

CASE STUDY

COASTAL WETLAND RESTORATION PROJECT



BACKGROUND

A significant wetland of the Mary Catchment was earmarked for on-ground works since an assessment was undertaken of wetlands in the Burnett Mary Region in 2008. It was one of 42 wetlands in the Burnett Mary region to have been classified as a regional priority through the Queensland and Australian Government's Wetland Inventory and Prioritisation. The site is a locally known with ecological, biodiversity and recreational values.

THE SITE

The site lies between Tinana and Coondoo creeks. Tinana Creek is the Mary River's largest eastern tributary, and supports significant biodiversity including critically endangered Lowland Rainforest of Subtropical Australia and several threatened flora and fauna species (giant barred frog, Mary River turtle and cod and *Samaders bidwillii* shrub). The Mary River catchment drains into the southern end of the Great Barrier Reef (GBR) and during flood events, the sediment plume impacts the GBR lagoon.

The site has recreational value to the local community, popular for swimming, four-wheel driving, motorcycle riding and (unauthorised) camping. Consequently, visitor impacts include:

1. Erosion and sediment transport of highly dispersive soils into the wetlands and drainage channels from four-wheel drive use along unauthorised access tracks and close to riparian areas;
2. Illegal dumping, generally from day use and unauthorised camping activities;
3. Increased wildfire risk from campfires, particularly during high fire danger periods; and
4. Damage to road/track networks (authorised and unauthorised) via inappropriate use.





Erosion on lagoon bank



Formalised vehicle turnaround / carpark

ONGROUND WORKS

The rehabilitation works of the wetland comprised of four parts:

1. Track Rehabilitation by way of track closure, regeneration and revegetation.
2. Redirection of vehicles onto less sensitive locations by constructing defined turn around loops and car parks away from riparian areas.
3. Construction of low key walking tracks to two swimming areas, including the installation of bollards and signage to prevent unauthorised vehicle access.
4. Implementation of a stakeholder engagement strategy focusing on appropriate recreational use and promoting the environmental values of the area.

OUTCOMES

The project has resulted in improved stewardship by the Project partner who will monitor on-ground work as an indicator of behavioural change of site users to improve the current condition of the wetland. This project has initiated the rehabilitation of a significant wetland of the Mary catchment to protect the southern Great Barrier Reef.



Queensland Government

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