



Mackay
Sugar

MEDIA RELEASE

10/12/2014

Mackay Sugar and Reef Catchments set to restore wetland at Racecourse Mill

Mackay Sugar and Reef Catchments have joined forces to help restore a heavily degraded wetland on Horse and Jockey Road, near Mackay Sugar's Racecourse Mill.

People using the road will have noticed foundation works beginning, with earth being moved and plants revegetated in sparse sections of the former wetland area. Catchment Solutions have been engaged as a contractor to carry out the on-ground site works.

Reef Catchments' Peter Muller said activities would be focused on improving water quality and landscape health.

"This is an exciting project that will aim to restore life to a degraded area on the edges of the Mackay city. The restoration of the wetland will bring back water and wildlife, including birds and the native fish population, which has dwindled over the years," Mr Muller said.

"Water quality is the major focus of the works, and the reinstatement of a functioning wetland will allow for a natural system that is able to more effectively remove pollutants from our waterways."

Matt Moore, project contractor from Catchment Solutions, said currently water draining off the bagasse pad ran into a dam.

"The dam will be incorporated into the wetland system and enlarged to create a first flush sediment detention basin with water plants. The system will effectively 'clean' the water as it moves through, removing nutrients such as phosphorous and nitrogen," Mr Moore said.

Mackay Sugar will also benefit from the improvements, with access to cleaner water and a larger water storage area for the mill to utilise.

"Improved quality of land and water delivers benefits for everyone in the immediate area. Activities on the site will improve the quality of water flowing to the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens locally, as well as more widely to the Pioneer River Estuary and the Great Barrier Reef," Mr Moore said. "The wetland will strengthen the natural landscape of the Mackay region and build resilience to support multiple uses for the long-term future."

Mackay Sugar's Health, Safety and Environment Manager Carissa Mansfield said Mackay Sugar was extremely proud to partner with Reef Catchments to restore approximately four hectares of land adjacent to its Racecourse Mill.

"This project benefits the environment, our Racecourse Mill operations and provides the community a picturesque viewpoint along Horse and Jockey Road.

"The joint partnership between Mackay Sugar and Reef Catchments is a real testament of our commitment towards environmental sustainability," Ms Mansfield said.

Works on the site will continue to June 2016, with Stage 1 works expected to be completed by June 2015.
ENDS

Media Contact

Jaime Newborn | **Ph** (07) 4968 4208 | **M** 0438 726 226

IMAGE 1: Meeting at the new wetland restoration site near Racecourse Mill are (from left) Matt Moore from Catchment Solutions, Mackay Sugar Health, Safety and Environment Manager Carissa Mansfield, and Peter Muller and Iona Flett from Reef Catchments.



Media Contact

Jaime Newborn | Ph (07) 4968 4208 | M 0438 726 226