

2014 water quality IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Flaggy Rock Creek Management Area Progress Report

Summary of progress

The Flaggy Rock Creek catchment area drains the coastal lowlands just south of the settlement of Carmila. The Flaggy Rock Creek estuary creates important local wetlands that are part of West Hill National Park. The National Park comprises 20% of the catchment area. The catchment area extends down the coast for approximately 50km. Seventy percent of the catchment is under grazing production, much of which extends to the coast. Cane production accounts for 5% of the catchment area.

In 2007, this estuary was rated as being in moderate ecological condition compared to other estuaries in the Mackay Whitsunday region. The marine environment receiving waters and inshore reefs associated with the Flaggy Rock Creek catchment are considered to be at medium to high risk of exposure from the effects of reduced water quality. The estuarine waters received a low water quality score in the 2007 catchment assessment.

Between 2007 and 2013, there have been efforts to improve the quality of water leaving cane and grazing production areas. These improved management practice initiatives provide a solid foundation for future activities to improve ecological health of the area.



“Our Reef Rescue partnership worked really well because it enabled us to prioritise the work we did to achieve best practice management.”
Flaggy Rock grazier, Karen Scanlon

Ecosystem implementation highlights

- A critical tidal bund barrier has been removed with the installation of a pre-cast concrete cone fishway

Agriculture implementation highlights

- Cane producers have improved management of soil, nutrients and herbicides on more than 120 ha of intensive cropping land in the catchment with Reef Rescue support improving management practices from C class to A class
- Across more than 8,400 ha of managed grazing land, 3 graziers have improved management practices from C class to B, 4 from D class to B class and 2 from B class to A class management practices
- Riparian management improved on more than 400 ha of the Flaggy Rock Creek by graziers who have installed 20 km of riparian fencing and off-stream watering points

Future priorities

Management practices that reduce particulate phosphorus and particulate nitrogen in grazing management practices will be priority.

System repair actions that contribute to instream habitat improvement and the removal of barriers to fish migration will continue to be a priority. Future management efforts should also focus on protecting and improving the coastal wetland extent and condition to support regeneration of inshore seagrass beds.



Pre-cast concrete cone fishway installed on Flaggy Rock Creek to reinstate critical passage and flow for fish migration.