TREAT Newsletter Cool Season April - June 2007

Eacham Landcare, Dairy Farmers' Grants and More...

Helen Irwin

The North Johnstone and Lake Eacham Association (Eacham Landcare for short) have achieved significant revegetation results in Eacham Shire.

Between 1998 and 2001 we established the Crater Lakes Corridor which connects the national park around Lake Eacham to Lake Barrine's rainforest across private land.

More recently, we've used an Envirofund grant to revegetate 2 gullies near Malanda. Clermont Creek on the way to Atherton and Davies Creek in Malanda township.

Funding from Dairy Farmers and the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal this year will see another 6,000 trees planted on dairy farms throughout the Shire. The Dairy Farmers grant is also funding our weed-at-the-back-of-a-ute (Farmer-to-Farmer concept) - we thank you Johno!

The decisions about where and how this funding would be spent over the next three years was given to EATRA, the Southern Atherton Tablelands Revegetation Alliance. A small committee was formed as EATRA only meets quarterly.

To gather information on the revegetation desires of dairy farmers, a questionnaire was sent out with the Dairy Farmers' newsletter. Ten farmers responded and we visited each of them to discuss their needs.

The response rate to the survey was just over 20%. From the information gathered, it was decided to concentrate efforts on three strategies (although there is some overlap between them):

• to plant trees in the riparian zone of the catchments (i.e. creek lines) - in the Eacham Shire - Rob Bridger, Yidne and Allison Soley's (upper North Johnstone River just below Bromfield Swamp), and Gaudern Dairy on Kerry Rd, (on the Dirran). Also, in the Malanda Shire - Clermont Creek, Davies Creek, Peterson Creek, Bromfield Swamp, Upper Johnstone River, Tarzali Creek, Upper Johnstone Catchment, Upper Johnstone Catchment and Lower Johnstone Catchment (in the Chapman and Lamb catchments);

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Revegetations to the questionnaire will now get 20-tree shade trees each, as shade and shelter plantings were identified, along with creek and river bank planting, as priority works for dairy farmers planting trees. Enviromix Project Bio-P3 guard has also been applied for to fund further shelter belt and biodiversity - strategic stone plantings on all stances on the Tablelands.

Active member Glen Davies has also received over 2,000 trees and established a dairy farm trees 'Primer' - these plantings are privately funded and are a special challenge for Glen as his dairy is biodynamic, supplying Mungalli Creek milk factory. So he planted into thick dense grass mulch and watered in by hand.

Conservation Volunteers Australia teams have helped with the two Enviromix plantings and the Dairy plant plantings. We will be inviting them back to assist Glen further over coming years as he aims to establish windbreaks in every paddock.

Eacham Landcare's other main focus is on Sustainable Agriculture (Sus. Ag.) projects to improve fertiliser and irrigation efficiencies and therefore water quality and land health.

Our latest research project, funded by FRRR, is testing the concept of 'degree days' scheduling, using average maximum daily temperatures to predict when to apply fertiliser. The aim is to reduce fertiliser inputs, increase the amount of fertiliser required to maintain productive pastures, reduce the quantity of nutrient run-off and increase the profitability of farms.

These Sustainable Agriculture projects, together with our revegetation efforts, work towards the group's official aims:

• to raise the standard of the local community in the conservation and care of the natural environment;
• to promote the adoption of land use and management practices to ensure the future livelihood of local people and create a balanced ecosystem, and
• to foster co-operation between land-users, including Government agencies, wherever action is needed to control land degradation.

For further information, please contact Helen Irwin c/- Eacham Landcare Project Officer, PMG 5996 Ute Ll on 4096 6139.

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HELP !!

TREAT needs more members! As you can see, we've had to forego the green colouring for this newsletter, as our current membership base doesn't cover our newsletter production costs, as well as our administration. At 9:10 per year, TREAT membership payments are access to lots of information about the "right plant in the right place" and the opportunity to learn from hands-on experience.

TREAT needs more members and are able to be active within the organisation. We would love to have more people come to the Friday morning Working Bees, and especially more people to use our Community Planting days.

If you enjoy working with others, have a primary school education program, and if you like being so visitors to the area, we need more helpers to staff the Rainforest Display Centre's front door days a week.

If you're not a member, please join us and help the environment, and encourage a friend to join as well.

TREAT membership application form

PLANTINGS

Barb Lansdey

We had a good start to the planting season wetchested in the last newsletter, with some wetlike some work on the first planting site, at Graham Creek, and then the rain set in. Fortunately, the rain continued for the day we had our planting and there was no need to water the plants for the planting.

February was wet this year and the first of 3 plantings scheduled for TREAT's Peterson Creek corridor (funded through FNQ NRM Ltd.) was a stamp affair. Though thankfully the rain eventually held off for the actual planting. Unfortunately, later rain was too much for access to the remaining two plantings, and they've had to be postponed till September. In a previous year (2002), we've had to plant in September and it was very dry. Hopefully we'll get enough rain to keep the bags wet, but that planting will be exceptionally wet! Of course, planting at that time of year means that irrigation is required, an extra job.

The Wabi Forest Recovery Team's planting at the Barron River at Bonatella's (funded through Envirofund) was also wet, but in this case there were no access problems. The Team's Bonatella corridor has been slow to take off, as the Bonatella Nursery, which was to supply the number from 3,000 to about 2,000) were planted before 9 March. The other planting scheduled at Picnic Crossing (funded by Landcare Australia) is also on hold, as the landowner has been unable to undertake the fencing of the riparian boundaries before the end-June deadline. The fencing will be done in the Summer.

The first GPRS planting at Massey Creek was also wetting for the first several weeks of January, so there were only about 25 people to plant the trees on January 27th. The trees were in the ground by the end of the day but there was much work to be done to find property in the wet. The Massey Creek trees are particularly extensive, with 2,000 trees planted in a relatively small area.

The Massey Creek planting was also particularly well-attended, with everyone organised a barbeque after each of the plantings, and the Massey Creek planting was no exception to that. Everyone enjoyed themselves and the barbeque was a timely opportunity to take advantage of the facilities for tourists at the Dalry and Bonalbo sites, but the marquee was erected as usual at Peterson Creek and Massey Creek.

Kim Forde

Under the coordination of Conservation Volunteers Australia (CVA), the Barron River Integrated Catchment Management Association's Enviromix project has undertaken a number of works to take advantage of the weather to maximise the planting opportunities over the last few months.

As you drive past the Jim Chapman Bridge between Atherton and Tumoulpina, you cannot help but see how rapidly the trees are growing on the Bonatella property. Over 2,000 trees were put in the ground over the course of 2 days in November, with Volunteers and TREAT's assistance to coordinate and cater has meant that the two community plantings so far have been very successful, with approximately 1,000 trees planted on each occasion. Maintenance of the site is ongoing, with the grass being slashed and the grass-encroaching trees and vines are beginning to show trees are growing above the grass.

Dinh Dois are sponsoring the next planting on Graham Dalry's property on Saturday, 14th April at 8am. Dinh Dois are 'adopting a plot' in Dalry's which means that they will be planting and maintaining approximately 1,000 trees and they expect to be out on the site at least 4 times per period. As they visit the site with tourists on a regular basis, they see it as part of their business ethics to improve the environment that they are viewing for recreational and leisure reasons, by being involved in the rehabilitation of the area.

At Mackers Beach on March 2, more than 25 people of the staffs of the Cairns Port Authority and Cairns City Council joined with Volunteers and TREAT members to plant 1,000 trees on the Barron River Corridor. The Cairns Port Authority and Cairns City Council have been working along the edge of the Barron River for a number of years, and established Grizzly Gardens, 1km of Dr Mackay gum and about 15 bags of rubbish. They then spent an hour planting 600 trees to complement the work that the CVA volunteers had been doing during the week, to commence the development of the Barron River Corridor.

Wyvis has been a community planting days in the last three months. In conjunction with Kuranda Envirocare's plantings, the biodiversity plots have been planted with 1,000 trees and the Kuranda Envirocare plantings have been over 2,000 trees. Wyvis has also undertaken the Freedom's property on the other side of the road, with planting in November to April, including planting days in February and March.

Kim Forde is the project officer for the Green Corridor project and CVA's fantastic work is having its first industry planting day on March 8 at Freshwater - the 20,000 trees planned for the corridor during this hot and sticky day. More trees had to be accessed because TREAT's Bonatella nursery was unable to supply the trees required for the planting, so Kim had to source trees from Cairns nurseries. The landscape at CVA Freshwaters is where they are all weeded and watered by all those who support the environment.

The original plantings at Freshwater, planted in June last year, are now an average of 3 metres high and the canopy is starting to close. At the end of last year, Freshwater experienced a fire which burnt a number of the trees and the canopy is starting to regenerate. Weeds, however, have been a problem, with the Lantana and Singapore Daisy being the most problematic species in the Atherton Shire Council, have been since who assess the sites and undertake regular inspections and maintenance as part of their routine.

As we approach the anniversary in June of the Wabi plantings, there has been a push in the Cairns Port Authority, Conservation Volunteers Australia and all our sponsors, partners and volunteers without whom this project would not be happening. The scope and longevity of the project is gaining momentum.

Landholders who consider that they are willing to join the project, and are prepared to assist by the exclusion of cattle from the river bank, or by preparation or maintenance and long term protection of the riparian area, are invited to call the project manager, Kim Forde to discover their options.

Potential sponsors of the project, who feel that protecting and enhancing the Barron River meets their business objectives are also invited to call to discuss how and where they might like to be involved.

The project will be undertaken by **Barron River Fitzroy Integrated** 2007 in which any interested member of the community is welcome to participate and join the planting teams in working on the Barron River Corridor. Contact Kim Forde on 4032 0844 to find out where and when planting will be taking place as they are depending on the weather and the numbers involved in the project.

Project Manager Kim Forde - 0448 930 009

First Year Plantings for the Green Corridor

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TREAT POLICIES

Barb Lansdey

Some time ago, the committee saw the need for TREAT to have a Photography Policy, especially for working with school children in our TREAT on TAP program. A policy was drawn up and subsequently adopted.

Last year, the government required us to put in place a Child Safety Policy and Risk Management Strategy for our TREAT on TAP program. Barb Lansdey and Jo Sutherland have been working on developing these. The governing committee has approved the policy and the risk has now been adapted to suit.

Owen has also prepared a Workplace Health and Safety Policy for us. This policy applies all TREAT's field days and community plantings and members are required to abide by the policy. This was necessary for the insurance for undertaking a risk assessment at each event.

These policies are stored in the TREAT office at the Lake Eacham nursery and each Friday we post the sign-on volunteers book for members to access.

Thanks, Owen, for all your hard work!

Colin Hunt
James Johnstone@bigpond.com

Economics and ecology of carbon sequestration on the Atherton Tablelands

Australia, like the US, has not ratified the Kyoto Protocol and is therefore excluded from international emissions trading. Any joint implementation which would stimulate in-country capture of carbon is hence most unlikely to occur.

Nevertheless, Australia's Prime Minister, John Howard, has recently signed Protocol agreements with various countries that specify that carbon stock enhancement projects will be undertaken in Australia.

Given the high rate of increase of emissions from the power generation and transport sectors the Australian government is encouraging bona fide bio-sequestration projects (under Article 3.3 of the Protocol) that can contribute to a reduction in the country's emissions. There is no Australia-wide cap and trade system governing emissions. However, corporate activity and unilateral action by states in the absence of federal government action, this forcing emitters to seek offsets to reduce the emergence of networks for sequestered carbon.

The natural forests in the study area, the Atherton Tablelands, have been subjected to logging and clearing. The complex notophyll vine (Mabi) forest is listed as "endangered" in the Queensland government's Vegetation Act "critically endangered" by the Australian government, having been reduced to 2% of its original extent.

The 30 Mabi forest species "vulnerable" specialised flying fox (*Pteropus conspicillatus*) are classified under Australia's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, together with the "rare" species Lumholtz tree-kangaroo (*Dendrolagus lumholtzi*). Other species of conservation significance are the "rare" and threatened palm possum (*Paramacrobiotus fuscus*), Herbert's rock-wallaby (*Petrogale herbertsi*) and Queensland's Native Dunnart (*Sminthopsis youngsoni*).

The complex mesophyll vine forest (Hypo) is less threatened, nevertheless less than 30% remains unaffected by weed invasion and the disturbance effects of logging, and its remaining stands are highly fragmented. Hypo is classified as "rare" in Queensland, and is the preferred habitat for the Lumholtz tree kangaroo, is also habitat for the iconic southern cassowary (*Casuarius casuarius johnsoni*), listed as "endangered" by the Australian government and "vulnerable" by the Queensland government. The cassowary's habitat is also threatened habitat by replanting native species that are not preferred by the cassowary. Habitat protection is additional ongoing threat to cassowaries, with reduction of terrestrial threats to the Mabi forest, in which reforestation has a major role.

The favourable soils and climate of the Wet Tropics region of north Queensland have provided a quintile growth rate of trees that anywhere else in Australia. However, because the environmental services generated have no market value, and the costs are high, reforestation activities are heavily subsidised.

A question arises whether the emergence of carbon markets has the potential to provide an economic incentive for landholders to undertake reforestation activities.

A recent analysis published in the text of senior sequestration scientists has concluded that there is a positive growth rate of trees that anywhere else in Australia. However, because the environmental services generated have no market value, and the costs are high, reforestation activities are heavily subsidised.

Economic analysis shows the importance of accounting for opportunity costs in establishing plantations, particularly labour and cattle grazing. Where the land is suitable for cattle grazing, reforestation is not economic. Where land is not suitable for cattle grazing, plantations are not taken but is marginal for agriculture and therefore carbon farming is an opportunity. Where the environmental services generated have no market value, the costs are high, reforestation activities are heavily subsidised.

Despite the fact that the community and the Australian government have devoted substantial human and financial resources to reforestation, the level of sequestration achieved has not been sufficient to guarantee the survival of ecosystems dependent on environmental reforestation. Moreover, the Australian government is unlikely to subsidise carbon sequestration by reforestation given the lower costs of abating emissions.

If carbon prices were to rise substantially to say three or four times present level - in the wake of caps on Australian emissions - then the outlook for private investment in environmental reforestation in north Queensland is much brighter.

Surveys of carbon sequestered in plantations, Atherton Tablelands. Costs of carbon sequestration per tonne and the price of carbon, Atherton Tablelands.

An abridged version of a paper "Economic and ecological implications of emerging markets for bio-sequestration carbon in tropical Australia" to be given at the International Society for Ecological Economics Conference, New York, in June.

Habitat Action Plan for Mission Beach

By Tony O'Malley

Mission Beach is well known for its outstanding biodiversity and its significance for cassowary conservation. The area also has very important Aboriginal cultural values associated with the living traditions and practices of the Djiru Traditional Owners, and is valued by many people for its lifestyle and beauty.

The outstanding natural and cultural values of Mission Beach are under increasing pressure from rapid development - both "sea change" and "tree change". Unfortunately, past native conservation and restoration efforts in Mission Beach have been marred by obstacles such as lack of coordination, lack of long-term funding, lack of community support, and a lack of on-ground implementation by participating institutions.

However, the rapid changing economy in the area due to Cyclone Larry, population growth, and changes in the regulatory/ planning system provide a real opportunity to develop a new, more effective arrangements to protect Mission Beach's natural, social and cultural values for future generations to enjoy.

For this reason, Far North Queensland Natural Resource Management Limited (FNQ NRM Ltd) is working with the CSIRO to develop and implement a new Mission Beach Habitat Network Action Plan (MBHNAP). The aim of the Action Plan is to prioritise actions for habitat protection, habitat restoration and habitat connectivity in the Mission Beach area, and to coordinate the efforts of all the various groups and organisations involved in undertaking such activities. The MBHNAP will be developed by the Mission Beach Habitat Network Working Group.

It will also foster integration between relevant State, Federal, Local Government and Traditional Owners plans, to facilitate coordination of the conservation efforts of the various groups. The Action Plan will be implemented by all participating groups.

Initial exploratory work on the Habitat Action Plan commenced in 2006, and the first draft will be completed by the end of 2007. Implementation of the Plan will commence in early 2008 and will be ongoing for the foreseeable future. Funding for the Plan's Project Co-ordinator has been secured from the Australian Government's Natural Heritage Trust. Other funding is being sought from the Mission Beach Community Association, Community for Coastal and Cassowary Conservation (C4), Johnstone and Tully Shires, Ergon Energy, Telstra, SUPERTOO, Skyrail, the Tourism Industry Council, Regional Development Australia, the Queensland Government, and others.

For more information, please contact Tony O'Malley from FNQ NRM Ltd on 4043 9333 or email tonyo@fnqnrm.com.au

Barb Lansdey

Representatives from the various community groups involved in tree planting met in 2003 on the Lake Eacham nursery to share ideas and experiences in order to learn from each other's efforts. It was decided to agree on a name for the combination of groups and to call ourselves Southern Atherton Tablelands Revegetation Alliance - SATRA for short.

SATRA meets quarterly (and at the nursery), and has been very successful over the past few years. TREAT (Tree Rangers and Wabikai Trees) and Eacham Landcare have been the two most active revegetation groups in the area. Other groups represented have been CVA, Malanda Landcare and Eacham Landcare, Yungaburra Landcare (formerly Lower Peterson Creek Revegetation Group), SPS (School for Primary Studies), TAFE, Ag Plus, Malanda Rotary, Malanda Lions, Yungaburra Lions, Yungaburra Rotary, Malanda Rotary and Malanda Lions. What's going on such as Tinga Rat Festival, Landcare Festival, Malanda Mania, Malanda Rat Festival, National Greening Australia (Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service). Recently, Dairy Farmers have been attending an account of funding to SATRA for Colonne Larry impact projects. SATRA has been developed to encourage the exchange of information to being sought from the Atherton Tablelands.

The meetings are usually held on a Thursday morning and are kept at an informal level, though minutes are taken and later distributed.

In 2006, SATRA received a grant of $50,000 through FNQ NRM Ltd for revegetation works and decided to decide which projects would have priority to use the funding. This led to the creation of a Scoring Matrix for projects to assess their relative value in biodiversity, social and economic terms. Projects were scored using the Matrix and ranked. The Matrix has been used by SATRA for other funding applications. Following the successful Revegetation Projects funded by SATRA, however, it was thought that there was a definite need to encourage group for dissemination of funding, and was recently given the task to decide on where to use funding received as a result of Cyclone Larry.

A comment recently made by a new attendee was that SATRA was clearly a very supportive and productive network. May that long continue!

Owen Schaffer

A visit to the Lake Eacham Nursery from Years 4 to 7 students from Butcher's Creek in February started our 2007 Tree Awareness Program.

The students, now called 'Enviro Rangers' are investigating the best way to repair the damage caused by Cyclone Larry to a tree at their school - Side by Side they are researching tree species (especially those to bring in butterflies, birds and other fauna) and also looking at the preparation, planting and maintenance needed to successfully achieve their aims. Once they have completed their research, TREAT will assist them to plant the trees in the area and then maintain them for the next 2 years.

TREAT could not have started this information in the Rainforest Display Centre and Education Centre meetings. After both the children had three activities - using the Coopers book 'Fruits of the Rainforest' they had to note information about some trees we chose from the nursery, considering the Tree Awareness Program workbook and finally identifying trees in the rainforest.

Thank you to the Enviro Rangers who visited us. We made our time with you a very enjoyable, happy day. We wish you well with your project and we are looking forward to visiting you in the future.

In the coming months TREAT will be having visits from the primary schools of Malanda, Herberton and Tolga. Early in the year, all Atherton Tablelands schools will receive a flyer from the TREAT members have made available. Would any teachers wishing to participate please ring Owen on 4096 6139.

TREAT members who enjoy working with children might like to consider joining the TREAT on TAP volunteers.

TREAT on TAP - Butcher's Creek

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NURSERY NEWS

Peter Snodgrass

It's been great weather for establishing trees on the Tablelands so far this year, and it is good to see that all sites, be they TREAT, Landcare, Bushcare, Trees for Life or Greening Australia, are looking very healthy. Over the last few months, TREAT volunteers have planted on the Isle of Pines, in Ivicky Gorge, Peterson Crossbow and weed control has been undertaken at the Lake Eacham nursery. Ms Williams s/he being in low lying swamp country has seen the postponement of the 2nd and 3rd plantings until spring (this year), with the Massey Creek planting being the only one to go ahead. Fortunately, the weather has been kind to us and the trees are looking fine. Even the site's foggy conditions, a Tablelands characteristic that normally encourages fungal infections and other problems, has not managed to affect the trees needed to traverse upon. And what we are here for sustainable land management practices and not land destruction practices.

The Peterson Crees 2006 plant is also looking good and has been well maintained by Landcare Australia. Only 2 metre high level. Great to see!

The Massey Creek planting was a huge success. Thanks to the dedication of those who attended we saw over 2000 trees planted, and another substantial area for habitat establishment. We hope everyone enjoyed seeing some of the other plantings that have performed exceptionally well.

I hope everyone is having success with not only the cyclone damaged areas that they have been repairing, but also your newly established areas.

We would like to thank those who have been helping with the work load in the bamboo bags. At the point the nursery is still quite full, but the bags are getting low. We are also in the process of re-potting some of the plants that have been in the nursery for quite a while, as overstocking is not as equally as important as weed cleaning and potting, and is a great opportunity to get to know more about the trees, their needs and their provenance.

Fruit Collection Diary January - March 2007

Species	Advance Seeds	Required Propagules
Acronychia crassipetala	Acronychia	7.8.2
Alphitonia petriei	Pink Ash	7.8.2, 7.8.3
Archontophoenix alexandrae	Alexander Palm/Nin	7.8.2
Argyrodendron trifoliolatum	Brown Tulip Oak	7.8.2, 7.8.3
Austromuellera trinervia	Rose Bottlebrush	7.8.2, 7.8.3
Carnarvonia araliifolia	Carnarvonia/ Oak	7.8.2
Castanospermum australe	Black Bean/Bean	7.8.2, 7.8.3
Cordia dichotoma	Cordia	7.8.3
Cryptocarya hypospodia ssp. cansdalei	Cryptocarya/Laurel	7.8.2
Cryptocarya hypota	Cryptocarya/Laurel	7.8.2
Cryptocarya laurina	Murray's Laurel	7.8.2
Cryptocarya mackinnoniana	Laurel/Laurel	7.8.2
Darlingia darlingiana	Brown Silky Oak	7.8.2, 7.8.3
Dysoxylum pettigrewianum	Ivory Mahogany	7.5.10
Dysoxylum rufescens/fraseri	Pink Mahogany	7.8.2
Elaeocarpus eumundianus	Hinterland	7.8.2
Eucalyptus curtisii	Plunkett/ Tar Scrub	7.8.2
Eucalyptus grandis	Flooded Gum	7.8.2
Ficus congesta	Red Leaf Fig	7.8.2, 7.8.3, 7.8.4
Ficus destruens	Rusty Fig	7.8.2
Ficus fraseri/obl	Hillwood Fig	7.8.2, 7.8.4
Ficus racemosa	Cluster Fig	7.5.10
Ficus rubiflia	Rusty Fig	7.8.2, 7.8.3, 7.8.4
Ficus superba	Deciduous Fig	7.8.4
Ficus virens	Green Fig	7.8.2
Flindersia bourjotiana	Silver Ash	7.8.2, 7.8.3
Flindersia schottiana	Bumpy Ash/ Beech	7.8.2, 7.8.3
Fontainea arnhemica	Snow Gen, Bushes Ash	7.8.2, 7.8.3
Harrisa subinermis	Native's Grey Lime	7.8.1
Hunterochloa hirsuta guineensis	Native Blowing Hand	7.8.2
Macaranga tanarius	Macaranga	7.3.10, 7.8.1
Melicope fareana	Fareana	7.8.2
Melicope penicularis	Turn-in-the-wind	7.10.1
Micromelum minutum	Native Curry Tree	7.8.2, 7.8.3
Neolitsea dealbata	Red Bolly Tabernut	7.8.2
Neolitsea vidalii	Brown Bolly Tabernut	7.8.2
Pachychlaena grahamii	Hoop Pine	7.8.2
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