

COMMUNITY SMALL GRANTS FUND

Statement by Minister for Agriculture and Food

HON JACKIE JARVIS (South West — Minister for Agriculture and Food) [1.05 pm]: On 22 September, I attended an event at Manjimup Speedway to announce the successful recipients of the first round of the \$4 million community small grants fund as part of the \$80 million native forestry transition plan. Twenty-seven successful small businesses and community groups from across the south west will share in \$2 million of funding as part of round 1 of the community small grants fund.

The investment will support local projects across a range of industries such as tourism, hospitality, sports, arts, entertainment, youth services, health, agriculture and charitable services. This includes a new luxury glamping experience in Nannup, an adventure high-ropes course in Pemberton and an upgrade to Manjimup Speedway Club. The second round of the community small grants fund will open early next year, and eligible businesses and organisations are encouraged to apply for grants of up to \$100 000 for projects that stimulate the economy and increase the region's livability.

The decision to end commercial native logging and protect Western Australia's native forests was not made without understanding the valuable contribution the forestry industry and regional communities have delivered to our state. The \$80 million native forest transition plan, delivered through three funding pillars, provides support to affected businesses, workers and communities to transition away from a reliance on commercial native logging. Small businesses and community groups are the backbone of our regional communities, and this funding will enable proposals that drive local economic growth and social connection. The impact of the community small grants fund will be witnessed through the creation of local jobs, growth and expansion of local businesses and through the increase in local community capacity and connection.

There was a huge amount of interest in the program, demonstrated by the large volume of applications received, which were all committed to making positive impacts on the affected region. The 27 applicants will receive funding under round 1 for projects across the local government areas of Bridgetown–Greenbushes, Manjimup and Nannup and it will be delivered over the next 12 months. The funding will support the delivery of a range of tourism opportunities, including a new high-ropes course in the Gloucester National Park, new mountain bike trails in Pemberton and establishing a UNESCO-designated geopark around Nannup. A range of expanding businesses share in the funding, including snail farming, hop production and investments to attract much-needed specialist medical services. Funding will also go towards a range of non-profit initiatives that will have positive impacts on social connection, inclusion and vibrancy.

I want to thank Rose and the volunteers at Manjimup Speedway for hosting the funding announcement, where 21 of the 27 organisations that received grants came along to share their stories. I look forward to seeing the impact these projects make in the communities as a result of this funding. A second funding round for the community small grants fund will open in early 2024 and I encourage businesses and community organisations within the forestry regions to apply when the second round opens.