



06 JAN, 2025

Two Tassie projects win

Tasmanian Farmer, Launceston



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2024 LANDCARE AUSTRALIA COMMUNITY GRANTS

BY JACINTA DICKINS

WHY did the Giant Freshwater Crayfish cross the road? It might sound like the start of a good joke, but it's the name of a Tassie project set to change road designs across the state and beyond to better protect native wildlife, namely the Giant Freshwater Crayfish.

The value of this project from Mount Roland Landcare has been recognised with a \$10,000 grant from Landcare Australia. Their innovative approach will reduce the impact on the International Union for Conservation of Nature-listed threatened crayfish, which have been seen crossing roads.

They aren't the only Tassie recipients of the 2024 Landcare Australia Community Grants. Dolphin Sands Community Association's strategic gorse control pro-

ject was awarded \$5940. The funds will go towards finishing works to fire-proof the area and clear out the highly flammable weeds near the Ramsar-listed wetland near Swan River and Moulting Lagoon.

Why did they cross?

Greg Taylor, president of Mount Roland Landcare, said they've discovered the answer: "Because they don't like culverts!" The group is now focused on designing culverts the crayfish are comfortable with and can grip onto and use without endangering themselves. It is also beneficial to platypuses.

They have two significant aims now: to see if they can remediate existing culverts to make them more usable to crayfish and to design a culvert for future road projects to help protect these native

animals. Think rock ladders, traction pads for slippery areas, claw holds and a durable stream bed-like structure also functional for roads.

Didn't start the fire

Gorse is a declared weed of national significance. It is problematic for farmers and highly flammable. Dr Robyn Moore, Dolphin Sands Community Association secretary, said their funding would help the group control larger clumps of gorse, and maintenance after would be straightforward. A team of volunteer firefighters was present during removal in case vehicle heat sparked a blaze. "We're certainly grateful to get that funding ... it helps small groups like us achieve much more than we could do on our own," Dr Moore said.



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Mount Roland Landcare knows why the Giant Freshwater Crayfish are crossing the road and can now work on protecting them. Picture supplied



Dolphin Sands Community Association has been busy removing highly flammable and problematic gorse, and can now finish the job. Picture supplied