

## COVENANT SCHEME CONTACTS

### NEW SOUTH WALES

**National Parks and Wildlife Service**  
phone: (02) 9585 6040  
**Department of Sustainable Natural Resources**  
Your local DSNR office or phone: (02) 9228 6111  
**Nature Conservation Trust**  
email: info@naturetrust.org.au  
phone: (02) 9528 0028

### VICTORIA

**Trust for Nature**  
phone: (03) 9670 9933 or 1800 99 9933

### QUEENSLAND

**Parks and Wildlife Service**  
phone: (07) 3006 4625  
**Department of Natural Resources and Mines**  
phone: (07) 3896 3894  
**Wet Tropics Management Authority**  
phone: (07) 4052 0555

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

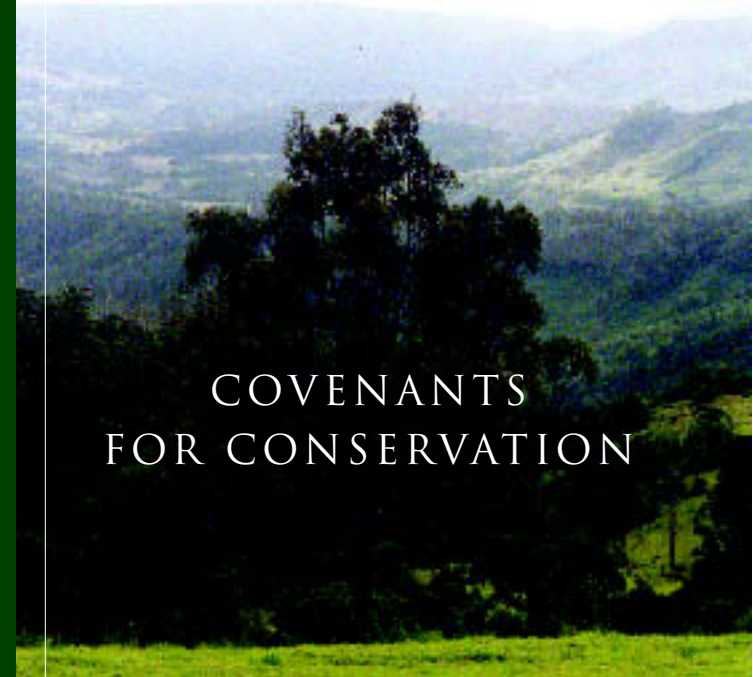
**National Trust of Australia (WA)**  
phone: (08) 9321 6088  
**Department of Conservation and Land Management**  
phone: (08) 9334 0477  
**Department of Agriculture**  
phone: (08) 9368 3282

### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**Native Vegetation Council SA**  
phone: (08) 8124 4744  
**Nature Foundation SA**  
phone: 1300 366 191

### TASMANIA

**Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment**  
phone: 1300 660 062  
**-Protected Areas on Private Land**  
phone: (03) 6233 6210



## COVENANTS FOR CONSERVATION



Leigh and Jan Verrall, 'Glenara', Hermitage SA.

This bushland has been part of our family for a long time. We appreciate it for what it is. The covenant program is an opportunity to formalise our land management strategies, so that if the property ownership ever changes hands, the bush will always be protected.

## DONATION OF LAND

As well as, or instead of, entering into a conservation covenant, some landowners may wish to donate all or part of their property to an eligible organisation. Again, income tax deductions and special capital gains tax treatments may apply.



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Yellow-throated miner attracted to the nectar of the Honey Grevillia: courtesy of the Director of National Parks. Other photography by John Tracy.





## WHAT IS A CONSERVATION COVENANT?

A conservation covenant is a voluntary agreement between a landowner and an authorised body to help the landowner protect and manage the environment on their property. It is usually registered on the title of the land and can apply to all or part of a property. Although there are exceptions, it is usually permanent. The terms of the agreement are negotiated between the landowner and the covenant provider and may only be changed with the agreement of both parties.

## PROTECTING NATURAL VALUES

Conservation covenants are designed to protect the natural values of an area such as its native vegetation, wetlands, wildlife and related habitat, and special landscape features. They can also include areas that have been rehabilitated.

Covenants are not about stopping the use of an area, but ensuring that the use is compatible with the natural values to be looked after. A management plan may be prepared, in consultation with the landowner, setting out practical strategies to make sure the natural values are protected. For example, the plan may include details of how weeds and pest animals are to be managed, or how and when controlled burning may occur.

## ASSISTANCE FOR LANDOWNERS

In entering into a conservation covenant, landowners may be able to access assistance such as:

- specialist technical advice, e.g. mapping vegetation and fauna surveys;
- assistance with management costs;
- tax deductions;
- rate relief; and
- reimbursement for establishment costs.

The amount of technical advice and assistance available to landowners varies between covenanting scheme providers. Please contact the provider in your state for details (see the organisations listed at the back).

Some schemes have budgets to assist with management costs (such as fencing), while others may have arrangements with volunteer and other groups to assist with on-ground works such as revegetation or pest control.

Some local governments offer rebates on council rates to landowners who enter into conservation covenants. Other forms of financial assistance, such as those provided by the Tasmanian Private Forest Reserves Program, can include an up-front payment for entering into a conservation covenant, or annual payments to cover management costs.

## TAX ARRANGEMENTS

In some cases tax concessions may be available to landowners entering into a perpetual conservation covenant. These concessions include:

- 1) An income tax deduction for any decrease in land value as a result of entering into a conservation covenant, providing that:
  - the covenant is entered into on or after 1 July 2002;
  - the land is owned (not leased);
  - no money, property or other material benefit is received for entering into the covenant;
  - the decrease in the market value of the land is over \$5,000; and
  - the covenanting organisation is eligible\*.
- 2) Special treatment of capital gains tax where a conservation covenant is entered into, and the landowner receives money or property for doing so. This treatment ensures a comparable treatment with landowners who sell part of their land.

A fact sheet on these tax arrangements for conservation is available on the Environment Australia website at <http://www.ea.gov.au/biodiversity/publications/fact-sheets/incentives.html>, or by phoning their Community Information Unit on 1800 803 722.

The Australian Taxation Office also has information on conservation covenant concessions on their website at <http://ato.gov.au/content.asp?doc=/content/notforprofit/19507.htm>

\* Only a limited number of organisations are currently eligible. See <http://www.ea.gov.au/pcd/ppu/reo/#tax>