



Protecting Koalas of South East Queensland & Northern New South Wales

Healthy Land and Water's **Protecting Koalas Project** is designed to conserve koalas in South East Queensland.

Activities will protect and restore key koala habitat and build knowledge of koala numbers and distribution.

Flinders Peak was selected as the location for this work, from more than 20 priority koala habitat areas identified in an earlier study.

About the project

- Restores +110 hectares of koala habitat
- Reduces fire threats through land manager training
- Builds conservation outcomes through collaboration with governments, community, Traditional Owners and researchers
- Improves knowledge and understanding through citizen science, workshops, research and surveys by koala conservation dog

Three-year **koala conservation** project to protect, restore and increase koala habitat in Flinders Peak



This project is supported by Healthy Land and Water, through funding from the Australian Government's Environmental Restoration Fund.



Australian Government

Other key project collaborators include the Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science, Queensland Trust for Nature, and North Coast Local Land Services (NSW).

How this project fits within the South East Queensland NRM Plan



Healthy **land**



Healthy **water**



Nature conservation



Coastal and **marine**



Local **landscapes**



Community



Air and atmosphere



Traditional owners

Project name: **Protecting Koalas** of South East Queensland & Northern New South Wales

Catchment: South East Queensland

Timing: June 2020 – June 2023

Project manager: Dennis Gannaway, Team Leader, Healthy Land & Water

Budget: \$1,000,000



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Why this project is important

Koalas are vulnerable to extinction, and koala populations in South East Queensland are at elevated risk for a variety of reasons.

Australia's koala populations have dramatically decreased since European arrival. Before it was realised that they would become a threatened species, between 1906 and 1927, 450,000 to one million koalas were killed for their fur annually in Queensland.

Koalas prefer forests growing in better soils, possibly due to the better nutritional value within tree leaves.

A growing human population has led to large-scale clearing of better-quality Koala habitats with many Koalas now struggling within smaller, fragmented patches of poorer-quality forest.

This, combined with decline in habitat condition through drought, fire and climate change and disease, vehicle strike, dog attack and reduced genetic diversity, have culminated in causing further, substantial decline in koala populations.



One of the things this project will target is maintaining and improving contiguous landscapes of koala habitat to allow koalas survival and movement

Action

Healthy Land and Water's **Protecting Koalas Project** will:

- Maintain or enhance existing koala habitat
- Expand and connect koala habitat
- Identify and use existing knowledge and build community understanding and awareness
- Build collaboration between governments, community, land managers and Traditional Owners to improve outcomes for koalas

Outcomes

- Maintain and improve contiguous landscapes of koala habitat to allow koalas survival and movement through:
 - 10 hectares targeted planting
 - 110 hectares weed control
 - 100 hectares improved fire management
- Improved community and land manager capacity to contribute to koala conservation through:
 - Knowledge building workshops
 - Fire information and planning workshops
- Improved knowledge of local koalas and habitat management through:
 - Data collation
 - Community reporting of koala sightings
 - Targeted koala surveys
 - Traditional Owner involvement
 - Research on koala habitat quality
- Improved collaboration on koala conservation through:
 - Project Working Group comprising Queensland Government Department of Environment and Science, Queensland Trust for Nature, Queensland Fire and Biodiversity Consortium, local governments, Traditional Owners and landcare and community groups.

This project is part of a broader Environment Restoration Fund (ERF) investment in Koala conservation across South East Queensland and Northern New South Wales. Healthy Land and Water is delivering the South East Queensland component and North Coast Local Land Services will deliver the northern NSW services component. The project is relying on a high level of collaboration to ensure alignment and consistency and reduce duplication throughout the project and will culminate in a joint project celebration.