

Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc.

Annual Report 2018/2019



PIONEER
Catchment
LANDCARE

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Chair, Dave Hunter

As Chairman of PCL, I am fortunate to work with a very diligent and dedicated group. Everyone in our team shares a genuine interest in natural resource management, and all are prepared to put self-interest and personal goals to one side for the greater good of our organisation. It is encouraging that our paid staff go to great lengths to get the most value out of every dollar when delivering on the projects we manage.

I am particularly impressed with how in the last twelve months Carla Lambropoulos has really taken ownership of the Co-ordinators role and has come up with some really great projects which have the potential to take PCL well into 2020. Carla is of necessity PCL's networking manager liaising with the numerous public and community groups we deal with on an annual basis. The groups she deals with are too numerous for me to mention but are all listed in the Co-ordinator's own report.

Kade Slater came on board as our new Project Officer in March 2018 and hasn't been able to stand still ever since. Kade's PR skills are myriad as he deals with the general public on a daily basis. I personally have been present in the background at an event Kade has organised and I have heard how genuinely he deals with each person as they enquire about our activities. It doesn't seem to matter whether he is talking to a group of farmers or members of the public or school children or our part time workers or the volunteers, he is always able to engage at that personal level that makes people feel comfortable in his presence. I must also commend Kade for the quality of the PCL newsletter he produces on a monthly basis.

Our Administration Officer Wendy Eiteneur is also a highly valued member of the team who juggles a range of duties, dealing with the daily enquiries from the public as well as other professional organisations in the Landcare Network. Wendy manages our financial affairs on a weekly basis as well as prepare an annual budget in cooperation with Carla and our treasurer Mark Radke. From my years of knowing Wendy I know she has a deep commitment to the Landcare movement and I have great confidence in her ability to manage our office.

We are grateful to Mackay Regional Council for the hospitality and facilities offered at the Swain St Depot, I was personally impressed by the number of councillors who turned up to our 2018 AGM and the commitment by Amanda Camm to work even more closely with PCL in the future. The continuing upgrading of the NBN is of huge assistance to our officers in all the necessary reporting that needs to be done. Sue McCormack has created a wonderful atmosphere at the Mackay Natural Environment Centre and I know our staff and volunteers appreciate the tranquil surroundings. We look forward to working with Sue and Lisa Kermode as the proposed improvements to MNEC unfold.

Our association with Reef Catchments Mackay Whitsunday Isaac Ltd is important to PCL because of our shared interest in improving Natural Resource Management (NRM) in our region. We have a good working relationship with Chair Julie Boyd, CEO Katrina Dent and Business Manager Traci Ellwood. I like to think we are all part of one big family motivated by good economical environmental and social outcomes. I know our officers share information with RCL staff on a daily basis that keeps us all in the loop. 2019 has also seen us working alongside NQ Dry Tropics NRM group on a project at the head of Broken River.

Our relationship with Central Queensland Soil Health Systems (CQSHS) has continued to grow, with PCL giving support in whatever areas we can. This year has seen Alan McLean take over as chairman of CQSHS, Simon Mattsson was relieved to step down from the role but still plays a very active role. Kade Slater has helped CQSHS to develop an impressive spreadsheet of plants useful for multi-species cover cropping in the Mackay region. It is intended to be a living document that will be refined over time so that there will be recommendations for summer

and winter as well as for different soil types and rainfall. In November 2018 I was fortunate enough to be able to travel with eight other members of CQSHS to the Australian Biological Farming Conference held on the Southern Cross University campus on the Gold Coast. These conferences are very well organised and well worth attending. The 2018 conference kept up the tradition of bringing a mixture of international and local presenters of the highest calibre together at the one location. What these conferences do is explain the science behind what we are trying to achieve as regenerative farmers.

One of our most important contacts is our link to the National Landcare Network through our Regional Agricultural Landcare Facilitator, Julianne Kasiske. Julianne organises the Annual Soils Symposium held in Mackay in November each year. These events are always packed with up to date information on current industry best practice. The guest speaker in 2018 was Andre Leu, chairman of Regeneration International, a worldwide group dedicated to addressing climate change by sequestering carbon back into agricultural soils. He gave numerous examples of farmers around the world who are improving soil health to produce nutrient dense food which then improves human health and the health of the bottom line of their farming enterprise. Julianne has done it again this year by engaging no less an identity than Dr Christine Jones eminent world renowned Soils Ecologist as well as Graeme Sait CEO of Nutritech Solutions. They will be in Mackay from 26th to 28th November.

We have a very dedicated and loyal group on our Management Committee that makes my life a lot easier. I would particularly like to acknowledge the effort Dianne Williams puts in as Deputy Chair. I appreciate that she does a lot of the heavy lifting when it comes to interviewing potential new employees as well as doing staff performance reviews. Last year her property was in the grip of drought and earlier this year she lost a large number of cattle from exposure due the cold wet weather we had in late January and early February. Who wants to be a farmer? We are also fortunate to have the services of Mark Radke as our Treasurer. As a practicing accountant, Mark is able to cast a professional eye over our budgets and keep us up to speed on any changes to the law in this area. Di Salau continues to provide her expertise in the IT department as well as reviewing all of our Procedures and Policies. Irene Champion's infinite knowledge of our native flora is of great value to the group along with her ability to keep us on track with meeting procedure. Unfortunately Kate Finch has had to deal with personal medical issues this year and hasn't been able to attend our meetings. She has asked me to put her position on hold for the time being as she has every intention of being an active member again once she has recovered. I would say get well soon Kate you brighten up our meetings.

I would like to acknowledge the ongoing work done behind the scenes by Margaret Lane. Margaret has a wealth of knowledge on the workings of Council and is always willing to sing the praises of the work done by PCL. Margaret also has a vast store of knowledge of the recent history of PCL and I know our officers appreciate it when she helps them at displays we put on at public events during the year.

Finally, I would like to thank all those volunteers who work silently doing all the little jobs that in turn allow us to continue with the work we do.

We are still hopeful the State Government will consider funding full time co-ordinators for the whole of Queensland. In a rapidly expanding region like Mackay that is fed by the activity in the coalfields it is essential to have a full time Co-ordinator. This would allow us to deal with all the environmental issues relating to the loss of good quality agricultural land followed by the development on that land.

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

Coordinator, Carla Lambropoulos

It does not seem like 12 months ago that I was writing the previous financial year's coordinator's report. The 2018/19 year has flown by in record speed and we've barely had a chance to breathe!

We've continued to work on building solid partnerships with NRM stakeholders across the region during the 2018/2019 financial year. I've had the pleasure of being a part of the management committee for the Mackay Regional Pest Management Group and sat on other working groups such as the Forestry Working Group and the Mackay Whitsunday Wetland Working Group. PCL's project officer, Kade Slater, has taken up task of representing PCL at the Mackay-Whitsunday-Isaac Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership and also continues to support CQSHS. Stakeholders that we've continued to work closely with include Mackay Regional Council (MRC), Reef Catchments Mackay Whitsunday Isaac Ltd (RCL), Conservation Volunteers Australia, Department of Agriculture & Fisheries, Mackay Christian College, NQ Dry Tropics, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Birdlife Mackay, Friends of Morag McNichol Reserve, Queensland Parks & Wildlife Services, Whitsunday Catchment Landcare, and Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association (SLCMA). Maintaining and building strong partnerships with our stakeholders is important, as we work together on NRM projects, share ideas, and leverage funding opportunities.

Working with the local community and delivering great environmental outcomes across the Mackay region is what PCL is all about and the team have done exactly that this year. Some of our most exciting projects that we've worked on include the Water Mouse project, the Reef Guardian project, the Reef Trust 4 project on St Helens Creek, and the Disaster Recovery projects also located on St Helens Creek. Our dedicated volunteers and project partners have all been vital in ensuring successful delivery of these projects. The Landcare Support and Land for Wildlife projects are our two most important projects as they bring us back to grassroots Landcare activities, which are educating and working with the community. We've expanded our PCL assets thanks to the Gambling Community Benefit fund and are now better set up to deliver revegetation and weed maintenance programs. PCL is also in the process of developing a brand new and user friendly website which is expected to launch during the 2019/20 financial year.

We've worked really hard this year in delivering exciting and educational workshops for the community to attend. Kade has done a fantastic job working with the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens to facilitate wildlife spotlighting events, and a school holiday event called "the wonderful world of insects". PCL hosted two native bee workshops with native bee guru, Dean Bryant, coming up from the Sunshine Coast to pass on his knowledge to eager attendees. Our insect hotel building workshop with Sian Lawson was another very popular event and our Landcare members really enjoyed learning about Australian solitary bees and building their new insect hotels to take home. Much to our surprise, all our events were sold out and we are extremely grateful for the community support. We'd also like to say a special thank you to Maya Harrison and Sian Lawson for helping to deliver some of these events.

Sourcing funding and developing new and exciting projects is always an ongoing and sometimes difficult task. Our aim for the 2019/2020 financial year is to build on the momentum from the previous year's successes and continue working with our regional partners to develop new projects and leverage funding. There are exciting times ahead and I hope our Landcare members come along with us and enjoy the ride!

PCL PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

1 PCL VOLUNTEER TEAM

The Pioneer Catchment & Landcare (PCL) Group's Volunteer Team is the heart of the organisation, and embodies perfectly the community spirit that fuels Landcare. Our volunteers



are integral for the delivery of projects both on and off site. When at the Mackay Natural Environment Centre (MNEC) Nursery, the team works with the MRC Nursery Supervisor Suzanne McCormack and her team, propagating local-provenance native plants. These are dispatched to revegetation sites across the region, as well as given away to PCL members, landholders and community. The volunteers at the nursery participate in a large number of important jobs, including plant propagation, seed collection, labelling, seed sorting, quality control, weeding, mixing soils and washing pots.

This year, field work included the continued maintenance and restoration of our Far Beach site, tree planting on St Helens Creek, and monitoring works for the Water Mouse Project. Volunteers also assisted in auditing Gross Pollutant rubbish traps with RCL, and the 2018 Great Northern Clean Up.



We would like to express our gratitude to our volunteers, who we depend upon for the completion of so many projects. If it was not for you, PCL would likely not exist in the capacity that it does today.

2 MACKAY REGIONAL COUNCIL FUNDING

PCL encourages and assists the local community through Landcare activities and ground rehabilitation works in collaboration with community stakeholders. PCL's work area is within the MRC local governance area, and through the sustained relationship between both partners, key programmes such as Land for Wildlife and Landcare Support have helped PCL reach out into the wider community. In addition to Council's project funding, the generous provision of office space at the MNEC is crucial to PCL's continued operation.

2.1 LANDCARE SUPPORT

Landcare Support is one of PCL's most important programs. It allows us to deliver and coordinate essential activities, projects and programs within the community that:

- Engage volunteers and youth in Landcare and environmental activities;
- Increase community awareness about the importance of our natural environment, and how to protect it;
- Support and coordinate community on-ground rehabilitation projects;
- Encourage the community to participate in environmental events;
- Provide leverage to attract further funding into the community, to build on projects, by demonstrating Council's support and partnership; and
- Increase interaction with the community.

Through this program, PCL is able to play an active role in local and regional working groups, support stakeholders and other community groups, and provide educational support to local schools. PCL has continued to work closely with MRC to deliver great environmental outcomes for the Mackay community.

2.1.1 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS RAISING

NEWSLETTERS

PCL produces eleven newsletters each year that we distribute to 600 residents and organisations. The newsletter is an excellent way for PCL to provide our members and the public information about our projects, local events, local biodiversity and biosecurity information, as well as a calendar of NRM events and activities in the region.

DISPLAYS AT COMMUNITY EVENTS

Farleigh Palm Fete 2019

The Farleigh Palm Fete draws in green thumbs from across the region, and it is a great place for us to get in touch with enthusiastic local landholders. This event has always been a great way for PCL to find new Landcarers and Land for Wildlife prospects and this year was no exception.



Pioneer Valley Show 2019

The Pioneer Valley Show was a little different this year as PCL was not doing its usual plant giveaway, but it was still its usual success in terms of getting to talk to landholders from the valley. Working alongside MRC Pest Management Officers and the Mackay Regional Pest Management Group's display trailer is always a treat, and it allows us to cover a broader range of expertise to answer landholder questions.

Mackay Regional Council Volunteer Expo 2019

The Volunteer Expo is an awesome showcase of our region's huge range of volunteering opportunities, and PCL was happy to set up with the familiar organisations in the "environmental section" of the expo, sharing a marquee with the MNEC team. The morning was a lot of fun, and we look forward to next year's event.

Botanic Gardens Open Day 2019

This year's Botanic Gardens Open Day saw the official launch of the MRC's native plant giveaway program, which was an overwhelming success, with a 40m queue of Mackay residents waiting to get their allocation! PCL set up its stall next to the plant giveaway. We talked to many Landcarers, signed up a few new members and promoted our Gardens for Wildlife program.

Grazing Forum 2019



RCL held its annual Innovative Grazing Forum, which draws in graziers and mixed operators from across the region (and beyond). This forum highlights many aspects of interest and concern for local graziers including best practice, nutrition, fertility and reproduction, as well as regenerative pasture management and weed control. PCL held its trade display at the expo, and gave away a

variety of pasture-suitable trees and shrubs. We had the opportunity to discuss with local graziers the best management practices for operating a farm in a sustainable and wildlife friendly way, and ended up with a few new Land for Wildlife applicants.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS EVENT

Great Northern Clean Up 2018

PCL hosted a site for the 2018 Great Northern Clean Up, on our continued site at Riverside Drive. With 42 volunteers on the ground, many of which were students from St Patricks College Mackay, we managed to fill two six-meter skips with rubbish. Not a bad haul for only two hours of work! The site is unfortunately popular with illegal dumpers, and much of the rubbish ends up in the Pioneer River. PCL would like to give a big thanks to our regular volunteers and to St Patricks College for their ongoing support at the site.



Insect Hotel Workshop

As part of our ongoing work to raise awareness of backyard wildlife habitat, PCL hosted an Insect Hotel Workshop. Led by Sian Lawson, who has extensive knowledge of native bees, attendees were walked through the process of making and decorating their own insect hotels, and learned all about native solitary bees and wasps.



2.1.2 WORKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

During this year, PCL officers worked with the following stakeholders in the Mackay region:

- Attended three Healthy Rivers to Reef Partnership meetings, two communication strategy meetings, a special TORG meeting and HR2R Partners Pledges media event;
- Attended four MRPGM Working Group meetings, one community engagement day event and one resource sharing day;
- Attended three Central Queensland Coast Landcare Network meetings;
- Work with RCL on the development of a project along St Helen's Creek at Calen;
- Met with Phil Trendell from DAF to discuss future project funding ideas;
- Attended one Forestry Working Group Meeting;
- SEAC Meeting with MRC;
- Met with NQ Dry Tropics to discuss project ideas for the Broken River catchment and attended a stakeholder meeting;
- Attended two Wetland Working Group meetings;
- Attended the RCL Walking the Landscape stakeholder workshop.

2.1.3 SUPPORTING LOCAL SCHOOLS

Environmental education for students and teachers is one of PCL's most important and rewarding roles. PCL works with schools across the region with various projects and initiatives, from assisting in creating native gardens, to giving educational talks, school tree days, and taking groups of students to do propagation activities at the MNEC.

These are some examples of the works PCL did with local schools in 2018-19! We worked with St Francis Xavier for School Tree Day doing a school planting with the students, we worked extensively with Mackay Christian College to rehabilitate their wetland, began developing a project with Eungella State School providing plants to replace the weeds that had taken over the school grounds, and facilitated nursery propagation visits with Mercy College.



2.1.4 SUPPORTING COMMUNITY GROUPS

PCL works with several community groups across the region, and we encourage you to get involved with the community groups that interest you. These groups are run by passionate individuals, and are always welcoming new supporters. In the 2018-19 financial year, PCL worked closely with:

Friends of Morag McNichol Reserve



Friends of the Morag McNichol Reserve have been working diligently for 16 years, holding monthly working bees where they remove weeds and rubbish from the reserve. The group has been working closely with MRC staff to ensure that the reserve is well managed. PCL attended the working bees and meetings of the group in 2018, and supported the group in any matter that we could.

Central Queensland Soil Health Systems (CQSHS)

CQSHS promotes sustainable farming practices and techniques in our region, and works closely with all forms of farmers to get adoption of these practices. CQSHS does this through farmer driven research, which is demonstrated in field days where members can see firsthand the results, and discuss and engage with likeminded peers. PCL attended CQSHS meetings, and finalised the work on the multi-species cover crop spreadsheet.

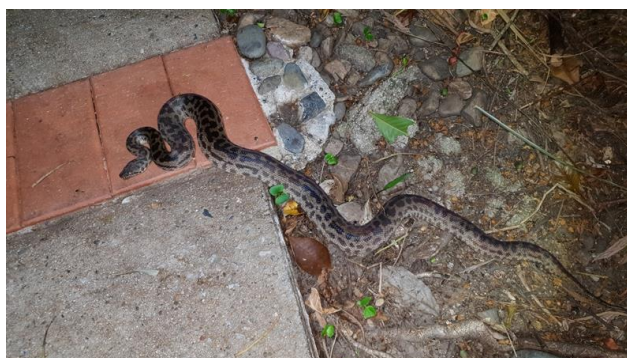
2.1.5 GARDENS FOR WILDLIFE

The Gardens for Wildlife (GfW) program was started to address the issues caused by human development, and help educate people on the important role of suburban gardens as habitat for wildlife. By planting native gardens and building habitat features in your yard, you can



provide an oasis for wildlife in our drastically altered environment. Two main features of our education effort is the GfW brochure, which lists garden friendly native plant options for the MNEC, and the display garden at the MNEC. This brochure was significantly updated this year, with help from MRC nursery staff, to help better reflect the newest additions to the nursery. As well as the continued maintenance of the display garden.

In the 2018-19 financial year, PCL held three guided walks as a part of GfW at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens. These included two guided wildlife spotlighting tours, showing off our regions night life in an urban setting, and the third was themed around insects and was a school holidays event to get kids invested in the natural world.



As well as the guided walks, PCL also held a Native Bee Workshop, which was an overwhelming success with the workshop booking out

within 24 hours of posting. This led us to arrange a second workshop on the afternoon of the same day, which also booked out. The event educated people on the keeping and handling of native stingless bees, and walked through the process of relocating hives. Native stingless bees are suitable to suburban environments, as they do not sting and also provide excellent pollination for your garden.



2.1.6 FAR BEACH RESTORATION WORKS



Through Landcare Support PCL was able to continue the work that had been started along the foreshore at Far Beach with our volunteer team. Coastal scrub is extremely important habitat, and efforts to preserve and restore it are of the utmost importance. This work also gives our volunteers a chance to get out and enjoy one of Mackay's spectacular beaches. Our focus was the

removal of weeds along the foreshore, with *Cenchrus echinatus* (Seaforth Burr), and *Macroptilium atropurpureum* (Siratro) being a focus due to the high density at which it is present. Roughly 145 volunteer hours were spent at the site.

PCL also hosted its National Volunteer Week event at the site, and celebrated with a tree planting and BBQ as a thanks to our volunteers.

2.1.7 RUBBER VINE TREATMENT WORK

Rubber vine is a major weed and widely spread throughout Queensland, and its ability to quickly spread and colonise areas has made it a Weed of National Significance. It has a limited presence in the Mackay area thanks to the effort of weed managers in our region.



Despite their efforts there is always the real possibility of the vine spreading, so it requires constant monitoring and control to prevent this. Because of this, MRC allocated funding for PCL staff to provide assistance to the MRC's Pest Management Officers to continue combating this weed.

2.1.8 MADEIRA VINE TREATMENT WORK



Madeira vine is one of the most significant weed threats in our region at this time, and has the potential to cause irreversible damage to our riparian vegetation. Like rubber vine, madeira vine is a Weed of National Significance and has caused havoc in south east Queensland. Efforts are being made to stop the spread of this weed in the Mackay Region, and PCL was funded to support MRC Pest Management staff in the

monitoring and control of this vine. Several days of field work were conducted alongside MRC staff to control the vine in identified hot spots.

PCL has also made a push to educate the community on the threat of this vine. In Finch Hatton PCL, MRC, and RCL staff came together to host the 'Madeira Vine Workshop', where we provided participants with information on the identification and control of the vine.



2.2 LAND FOR WILDLIFE



In the 2018/19 period, PCL delivered seven land management plans to newly registered Land for Wildlife (LFW) properties, as well as seven revisits to properties already registered in the program including re-establishing contact with two members who have been out of touch for over 15 years.

2018/19 saw the introduction of the LfW Working Group. The Working Group was formed as part of the ongoing commitment to improving the LfW Program and includes representatives from PCL, SLCMA and MRC. The Working Group met twice in 2018/19 to discuss the future direction of the program, first in November 2018 and again in June 2019.

PCL produced two of the four quarterly newsletter provided to LfW participants. SLCMA shares this task, producing two newsletters annually also.

The Facebook page for the [Land for Wildlife: Mackay Regional Group](#) that PCL established 2017-18 has proven to be a great avenue for LfW members to have direct connect with other members. Posts have been varied and interesting: topics include wildlife spotting and identification (ID), sharing of achievements, requests for plant ID and more. The networking group currently has 45 members.

The “Beers, Bubbly & Bats” LfW Field Trip was held in February of 2019 at Forest Flying, Finch Hatton Gorge. Participants enjoyed a rainforest walk at David & Donna Lowe’s LfW property, with spectacular views of the rainforest canopy, crystal clear creeks and the local wildlife, including a large flying fox colony. Beer, bubbly and nibbles were served while spectators enjoyed the spectacular bat ‘fly out’ at sunset.



A second LfW Field Trip to De Moleyn’s Lagoon for 2018-19 was delayed due to the extended wet season of summer 2019, but was held early in the 2019-20 year.

2.3 COMMUNITY GRANTS ROUND 2 - ‘INTREPID WAY’ WORKSHOP

PCL were successful in receiving funding through MRC’s Community Grants round to host an ‘Intrepid Way’ workshop. Like many other community groups, PCL relies heavily on the support of our volunteers to be able to deliver positive on-ground environmental outcomes for the Mackay region. However, like many other groups, PCL has mixed success in attracting a younger generation of volunteers. The purpose of this project is to build the capacity of Landcare facilitators, NRM leaders, and key volunteers to design and deliver youth engagement activities, events, campaigns to encourage youth participation in Landcare across the Mackay region.

PCL will engage the skills and expertise of Intrepid Landcare, who will facilitate the workshop. The workshop will be held on the 30th of August 2019 (next financial year).

3 FUNDED PROJECTS & GRANTS

3.1 DISASTER RECOVERY – ST HELENS CREEK

REEF CATCHMENTS LTD



In 2017 the Queensland Central Coast was devastated by cyclone Debbie. Waterways flooded, stream banks were stripped of vegetation and significantly became significantly eroded. Creeks were left with sheer unstable banks up to six meters high, and were highly susceptible to further erosion. RCL received funding through the Australian Government and Queensland Governments National

Disaster Relief and Recovery Program to rehabilitate highly impacted areas and increase the resilience of waterways.

PCL took on two restoration sites on St Helens Creek (near Calen), where we were to plant two areas (known as SH5 & SH6) and maintain the revegetation areas. Both sites were planted in November with a combined total of 2800 tube stock and the initial site maintenance went through to June.



Though there were some difficulties, the sites have been a success with good plant survival and the area holding against flooding events post planting. RCL has provided additional funding to continue site maintenance into the next financial year.

3.2 REEF TRUST IV – ST HELENS CREEK

REEF CATCHMENTS LTD

In November 2018, PCL submitted a proposal for a revegetation project along St Helens Creek, as part of the Reef Trust 4 program. The overall intent of the project is to reduce streambank erosion along St Helens Creek, in return reducing the amount of fine sediments that reach the Great Barrier Reef. The site is an extension of previous revegetation works carried out by PCL in 2015 and will compliment further revegetation projects throughout St Helens Creek built under the National Disaster Recovery funding.

Due to an extended wet season, works at the project site were slightly delayed and commenced in the beginning of May 2019. A total of 1840 trees and grasses were planted at the site. PCL have funding to carry out weed maintenance until May 2021.



3.3 JOHN BREEN PARK

REEF CATCHMENTS LTD

At the end of October 2018, Reef Catchment's staff planted approximately 30 trees around the new gym equipment at John Breen Park, North Mackay. PCL were engaged to carry out six watering and maintenance visits to the site.



3.4 NRM PLAN REVIEW

REEF CATCHMENTS LTD

The coordinators from the Central Queensland Coast Landcare Network (CQCLN) were invited to attend a strategic partnership meeting to review Reef Catchment's Natural Resource Management Plan 2014 – 2024. The purpose was to evaluate how the local Landcare groups have been able to meet key outcomes of the NRM Plan over the last five years and provide feedback on improvements that could be made to the plan. Findings from the review should help to improve NRM Plan design and delivery, reorient investment during the life of the plan, fulfil accountability requirements, evaluate outcomes and collate learnings to inform future planning.

3.5 NRM BARRIERS ASSESSMENT

REEF CATCHMENTS LTD

The 'Assessment of NRM Barriers' project utilized the skills and knowledge of Landcare groups from Sarina to the Whitsundays to report potential barriers and learnings from NRM projects. Five assessment reports were developed, each one focusing on a single project completed in partnership with RCL. The purpose was to identify in each of these five projects what barriers were encountered and what recommendations could have been implemented to improve NRM outcomes. These learnings will assist RCL in areas such as increased capacity to deliver work, improvements to future community engagement, or knowing what motivates the community to participate in Natural Resource Management.

3.6 RAISING THE PROFILE OF THE LOCAL WATER MOUSE, XEROMYS MYOIDES

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT
NATIONAL LANDCARE PROGRAM – ENVIRONMENT SMALL GRANTS



There have been very few investigations on the population dynamics of the water mouse within this region. Consequently, little is known about their extent, population size and trajectory, and key threats. This lack of knowledge has undermined the ability of organisations to implement thorough and effective conservation actions. This project aims to address the knowledge gaps and provide management recommendations to land managers with water mouse habitat, including the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS). It also aims to reduce the impacts of feral predators on the water mouse. The information was gathered through remote camera monitoring, and cameras were set to take images of water mouse and pests. The project also has a strong focus on community engagement and education. Four sites were identified for the study, which are Cape Palmerston National Park, Sandringham Bay Conservation Park, Bakers Creek Conservation Park, and Skull Knob Conservation Park.





As part of the project, pest surveys and fox den detection work was conducted across all four sites using a fox den detection dog. Foxes were detected at three of the four sites, but only one active fox den was located (at Cape Palmerston) and humanely destroyed.

PCL commenced the project in August 2018, and it is continuing into the 2019/20 financial year.

Though we cannot report on the results yet, we are thrilled to share that we have captured water mouse on camera at three out of four of the study areas. We have also found a water mouse nest at one site, something that is rarely seen in this area.

PCL would like to give thanks to the volunteers who have been supporting us during the field activities of the project.

3.7 MACKAY CHRISTIAN COLLEGE VINES CREEK WETLAND RESTORATION

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT
GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK AUTHORITY – REEF GUARDIAN GRANTS



PCL and Mackay Christian College (MCC) set out with the goal of educating students and surrounding residents on the importance of wetlands, and how they affect reef health. We did this using the wetland system that was present at the front of the schools junior campus. With the long-term goal of protecting the wetland and restoring its ecosystem health and biodiversity, as well as improved outgoing water quality. These goals were achieved in the following ways:

- Development of an educational flyer that was distributed via a letterbox drop to the surrounding community;
- Wetland workshop by DAF Officer Phil Trendell presented to students, discussing the function and importance of wetlands;
- A school tree planting where students, MCC staff, MRC staff, and PCL volunteers planted 750 local native trees, shrubs and ground covers;
- A school field trip to the MNEC Nursery, where students took part in propagating native plants, similar to those they planted;
- Weed maintenance by PCL and MRC staff at the wetland; and,

- Installation of a sign for the wetland.



This project enabled the kids to be a part of the story of this wetland. From learning in the classroom about the function of wetlands, to planting, to propagating native plants, and now seeing the trees grow into a forest.

PCL would like to give thanks to the MRC for its support, Phil Trendell, MCC's Janelle Plant, and GBRMPA for the funding.



3.8 MACKAY WHITSUNDAY WETLAND WORKING GROUP MEETING SUPPORT & FIELD DAY

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT DEPT AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES

The aim of this project is to support the Mackay Whitsunday Wetland Working Group to ensure it continues to meet regularly. This allows wetland management staff in the Mackay Whitsundays Isaac region to share knowledge and information, coordinate wetland management/treatment system activities and build capacity around best practice wetland management. PCL's coordinator is responsible for organising the meetings, sending out meeting agendas and recording and distributing meeting minutes.

PCL are also responsible for organising and facilitating the annual Wetland Field Day. This year, the Wetland Field Day was held on the 12th June and was attended by 20 stakeholders and community members. The field day showcased the Little McCreadys Creek wetland restoration project, the Slade Point Wetland Walk-About reserve, and Mackay Christian College Reef Guardian project. Feedback from attendees was very positive.



3.9 EUNGELLA LANDHOLDERS' SOCIAL NETWORKING EVENT

NQ DRY TROPICS

NQ Dry Tropics' Landholders Driving Change project aims to tackle erosion and improve land management, productivity and reef water quality in the Burdekin region. It's about keeping soil on the land, to help maximise pasture cover and to keep our waterways clean. The best part is that the LDC project works with local graziers to combine their knowledge with scientific research to trial and implement solutions designed to remove the social, financial and technical barriers to practice change.



It is delivering a flexible program of innovative and tried and tested activities designed by landholders and tailored to their needs, concentrated on the high-priority Bowen, Broken, Bogie (BBB) catchment near Bowen and Collinsville.

PCL were engaged by NQ Dry Tropics in April this year to facilitate a Eungella social networking event. The event provided an opportunity for local landholders from the Broken River catchment to get together over a meal to learn more about NQ Dry Tropics and their LDC project and discuss land management issues that they are currently facing. The event was held on the 11th May and was a huge success with over 50 local landholders in attendance. Information from landholder surveys completed on the night will be used to develop future projects within the Broken River catchment. PCL looks forward to continuing to work with NQ Dry Tropics.

3.10 CLIMATE WEEK QLD

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT & SCIENCE



As part of Climate Week QLD, PCL hosted a private screening of the documentary film '2040' on the 5th June 2019. Reef Guardian high school students from across the Mackay region were invited to attend the event. Award-winning film director, Damon Gameau, embarks on a journey to explore what the future could look like by the year 2040 if society/governments embrace the best solutions already available to us now to help improve the health of our planet. The film is inspiring and interviews innovators and change-

makers who currently work in the areas of economics, technology, civil-society, agriculture, education and sustainability.

A total of 62 senior students from two local high schools were able to attend the event. In keeping with the theme of climate week and being mindful of our carbon footprint, all students walked to the city cinema from their respective high schools to attend the event.

Students from St Patrick's College have said that they found the film inspiring and it has helped to generated ideas on how to improve their school's eco footprint.



3.11 GAMBLING COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND – EQUIPMENT GRANT

QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT DEPT JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY-GENERAL GAMBLING COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

In November 2018, PCL applied for a grant through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund to purchase field equipment. PCL were successful with their application and the funding has allowed the organisation to purchase much needed revegetation and weed maintenance equipment including a brushcutter, rapid spray unit, 15L backpack sprayer, Windmate Spray meter, auger and power planter drill. The purchase of these items allow PCL officers to effectively carry out revegetation and weed maintenance activities in the Mackay region and enables the organisation to be more self-sufficient. It also provides an opportunity to increase our capacity to work with Landholders and other stakeholders on environmental projects.

3.12 THE GREAT COMMUNITY FUNDRAISER (RAFFLE)

ROTARY CLUB OF MACKAY NORTH IN PARTNERSHIP WITH NORTH JACKLIN MOTOR GROUP

The Great Community Fundraiser is an initiative of the Mackay North Rotary Club and North Jacklin Motor Group. Through PCL's involvement with the Great Community Fundraiser, we received \$700 in August 2018.

These funds were put towards the purchase of a new laptop for our Project Officer in January of 2019 – a much-needed replacement as the old laptop was experiencing some significant issues.

Our thanks go to those who contributed their time by selling raffle tickets.

4 CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

4.1 NATIONAL LANDCARE CONFERENCE

REEF CATCHMENTS LTD

The National Landcare Conference and Awards were held in Brisbane from the 10 – 12 October 2018. PCL's Coordinator, Carla Lambropoulos, attended the three day conference and field



day. The conference always provides a great opportunity to network with like-minded people and learn about inspiring and innovative Landcare projects happening across the country. The sessions that Carla found particularly interesting were on youth engagement and enabling the next generation of Landcarers to get involved, the 10 Deserts Project: Creating partnerships to build Indigenous capacity and manage country at scale, and Prof Mark Howden's presentation on a climate change strategy for Landcare.

Two other presentations that were of particular interest were the Victorian Government's Local Landcare Facilitator Initiative and the Impact of a supported Landcare in NSW. Both presentations show that when State Governments fund Landcare coordinators/facilitators there is a positive return on investment and positive outcomes for the community.

Carla attended the Gold Coast Hinterland field trip, which showcased two exceptional environmental projects: Austinville Valley and Schuster Park. As the second largest local government area in Australia, the City of Gold Coast has recognised environmental land management programs and extension support for community groups and private landholders, a Nature Conservation Assistance Program, Land for Wildlife, and Council supported bushcare groups. Austinville Valley is a hinterland sub-catchment that demonstrates excellent examples of each of these programs. The Austinville Landcare Group were formed in 2005. The group have worked tirelessly to tackle Madeira Vine and other environmental weeds and restore riparian vegetation along the upper reaches of Mudgeeraba Creek. The dedication and achievements of this Landcare Group are impressive.



PCL would like to thank RCL for providing funding to allow a PCL staff member to attend the National Landcare Conference.

4.2 PEST AND WEEDS SYMPOSIUM (PAWS) 2019

The Pest and Weed Symposium (PAWS) was held at the SeaWorld Conference Centre on the Goldcoast from the 20th – 23rd of May 2019. PAWS brings together some of the leading experts and stakeholders from across the country, and PCL's Project Officer, Kade Slater, was fortunate to attend the event. Kade was able to network with many other professionals, and gain some new ideas to bring home to Mackay.



Kade highlighted some stand out presentations from the symposium, including a talk on 'The importance of thinking' by John Clarkson, from the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, 'A new approach to managing pests at the local government level', by Matthew Warren, Southern Downs

Regional Council, and 'Community led action in the Balimba Creek Catchment' by Stefan Hattingh and Carly Murphy.

The symposium also offered field trips for attendees, and Kade attended the coastal and aquatic field trip. Though there were many points of interest, much of what was looked at was not relevant to the Mackay region.

5 CENTRAL QUEENSLAND COAST LANDCARE NETWORK

The Central Queensland Coast Landcare Network (CQCLN) is a collaboration of Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group (PCL), Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association (SLCMA) and Whitsunday Catchment Landcare (WCL). The organisations meet three times per year to encourage networking and collaboration. This year, each Landcare group took turns in hosting the meeting. It provided a great opportunity to see the other Landcare group's headquarters and nurseries. A key supporter of the CQCLN is Kapow Interactive who provides the group's websites.

One of the outcomes from this year's networking meetings was the decision to upgrade the websites of the CQCLN and each individual Landcare group. The coordinators met with Megan from Kapow Interactive to commence the design phase of the development of the new websites. The groups had also sent out surveys to their members to ask for their feedback on where our website needed to be improved. Development and launch of the new websites will occur in the next financial year.

6 REGIONAL AGRICULTURAL LANDCARE FACILITATOR (RALF)

provided by Julianne Kasiske,
REEF CATCHMENTS LTD

PCL and RCL are maintaining their relationship engaging and educating the Mackay Whitsunday community. RCL's Regional Agriculture Landcare Facilitator (RALF, formerly known Regional Landcare Facilitator), Julianne Kasiske, carries out two annual community engagement activities that promote sustainable agriculture land management practice in the region. The events each attract more than 100 participants, enabling landholders to improve their understanding of regenerative farming practices and enables them to connect with local industry and community group organisation. PCL are involved yearly and assisted RCL at the annual Grazing Forum on 28th March 2019 by displaying educational material and engaging with participants.

Furthermore, PCL played a key role in carrying out landholder surveys on behalf of RCL to assist project evaluation and reporting requirements. Besides facilitating the initial steps of the survey activity, the RALF also provided PCL with website design training.

The strong agricultural focus of the RALF, in particular the strong demand for grazing extension in the region, restricted Julianne's ability to engage with PCL through the Regional Forestry Working Group this year. However, both parties understand the great value of the group, which saw members reviewing and updating the industries Forestry Sustainability Framework in previous years. It is intended to maintain the momentum of the group with assistance from PCL.

7 ADMINISTRATION MATTERS

7.1 MEMBERSHIP

PCL had another strong membership year, finishing 2018-19 with a total membership of 139, a rise from 91 in 2017-18.

87 new memberships were approved by our Management Committee during the year, so it seems attrition at renewal time was this year a significant factor.

We thank our new and continuing members for their support.

7.2 MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

We appreciate all our Management Committee (MC) members for their efforts on PCL's behalf: these volunteers are the cornerstone without which PCL wouldn't be able to operate in its current capacity.

The MC elected at the November 2018 AGM was made up of the following members:

- Dave Hunter – Chair
- Dianne Williams – Deputy Chair
- Mark Radke – Treasurer
- Wendy Eiteneuer – Secretary (Non-voting)
- Irene Champion – Committee Member
- Kate Finch – Committee Member
- Di Salau – Committee Member

7.3 FINANCES

Appendix 1 contains the audited Financial Statements for 2018/19, and the Independent Audit Report provided by our appointed auditor, Bennett Partners Chartered Accountants. The Financial Statements with the Associations Incorporation Act (QLD) 1981 (as amended by the Associations Incorporation and Other Legislation Amendment Act (QLD) 2007) were provided by Bennett Partners Chartered Accountants.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PCL can't individually thank all those individuals and organisations that provided advice, assistance and collaboration throughout the 2019 year, but we would like to particularly acknowledge:

- **Our Volunteers.** Volunteers are Landcare's bread and butter. New volunteers join our activities regularly, but we particularly value those who have supported PCL for years. We recognise and applaud all our volunteers, but we make particular mention of:
 - The members of our **Pioneer Volunteer Team**, who donate considerable time and effort each and every week, either in the nursery or at PCL project sites;
 - **Gerard Masters**, who continues to fold and prepare PCL's newsletters each month;
 - **Di Salau**, who has provided IT support, policy development and participation on the Management Committee;**Thank you** all of you for your contributions.
- **Reef Catchments Mackay Whitsunday Isaac Ltd**, for involving PCL in on-ground activities, and for providing technical support and resource sharing.
- **Mackay Regional Council** for their ongoing support of PCL operations and assisting with knowledge sharing, general support and facilitation. Specifically, we thank the Environment and Sustainability team including **Lisa, Jono, Sue**, the **Habitat Restoration Team**, the **Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens staff**, and the **Pest Management Officers** who have collaborated and generously shared their knowledge.
- **Native Plants Qld Mackay Branch**, for sharing advice and support in our endeavours to promote the knowledge and use of local native plants.
- **Sarina Landcare Catchment Management Association** and **Whitsunday Catchment Landcare Inc.**, for their support and collaboration as part of the **Central Queensland Coast Landcare Network**.
- **Qld Parks & Wildlife Service** officers, for their advice, technical support and collaboration with Landcare field events and projects.
- **Phil Trendell** of Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for project advice & support of Landcare activities.
- **Biosecurity Queensland** staff, for their advice and technical support, and for their collaboration on field events.
- **Megan Taylor** of **Kapow Interactive** for her ongoing support for CQCLN websites.
- The range of other **local organisations, government agencies and their staff** who have contributed to events held and who have provided technical advice.

*Natural resource management in our community is enriched by your contribution,
Thank You!*

PROJECT FUNDING & OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

BY:



APPENDIX 1

2018/19 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Partners

Chris Sammut FCA
Paul Hinton CA
Therese Scolton CA
Geoff O'Connor CPA, Affiliate CA
John Lavis CA, CTA
Ryan Leach CA
Brenton Lazzarini CA

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF PIONEER CATCHMENT & LANDCARE GROUP INC.

Report on Audit of the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Pioneer Catchment & Landcare Group Inc. (the association), which comprises the Statement of Financial position as at 30 June 2019, and the Statement of comprehensive income for the year ended, and notes to the financial statements, including summary of significant accounting policies and the committee statement.

In our opinion, except for the effects of the matter described in the *Basis for Qualified Opinion* section of our report, the accompanying financial report of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2019 is prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act (QLD) 1981 (as amended by the Associations Incorporation and Other Legislation Amendment Act (QLD) 2007).

Basis for Qualified Opinion

It is not practical for the Association to maintain an effective system of internal control over cash receipts until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, our audit in relation to cash receipts was limited to the amounts recorded in the accounting records.

We conducted our audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our qualified opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 of the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report is prepared to assist the Association in meeting the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (QLD) 1981 (as amended by the Association Incorporation and Other Legislation Act (QLD) 2007). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our report is intended solely for the Association and should not be distributed to or used by parties other than the Association. Our opinion is not modified in respect of the is matter.

Liability limited by a scheme approved under professional standards legislation

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Partners

Chris Sammut FCA
Paul Hinton CA
Therese Scotton CA
Geoff O'Connor CPA, Affiliate CA
John Lavis CA, CTA
Ryan Leach CA
Brenton Lazzarini CA

Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act (QLD) 1981 (as amended by the Association Incorporation and Other Legislation Act (QLD) 2007), and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the Association or cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The committee is responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are consistent material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.



.....
Paul Hinton (CA)
Bennett Partners Chartered Accountants
122 Wood Street
MACKAY QLD 4740

26/8/19
.....
Date

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