

2014 water quality IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Andromache River

Management Area Progress Report

Summary of progress

The Andromache River flows 46 kilometers from the highlands of the Clarke Connor range before joining the downstream reaches of the O'Connell River. Eighty percent of the catchment is dominated by grazing with a small amount of land under cane production toward the coastal flats. The remaining 17% of the catchment is National Park and reserve.

In 2007 the ecological health of the Andromache River catchment area was rated as amongst the highest in the region. Since that time significant efforts have been made to improve agricultural management. River condition mapping has provided an excellent foundation from which to develop future works that will improve ecosystem health.



Andromache River farmers Barry and Dale Holcombe have been working with Reef Catchments and the Reef Rescue program to adopt best management practices on their grazing property for improved water quality.

Ecosystem implementation highlights

- Instream habitat management improved through riparian vegetation and bank stability surveying
- Riparian management improved along more than 13 km of the Andromache River by graziers who have installed riparian fencing and off-stream watering points with Reef Rescue support
- Ongoing feral pig control with aerial baiting, shooting and trapping programs

Agriculture implementation highlights

- Cane farmers have improved management of soil, nutrients and herbicides on more than 33% of the intensive cropping land with Reef Rescue support
- Graziers have improved pasture management on more than 44 ha of with Reef Rescue support

Future priorities

Grazing and cane management practices that reduce particulate phosphorous loads are the highest priority for improving event water quality in the Andromache River catchment area. Management practices that reduce total suspended sediment are a moderate priority.

System repair actions for flow, barrier removal and instream habitat and riparian vegetation important are the highest priority. A significant increase towards investment in active management and restoration of instream habitat and riparian vegetation is required to enable fish communities to gain the maximum benefits from the improvement in water quality.



Wildlife friendly riparian fencing combines natural resource management with best practice farm management to protect native vegetation, wetlands and riparian areas. More than 13km of fencing on the Andromache River has protected almost 24 hectares of riparian land.