# Northern Plains Grassland Reserves

## Application for Biomass Reduction Agreements

### Application schedule

| | |
|---|---|
| **Applications open** | **29 October 2026** |
| **Applications close** | 18 November 2026 |
| **Interviews** | 3 - 8 December 2026 |
| **Agreements offered** | From mid-December 2026 |
| **Applicants advised of outcomes** | January 2027 |

Registered applicants will be notified of any changes to the above schedule.

### Contents

**Application schedule** ..... 1
**Northern Plains Grassland Reserves Biomass Reduction - Background** ..... 3
**The opportunity** ..... 3
**Description of the Northern Plains Grasslands** ..... 4
**Requirements of the Service Provider (farmer)** ..... 4
**Evaluation criteria** ..... 5
**Application process** ..... 6
**Contact** ..... 6
**Application form** ..... 7
**Evaluation Questions** ..... 8
**Reservation of Rights, Confidentiality and Disclaimer Statements** ..... 10

## Northern Plains Grassland Reserves Biomass Reduction - Background

Northern Plains Grasslands (NPG) is a naturally treeless vegetation community dominated by perennial grass tussocks, with a rich diversity of forbs and wildflowers. Less than 3% of their original extent remains. This threatened ecological community is protected under Victorian and Commonwealth legislation, including Victoria's *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act* and the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act*.

Parks Victoria is responsible for managing Northern Plains Grasslands in Terrick Terrick National Park and numerous Nature Conservation Reserves across northern Victoria. These parks and reserves protect some of the best remaining examples of the NPG community and provide habitat for many threatened plant and animal species.

Inappropriate grazing regimes threaten many grassland-dependent species, which rely on specific habitat structures to survive and thrive. To maintain the health and condition of NPG habitat, Parks Victoria uses strategic livestock grazing. These grazing regimes are designed and managed by Parks Victoria to achieve conservation objectives rather than private commercial outcomes.

## The opportunity

An opportunity exists for suitable service providers (farmers) to undertake periodic controlled stock grazing in the Terrick Terrick National Park and other nature and conservation reserves across the Northern Plains (Patho Plains and Lower Avoca Plains). This will enable Parks Victoria to achieve suitable biomass levels which support the conservation outcomes for the grasslands. This opportunity provides for farmers to support conservation outcomes for a threatened ecosystem in return for access to a source of fodder for stock.

The opportunity will vary dependent upon seasonal conditions, the quality of grasslands including the ecological values within each site and the need for grazing as part of the management regime.

The opportunity requires service providers who can work cooperatively with Parks Victoria, be prepared to accept uncertainty in the availability of grazing, and to undertake works to ensure the integrity of fencing and watering points, and management of specified weeds as required.

## Description of the Northern Plains Grasslands

Applications are invited for the grasslands listed below. For further information about each grassland, refer to the website https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/ecological-grazing-program or contact Ben Hodgens on Grazing@parks.vic.gov.au

### Grasslands on the Lower Avoca Plains (west of Kerang)

| | Total area (ha) | Grazing area (ha) |
|---|---|---|
| **Bael Bael Grassland Nature Conservation Reserve** | 3421 | 3062 |
| | | |

### Grasslands on the Patho Plains

| | Preferred Stock type | Total area (ha) | Grazing area (ha) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Canegrass** | Cattle | 79 | 61 |
| **Cantwell NCR** | Either | 31 | 20 |
| **Davies Block – West** | Sheep | 695 | 458 |
| **Davies Block – East** | Sheep | 601 | 589 |
| **Kotta Grassland** | Sheep | 222 | 222 |
| **Little Kotta NCR** | Sheep | 19 | 16 |
| **Patho West** | Either | 226 | 226 |
| **Pine Grove NCR** | Sheep | 36 | 36 |
| **Pipit NCR** | Sheep | 32 | 32 |
| **Roslynmead East** | Sheep | 123 | 123 |
| **Roslynmead North** | Cattle | 454 | 442 |
| **Roslynmead South** | Either | 117 | 117 |
| **Terrick East** | Sheep | 217 | 217 |
| **Tomara Gilgai** | Sheep | 339 | 339 |
| **Torrumberry** | Sheep | 246 | 215 |
| **Wanurp** | Sheep | 122 | 105 |
| | | | |

Changing environmental conditions may result in other grasslands in the local area requiring grazing through the life of the contract. These opportunities would be offered to graziers with an existing grazing agreement, or to suitable applicants.

## Requirements of the Service Provider (farmer)

Successful farmers will be required to enter into an agreement with Parks Victoria in the form of a Biomass Reduction Services Agreement. The successful farmer(s) are to ensure that the Agreement conditions are met.

Successful farmers will be given access (in accord with a Biomass Reduction Services Agreement) to reduce biomass for part of, one or more reserves for a period of three years. An extension of the agreement for up to a further three years may be available where mutually agreed to by both parties and there remains an ongoing need for grazing to achieve the conservation outcomes of the grassland.

## Evaluation Criteria

Parks Victoria will assess Application responses and interviews against the key selection criteria outlined below.

### Grazing Management Compatibility (weighting 40%)

- Capacity to supply appropriate livestock numbers when requested.
- Capacity to move and tend to stock regularly.
- Understanding and ability to comply with the Grazing Agreement's biosecurity requirements.
- Sufficient flexibility within the farming enterprise to accommodate changing seasonal conditions, including drought and periods of exceptionally high biomass growth.

### Experience Grazing Native Pastures (weighting 20%)

- Understanding how native grasslands respond to climate and grazing practices.
- Understanding the benefits and challenges of grazing native grasslands, including implications for livestock health and nutrition.
- Experience managing native grasslands on the applicant's own property.

### Communication and Collaboration (weighting 30%)

- Capacity to provide and respond to regular feedback, progress updates, and records.
- Willingness to work collaboratively to resolve problems and achieve shared goals.
- Ability to negotiate and compromise when required.
- Previous experience working with government or non-government organisations, such as Parks Victoria, DEECA, Trust for Nature, a Catchment Management Authority, or Agriculture Victoria.

### Conservation Knowledge and Experience (weighting 10%)

- Knowledge of the conservation objectives that underpin ecological grazing.
- Previous participation in on-farm or off-farm conservation programs.

# Application process

## Information session

Parks Victoria will hold an information session with farmers interested in grazing Parks Victoria grasslands from 2027.

The information session provides an opportunity to:

- learn about the conservation outcomes Parks Victoria is seeking to achieve
- understand how strategic grazing contributes to native grassland management
- discuss agreement requirements and grazing expectations
- be provided sufficient information to determine whether the grazing requirements align with your farming system.

This Application form is available at the information session and on the website.

For those farmers that do not attend the information session, it is important that they contact Parks Victoria and discuss any questions they have about the grazing program.

## Application submissions

Application submissions should be marked as 'Biomass Reduction Application' and can be made in the following ways:

**Post:** Parks Victoria, PO Box 138, Echuca, VIC, 3564

**Email:** Grazing@parks.vic.gov.au

**All Applications are to be submitted before 12pm AEST on 18 November 2026**

A notification will be sent by post or email to applicants upon receipt of their Application.

## Interviews

Farmers will be short listed based on the responses they provide in their application.

Interviews will be held between 3rd and 8th of December with short listed farmers.

All farmers will be notified as to whether they are successful or not.

## Biomass Reduction Agreement

A copy of the Biomass Reduction Agreement is available on the website, contained in the information pack or can be emailed out to you.

Applicants should seek their own independent legal advice on the Biomass Agreement prior to signing.

Successful applicants will be offered an agreement commencing in early 2027.

## Contact

For further information contact: Ben Hodgens

Phone: 03 8427 2469

Email: Grazing@parks.vic.gov.au

Website: www.parks.vic.gov.au/grazingcontract

# Application form

## Applicant details

| | |
|---|---|
| **Name** | |
| **Address of main farming property** | |
| **Postal Address** | |
| **Phone** | |
| **Email** | |
| **ABN** | |

## This application applies to the following grasslands

| **List the grassland reserves that you wish to be considered to graze (in order of priority)** |
|---|
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |
| |

I hereby apply to graze for the Northern Plains Grassland Reserves.

Signed:

---

Name:

---

Date:

---

## Evaluation Questions

### Section 1. Describe your farming business.

**Address of home farm(s) and size (ha):**

**What type/class of stock do you run and what is your production focus (e.g. lamb/beef meat production, wool, dairy, mixed grazing/cropping) What stock numbers would you generally have available to graze the grassland grazing area(s)?**

**Where do most of your stock originate from (. i.e. self-replacing flock, local trading, interstate trading)? If buying stock from outside the region – where from?**

**Describe the pastures and feed type on your property? (E.g. improved pastures, sown fodder, native pastures, feed lot)?**

### Section 2. Stock Management

**How would stock be moved on/off the reserve (walked, livestock transport contractor, own truck)?**

**What sort of lead time would you require to move stock on/off the reserve?**

**Do you have access to sufficient land to carry the stock when not required to graze the reserve?**

**Are there certain times of year when your stock numbers will be reduced or unavailable? For example; taken home for shearing in November, lambing at home farm during July, lambs weaned in October etc.**

**Who will be the primary person responsible for day-to-day stock management and handling (yourself, farmhand, other)? How far away is this person from the grazing areas?**

## Section 3. Working together - **Conservation** and Collaboration

**Describe how you work collaboratively on your own farm**

**Have you previously participated in any government or non-government conservation programs? Please describe your experience**

**Have you grazed native grasslands before? Describe your experience.**

# Reservation of Rights, Confidentiality and Disclaimer Statements

## Reservation of Rights

Parks Victoria reserves its right to:

a) consider or accept, or refuse to consider or accept any submissions that do not comply with this Application document at its discretion, and without providing any reasons for its decision;
b) without any warning or explanation and for any cause, to terminate the entire Application process at any stage;
c) change any part of this Application or any document relating to this Application (for example, the grazing area);
d) accept one or more submissions;
e) require you to provide more information; and
f) offer other grassland reserves for grazing (if they become available) to suitable applicants.

## Confidentiality

Applicant's intellectual property outlined in the proposal will not, subject to legal obligations, be disclosed to competitors or used for illegitimate purposes.

In addition, initial discussions about the project will be treated as confidential and only shared with Parks Victoria employees and/or DEECA and Ministerial advisors and appropriate bodies for the purposes of assessment.

Applicants must acknowledge that the details of the proposal are accurate at the time of submission. Applicants must notify the Project Manager, where details change.

## Disclaimer

Applicants are advised to make independent enquiries in relation to their application.

This Application is intended to provide background information.

Parks Victoria does not give any warranty, expressed or implied, as to the accuracy or completeness of any information contained in this Application or which may be provided in association with it, or before the date of this Application or in future by Parks Victoria, its officers or agents. Parks Victoria do not take responsibility for any sites impediments such as heritage status, permissible uses, encumbrances on title, native title claims and environmental, planning and other approvals.

Parks Victoria does not accept any responsibility to any applicant or third party under the law of contract, tort or otherwise for any loss or damage which may arise from anything contained in the Application, any matter deemed to form part of this Application, the supporting information or documents referred to in this Application or any information supplied on behalf of Parks Victoria.

All information given to an applicant and ultimately the preferred proponent by Parks Victoria or its respective officers or agents will be given on an 'all care and no responsibility' basis.

Applicants acknowledge and agree that the submission of an application does not create a process contract.

By submitting this Application, the applicant agrees, without qualifications, to have acknowledged and accepted this disclaimer.