



PROTECTING THE MARY A LANDHOLDER'S LABOUR OF LOVE

Glenda Pickersgill – Mary Valley

Glenda Pickersgill has worked hard to realise a long standing dream of owning a river front property purchasing in the 1990's a 170 ha grazing property that has a 1.5 km Mary river frontage and almost 3km frontage along Kandanga Creek in the Mary Valley. She runs 150 head of cattle and considers herself as a steward of the land she owns.

Holistic Land Management

In 2000 she attended a holistic management course and this together with her involvement in opposition to the Traveston Crossing Dam proposal which gave her a wider perspective on the downstream impacts of inappropriate land management practices on coastal and marine habitats in the Great Sandy Strait.

Her concern for the health of the Mary River and its iconic species and habitats has extended to volunteer work with the World Wildlife Foundation and mapping of the endangered Mary River Turtle.

Her approach to managing her property takes the long term view and a belief that her emphasis on sustainable processes on her property and contributing to making a difference to the health of her local environment.

One of the first major actions she took was to fence her waterway frontage so as to exclude stock. She also installed offstream watering points and improved pasture growing a mix of kiku and clover.

2010 Flooding of the Mary River

Unfortunately the major flooding in 2010 severely damaged her property. Most of her fencing was destroyed and significant erosion left the river banks unstable and devoid of vegetation.

Reef Rescue funding not only helped restore fencing on her property quickly which meant that she was able to keep her cattle from further damaging her streambanks, it provided a welcome boost to her morale. She has installed internal fencing and has implemented a rotational grazing program through 12 permanent paddocks on a 21 day cycle. This allows her to manage the condition of her pasture and ground cover.

She was also able to conduct weed control and riverbank revegetation work and established her own home nursery and greenhouse to produce native plants. She has manually controlled large woody weeds such as camphor laurel and chinese elm and has undertaken extensive plantings to reduce bank erosion.

Increasing Public Awareness

Glenda takes great pride and pleasure in the work she is doing to protect her beloved Mary River. She holds an annual field day and demonstration of her grazing operation for others in the region and conducts canoe trips along the river to explain the importance of working to ensure the river remains healthy.



Controlling weeds and revegetation with native species to protect riverbanks from erosion



Reef Rescue helped restore flood damaged fencing to prevent cattle from fouling waterways



Controlling large woody weeds...