

2014 water quality IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Thompson Creek

Management Area Progress Report

Summary of progress

The Thompson Creek catchment area includes the Nationally Significant Goorganga Plains Wetland Complex. This seasonal wetland covers more than 16,000 hectares and is habitat for a diversity of significant flora and fauna as well as providing a nursery for recreational and commercial fisheries. Beyond the wetlands almost 40% of the catchment supports grazing with an additional 10% under cane production.

In 2007, Thompson Creek catchment area and estuary was rated as being in moderate condition. Between 2007 and 2013, there have been efforts by local farmers to improve management practices to benefit water quality leaving farms and flowing downstream to enter the High Ecological Value and Declared Fish Habitat Area of Repulse Bay.



"Reef Rescue's education package and assistance has definitely helped me reach that goal of improved farming systems faster."

Toni Randal, Thompson Creek grazier

Ecosystem implementation highlights

- Barriers to fish migration have been prioritised and fish community type and abundance have been surveyed to inform system repair works
- Ongoing feral pig control with aerial baiting, shooting and trapping programs

Agriculture implementation highlights

- Improved riparian management has benefited 34 ha in the Thompson Creek catchment by graziers who have established off-stream watering points with Reef Rescue support
- A sediment detention basin has been constructed on a cane property to improve the quality of water leaving the farm

Future priorities

Grazing and cane management practices that reduce reactive phosphorus and dissolved nitrogen loads are the highest priority for continued improvement of event water quality. Management practices that reduce other nutrients and residual herbicides are also a priority.

Highest priority system repair actions should be planned to improve flow in wetland areas, restore mangroves and saltmarsh for fishery productivity and remove instream barriers. Restoration of instream habitat to support improved bed and bank stability are also important future activities for the ecological health of the catchment.



Feral pig control program aerial survey and shoot helicopter take-off. This aerial program covered 16,200 ha targeting high priority sites across Thompson, Gregory, Lethe Brook, Whitsunday Coast catchments. PHOTO: J WRIGHT