



An exciting opportunity for progressing eco-restoration and environmental education by helping acquire this strategic property in South West Western Australia

November 2020



Property purchase for eco-restoration

Green Skills Inc. (an incorporated not for profit community association with charitable status) has advanced the funds to purchase an important conservation property and is now seeking donations to cover the cost of this purchase and its restoration.

You can be part of this exciting new conservation opportunity by donating now.

The property, Lot 2249 Rocky Gully Road, is between Rocky Gully and Frankland River, in the Upper Kent catchment in Western Australia's Great Southern region. The 49.5 ha (122 acres) property has about 17ha of remnant bush and 32.5ha of cleared land.

The property is a strategic link between the Tootanellup Nature Reserve, and a WA Department of Water (DWER) reserve which encompasses Boggy Lake, which in turn is part of a group of 3 freshwater wetlands of very high conservation value.



Figure 6 Property Location

Eco-restoration on the property will be undertaken to strengthen the linkage between these reserves. Around 28 hectares of cleared land (including a wetland) will be carefully restored according to current best gold standard eco restoration practices.

There are then bushland eco-linkages all the way down to the Mt Roe National Park and up to Poorrarecup Lagoon, a Shire of Cranbrook reserve.

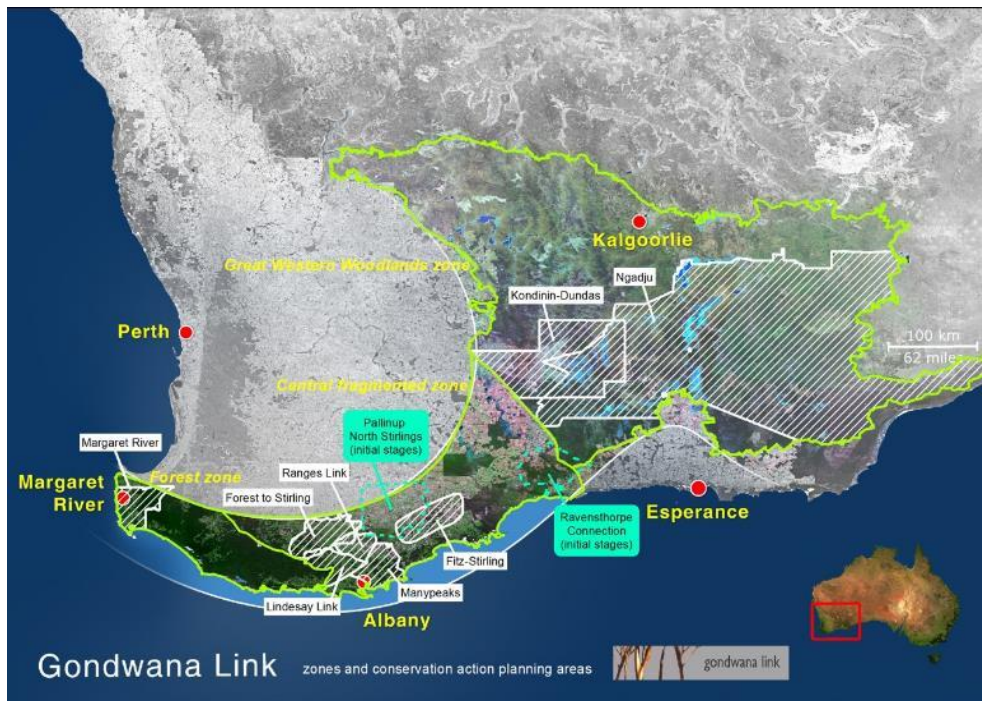
Find out more about this initiative in this short film:



<https://youtu.be/orDE4DPGE5g>

Be a part of the Gondwana Link

Green Skills has been an active part of the Gondwana Link program (<http://www.gondwanalink.org/>) for over 12 years helping to link priority biodiversity areas on public and private land across a thousand km arc between the West Coast and the Great Western Woodlands.



Green Skills has been particularly active in running Gondwana Link programs in the Forest to Stirlings section between Rocky Gully and the Cranbrook/Kendenup areas.

Donating to the Tootanellup property purchase is a rare opportunity to get directly involved in the Gondwana Link restoration effort.

How you can be involved

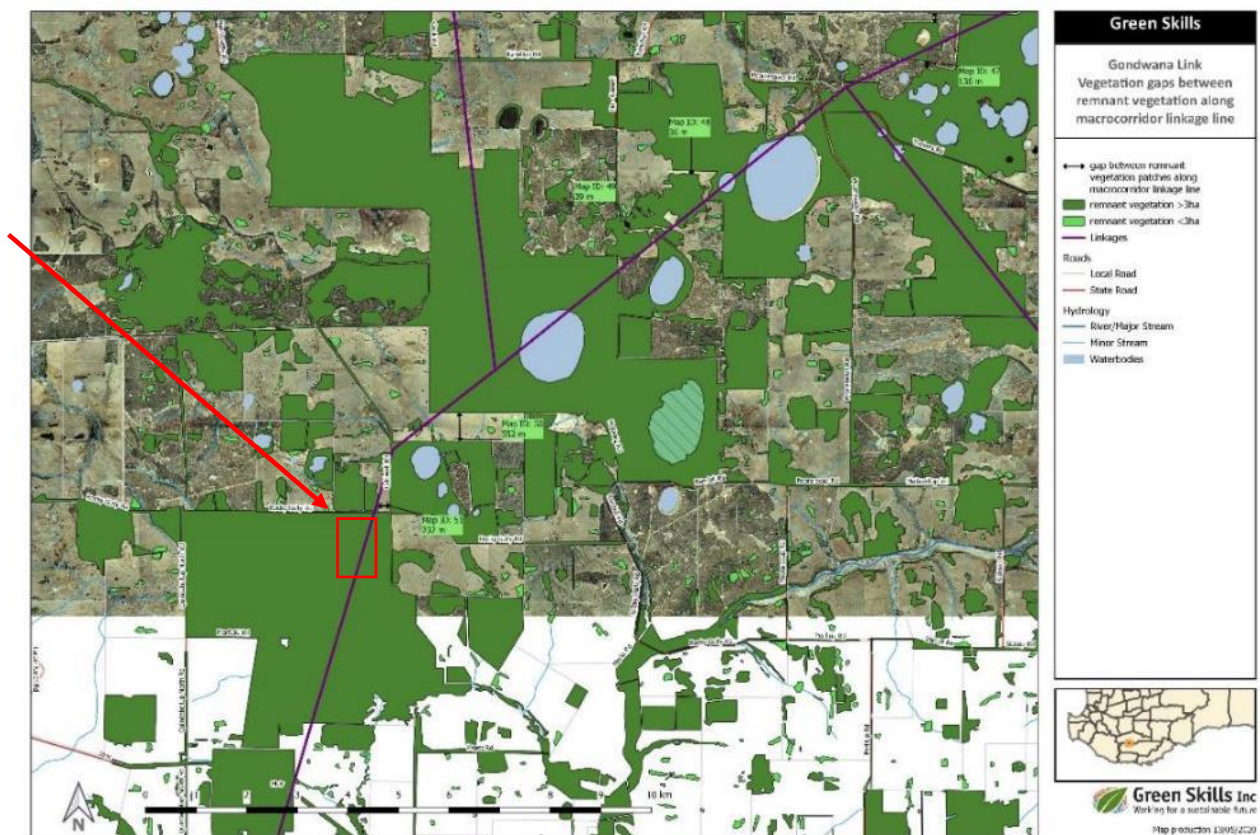
Green Skills Inc is seeking donations to cover the cost of the property, as well as the cost of eco-restoration and development as a site for environmental education and community engagement.

Green Skills Inc is an incorporated associated with PBI status (and tax-deductible gift recipient status) and will coordinate the ongoing project, on behalf of all the contributors. Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

Why is this property important?

1. It joins up a missing section of the Gondwana Link

A 2006 study of the south coast identified major corridors that could be created from existing remnant vegetation in the landscape. Tootanellup sits right on top of one of those lines, linking up remnant vegetation to Mt Roe National Park to the south of Muir Highway.



Revegetation of this block would fill a gap between two reserves on a critical Gondwana Link pathway in the Forest to Stirlings section. http://www.gondwanalink.org/whatshapwhere/forest_stirlings.aspx

2. Opportunity to enhance nearby reserves

There is opportunity for Green Skills to be involved in improved management of adjoining Boggy Lake property, which is free hold land held by the WA Government for water catchment protection, as well as other bushland reserves and remnant vegetation on farmland in the area. Permission has already been granted to Green Skills to undertake bird and other environmental surveys, and seed collecting on the adjoining Boggy Lake property.



In particular, Green Skills is partnering with BirdLife Western Australia and the Denmark Bird Group to undertake regular surveys at Boggy Lake to ascertain the presence of Australasian Bitterns.

Find out more about the potential for Australasian Bittern at Boggy Lake:



<https://youtu.be/ihzr2GwHX04>

3. Opportunity to create a facility for ecological education and citizen science

Green Skills Denmark has prepared a draft plan for the development of the Tootanellup property that provides a clear framework for how the property will be restored and managed.



Key components of the plan include:

Remnant Bushland - The 16.8 ha of current bushland (Yate, Wandoo, Jarrah, Marri, Paperbark and Banksia woodland) would be managed to retain and enhance its biodiversity value. This would entail monitoring for weeds, installation of bird and mammal nesting boxes, and development of a walking trail through the woodland. Monitoring and wildlife nesting boxes would be grant funded, in association with current ongoing management activities undertaken at the Balijup Fauna Sanctuary near Tenterden.

Ecological Restoration - 25 hectares of the property would be eco-restored through a formal contract with Carbon Positive Australia (www.carbonpositiveaustralia.org.au), to be revegetated with direct seeding of local provenance collected seed as part of a carbon offset funded high standard eco-restoration project overseen by Albany consultant, Dr Geoff Woodall. Carbon Positive Australia would also arrange for these plantings to be securely carbon and conservation covenanted.

Environmental Study and Camping Area - It is intended that 0.4 hectare area (4000 m²) area could be developed as a nature study and eco camping facility with the following features: Shelter and tables, bush camp kitchen, compost toilet, display and interpretative panels, tent sites, car and bus parking, rainwater tank, outdoor campfire and seating and related infrastructure. This nature study eco facility will service a range of organisations (both environmental and cultural) who are participating in such activities as wetland monitoring, bird watching, Noongar cultural surveys, fauna surveys, and other citizen science activities. BirdLife WA has been consulted and expressed interest in this, including linking to undertaking ongoing Australasian Bittern surveys on the adjoining Water and Rivers Commission's Boggy Lake and Tootanellup Lagoon property next door. Green Skills has been delivering citizen science and other fauna monitoring surveys and eco-camps on the Green Skills Balijup Fauna Sanctuary since 2016. Development of the eco-camping facility will be funded by grants.

Future homestead site - A 4-hectare (200 x 200m - 40000m²) area is planned be retained as a future homestead lifestyle residential area in order to enhance the future resale value of the property. Until such time as it is developed this currently pastured site would be kept slashed on an annual base by the same contractor who does the firebreaks.

Other considerations

Rates for the property are \$1000 per annum.

The property is currently being grazed by a neighbour's sheep, which is keeping the fire risk low. This arrangement can continue until site preparation for revegetation is ready to commence. Firebreaks are in place and the neighbouring farmer has agreed to maintain them at no cost to Green Skills.

The current boundary fencing is likely to be adequate in the long term as there is no stock grazing on the neighbours' property with bush bordering the northern and western sides of the property. The other two boundaries are with public land reserves.

Looking to the Future

In advancing the funds for the acquisition of the property (which was acquired by Green Skills on the 15 October 2020) , the Green Skills Board of Management has agreed to the following plans in the event of a future possible sale of the property.

Should Green Skills' Board of Management choose to sell the Tootanellup property (Lot 2249) at some stage in the future, then Green Skills will first ensure that:

1. The planned sections of the property have been successfully revegetated; and
2. A secure conservation covenant protecting this revegetation has been lodged on the title.

Green Skills would also aim, in the first instance, to sell the property to an investor sympathetic to the original intentions of Green Skills for the property, before more widely advertising the sale.

Overall priorities in the instance of the Tootanellup property being sold:

1. For Green Skills to recoup the costs it has expended on acquiring the property appropriately indexed to the CPI (Consumer Price Index). These costs are the property purchase price, the costs of settlement, and the amount spent on rates and firebreaks while under Green Skills ownership.
2. For equivalent funds to those fundraised for the property to be placed into a Green Skills' project account for the specific purposes of progressing another landscape conservation eco restoration project (i.e. contributing to another conservation property acquisition or eco-restoration/revegetation works on an existing conservation property in Gondwana Link).
3. For any remaining funds to be retained by Green Skills for use as the Board wishes in accordance with Green Skills' constitutional objectives and strategic goals.

The Board of Green Skills were prepared to effectively advance the funds so that this strategic property could be secured for conservation while it was on the market. Green Skills Inc. is a registered not for profit charitable association who have over 30 years involvement in landcare. The Green Skills Board has agreed that a very high standard of eco-restoration will be undertaken at Tootanellup, and its conservation values will be secured by protective covenants on the title.

In addition there will be a strong environmental education focus for the property into the future. If the Board did choose to sell the property at some time in the future then this would only be after such covenants were in place. Once the initial advance has been recouped donated funds would go towards further restoration projects

Effectively if the property were sold, the funds received would establish a 'revolving fund' to secure further conservation benefits. These arrangements are intended to provide a safeguard and additional benefit for donors for this project.

Photographs from visits to the property (August and October 2020)



Aerial view of property (Lot 2249)



On the property with Melaleuca trees in paddock



Entrance to property Lot 2249 Rocky Gully Road



South east corner of the property



Wandoo and Yate trees in the remnant vegetation on the property



Wandoo and Yate trees in the remnant vegetation on the property



Wandoo and Yate trees in the remnant vegetation on the property



A large *Eucalyptus rudis*



Eucalyptus decipiens and Balga (*xanthorrhoea preissii*)



Cleared wetland



Wetland on the property



Wetland on the property



Small Marri forest remnant on north east side. Cleared area a possible site for camping.



Dam at the north of the property



North-east corner gate



South-west corner of property



Aerial view of Boggy Lake in the adjacent Department of Water (DWER) property



Boggy Lake in the adjacent adjacent Department of Water (DWER) property



Boggy Lake



Boggy Lake



Boggy Lake in the adjacent Department of Water (DWER) property



Old wandoo in Boggy Lake area



Spider orchid in Boggy Lake



Tootanellup Nature Reserve



Tootanellup Nature Reserve



Banksia littoralis in swamp in Tootanellup Nature Reserve

Donation Form



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www.greenskills.org.au
ABN: 68989519966

Tax Deductible Gift Recipient Fund Tootanellup Project Property Purchase & Eco-Restoration

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\$

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If you wish to remain anonymous in terms of public acknowledgement of your donation, please confirm this request by providing your signature in the box below:

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For further information please contact: Basil Schur on 0429481019 or bschur@greenskills.org.au

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