

# REEF RESCUE

2010

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David Wright

## PASTURE MANAGEMENT

**Reef Rescue helped David Wright and his family improve the pasture management on their Constant Creek and Mt Spencer grazing properties. They were able to construct 1.55 km of land type fencing at Constant Creek and 3.55 km at Mt Spencer.**

David Wright and his family had already begun making improvements to their Constant Creek grazing property, when they found out about the Reef Rescue initiative.

The project funding allowed the family partnership to speed up the work and complete 1.5 km of land type fencing at Constant Creek and 3.55 km at the second property at Mt Spencer.

The Constant Creek project fenced off a hard ridge from flatter, more productive land.

The family had also installed a watering point at this property.

The land type fencing constructed at Constant Creek helped to improve and maintain ground cover through more efficient use of available forage.

The family was comfortable building land type fencing which met the Reef Catchments standards for the funding offered. They implemented a wildlife-friendly top plain wire fence.

The funding advanced the rate at which the family was able to initiate and complete the works. "We wouldn't have done (the Constant Creek work) so quickly, if we didn't get the funding. We would have left it for another year or so," David says.

David said the family was planning on completing the Mt Spencer fencing within the next five years, however the Reef Rescue funding brought this forward. In fact, there is parts of the Mt Spencer property that they would never have fenced, if not for the funding.

"The 50 per cent funding is very generous and makes it very attractive to do fencing activities."

David is already seeing the environmental and economic outcomes that his family set out to achieve.

"We have already been able to undertake re-seeding with Signal Grass and the land type fencing has enabled us to lock the cattle



### About the farm...

David Wright and his family has three grazing properties in the Mackay region. The main breeder property is at Mt Spencer, between Eton and Nebo, and runs 4,500 head of cattle over 80,000 acres. The Constant Creek property is 1700 acres and runs 500 head of cattle, however David's vision is to increase this to 1000 head. All steers are sent to the Dabin Property, near Nebo, to grow and finish while the cull heifers are sent to Constant Creek to trade weight. Most of the cattle go to the meat works.

out of that land type while the pasture is established. Without the fence, we would not have been able to stop the cattle getting into the newly re-seeded pasture," David says.

He hopes that they will now be able to manage the ground cover more effectively and as a result, increase the stocking rate.

David is also confident that the family will experience economic benefits in the long run.

In terms of improving water quality, David and his family's work means improved ground cover, which will reduce sediment input into the waterways.

David initially read about the Reef Rescue initiative in the media, but didn't realise that it applied to grazing. After speaking to Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation precision planning consultant Jim Fletcher, he discovered that he could get involved.

"Jim was very good to work with. He obviously has a good background in the (grazing) industry and is a very practical bloke. The mapping and planning component was excellent and

pointed out directions for the future," David says.

"With these two projects, I signed off on them and it was within a fortnight that I had received the (funding). It was like return mail. The big advantage of the way the Reef Rescue budgets were developed, was that I didn't have to race around town getting

quotes from all and sundry. You just put your own figures in and they were accepted, or not."

Due to the size of the job, David would not have carried out the work without 40 per cent funding or more.

"Anything less does not justify advancing the priority of the works. The

50 per cent is what made the project attractive," he says.

"In comparison to anything else that I have tried to do in the past, Reef Rescue does not compare.

The project was so simple and easy - that's the reason why I would line up to have another chop at it. I can't criticise the process at all. I hope that the funding continues for years to come. Particularly with larger properties, it is difficult to get all of the work done in 12 months. There are a lot of benefits that could come from Reef Rescue."

***"The 50 per cent funding is very generous and makes it very attractive to do fencing activities."***



## OUTCOMES



Improved ground cover and pasture utilisation



Reduced cattle tracks near waterways



Reduced sediment input into waterways



Improvement in ground cover