to the Natural Resources Commission, Local Land Services, and/or Landcare NSW.

Background Information

Grant Thornton was engaged in May 2016 by the Natural Resources Commission to assist in undertaking a baseline study to help quantify Local Land Services' expenditure on Landcare and other community groups. An overview of the services performed by Grant Thornton is as follows:

- Grant Thornton was provided with data in Excel format that had been submitted to the Natural Resources Commission by the 11 Local Land Services regions within New South Wales. The data was subsequently provided to Grant Thornton in May and June 2016 for Grant Thornton's review and analysis;

Attachment 2: Grant Thornton Letter of Attestation. continued

- Grant Thornton consolidated all the data for each Local Land Services region into one consolidated workbook, conducted the analysis and where appropriate, made any amendments within the consolidated workbook;
- Grant Thornton liaised with the Natural Resources Commission with respect to any findings and/or queries during the consulting period (18 May 2016 to 30 June 2016). The Natural Resources Commission reported findings and/or queries to various personnel from Local Land Services and amendments were made to the data accordingly; and
- The factual accuracy of the report was verified by Grant Thornton using the finalised consolidated workbook that was provided to the Natural Resources Commission on 24 January 2017.

We do not accept any responsibility for any loss or damages arising out of the use of the report for any purpose other than in connection with the consulting services provided by Grant Thornton to the Natural Resources Commission.

Yours sincerely
GRANT THORNTON AUSTRALIA LIMITED



Mark Griffiths
Partner

Grant Thornton Australia Limited ABN 41 127 556 389 ACN 127 556 389

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