



MEDIA RELEASE

STRICTLY EMBARGOED until 6am Friday 31st January 2025

NATURE GLENELG TRUST AND PLANTATION GROWERS PARTNER TO RESTORE WETLAND HABITAT FOR BROLGA AT WIREY SWAMP

A significant freshwater marsh called Wirey Swamp will soon be reinstated to provide habitat for the threatened brolga, thanks to a partnership between Nature Glenelg Trust (NGT), Australian Bluegum Plantations (ABP) and OneFortyOne (OFO).



NGT is collaborating with the Green Triangle plantation forestry companies to lead a 'matching fund' campaign valued at up to \$300,000, to fast track the purchase and ultimate restoration of the 180-acre Strathdownie property, in Western Victoria, revitalising the farmland into habitat for vulnerable wetland dependent species.

"Thanks to a new partnership we have entered into with Australian Bluegum Plantations and OneFortyOne, every donation made by the public will be matched, dollar-for-dollar, essentially doubling the community's impact towards our fundraising target" Nature Glenelg Trust founder and managing director Mark Bachmann said.

"These two plantation forestry companies have stepped up and are willing to become financial partners in the project, alongside the community, to help make the exciting vision we have for the site a reality."

Wirey Swamp is adjacent to ABP's hardwood bluegum (*Eucalyptus Globulus*) plantation forests, and within the wider OFO softwood (*Pinus Radiata*) growing region. The site is located east of the SA/Victoria border, neighbouring Kaladbro Bushland Reserve – close to a key annual gathering zone for the threatened local population of Brolga. The site has been artificially drained for several decades to support cattle grazing, resulting in seasonal dehydration of the once permanently saturated peat soil.

The restoration plan proposes to regulate flows at the artificial outlet, to hold back a greater depth of water and restore the wetland. This will enhance habitat for the Brolga, which urgently require additional choice of wetlands in the landscape for breeding to sustain their numbers. The nationally threatened Growling Grass Frog, Australasian Bittern and fresh-water Little Galaxias fish, among other wetland dependent species whose habitats has been lost across south-eastern Australia, will also benefit from the restoration.

If the remaining fundraising target of \$600,000 is successful, building on other existing NGT financial contributions, the land purchase is scheduled to occur in June 2025 with restoration work to follow thereafter.

ABP CEO Russ Hughes said the financial pledge built on NGT's decade-long relationship with local plantation companies, delivering projects which had played an instrumental role protecting biodiversity across the Green Triangle.

"We are proud to partner with NGT who have led many important environmental projects, enhancing and restoring a diversity of species to our landscape. Wirey Swamp is a unique opportunity to continue this great legacy, partnering with our community to restore, monitor and manage the site for future generations," Mr Hughes said.

OFO CEO Wendy Norris said the project mirrored the foundations of their existing successful partnership with NGT at Mount Burr Swamp, which was restored in 2016 and now supports the recovery of the same threatened species earmarked for the Strathdownie site.

"OneFortyOne and other Green Triangle forest growers have partnered with NGT on many projects including rebuilding swamp habitat, quarry restoration and threatened species conservation. We greatly value the ecological expertise of NGT and are proud to make this contribution," she said.

For further details, or to make a tax deductible donation visit www.ngt.org.au, email donations@ngt.org.au, or call Toni at the NGT regional office on 0438 268 114.

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ABP silvicultural manager Neil Turner, NGT managing director and founder Mark Bachmann, and OneFortyOne estate manager Marcel Griffiths, at Wirey Swamp, which is currently drained.

Additional images supplied by NGT that may be used:

Fundraiser banner:

<https://natureglenelg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Wirey-Swamp-fundraising-banner.jpg>

Brolga:

https://natureglenelg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Brolga-Tang-Tang_cropped.jpg

Growling Grass Frog:

https://natureglenelg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/20201211_1219402-scaled-e1674454012743.jpg

Wirey Swamp in its current state:

https://natureglenelg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Wirey-Swamp-DJI_0483-frame-at-0m21s-scaled.jpg

A restored Mount Burr Swamp, showing what Wirey Swamp will look like:

https://natureglenelg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Mt-Burr-Swamp-DJI_0637-frame-at-0m24s-1024x576.jpg