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- Ben and Jodie Ferdinand



REEF PROGRAMME CASE STUDY

Ben and Jodie Ferdinand, Cedar Bend Kelsey Creek.



Ben and Jodie purchased the 690 hectare Cedar Bend property in 2011. The property is located west of Proserpine in the Kelsey Creek Catchment.

The property is primarily used for beef production and currently carries 120 cows and calves, with a goal to run up to 250 breeders.

The main management issues when the property was purchased included: limited internal fencing constraining the ability to control grazing, major erosion of gullies and tracks, and poorly managed regrowth.

“We initially contacted Landcare to buy plants to reduce erosion in gullies. They told us about the Reef Rescue program (now the Australian Government Reef Programme),” Ben said.

“We then had a visit from a Reef Rescue grazing officer who brought out aerial maps of the property. With the maps and advice we were able to develop a management plan to control stock in eroding areas and manage grazing.”

Through Reef Rescue funding distributed in the Mackay and Whitsundays by Reef Catchments,



Fencing erected as part of the Reef Rescue programme to assist landholders.

Property bank erosion prior to on-ground gully management works.





The installation of 9km of land type and riparian fencing, helped to improve grazing management, ground cover and control a number of eroding gullies.



Ben and Jodie were able to install 9km of land type and riparian fencing, and established off-stream watering points to improve grazing management, ground cover and control a number of eroding gullies.

They also took the opportunity to have a Reef Rescue funded soil conservation officer inspect several major erosion sites and provide detailed plans on how to manage the erosion. Jodie additionally participated in a Reef Rescue trial to train landholders in the Phoenix property mapping program.

"Reef Rescue has helped our overall farm management through internal fencing and water points which have allowed us to rotate cattle and reduce grazing pressure. It also makes it easier to muster," Jodie said.

When Ben and Jodie purchased Cedar Bend most of the land had been scrub pulled, leaving large rows of debris and regrowth. Now they have a number

of paddocks where they plan to remove timber rows and control regrowth. Each paddock will be then sown and locked up for 12 months. This will improve overall management and production of the property.

"Through Reef Rescue we have turned one large open paddock into five smaller paddocks with off-stream water. This will help our long term management plans," Ben said.

"We would definitely get involved with the Reef Programme again. The improvements we have seen are great. The cattle are now utilising the areas they hadn't grazed before. Overall the future productivity of the property is looking better."

****Graziers please note:** Reef Catchments is currently taking Expressions of Interest from landholders in the next round of funding for the Australian Government Reef Programme (formerly Reef Rescue), available July 2014.



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