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## A plan comes together at Little McCreadys Creek

THE Little McCreadys Creek rehabilitation project has received an exciting boost thanks to 5000 plants from council's Mackay Natural Environment Centre nursery.

The plants are mostly grasses and sedges that help filter stormwater before it reaches the Great Barrier Reef.

This riparian vegetation is being planted by the council-sponsored Green Army Riparian Team in a mammoth three-day planting operation, starting today.

The project area is 720m in length, beginning at Mackay-Bucasia Road and extending through to Dawson Boulevard.

Parks and Environment portfolio councillor Theresa Morgan said council was extremely pleased with how the project was coming together.

"Mackay Regional Council and Reef Catchments have undertaken works for a jointly funded rehabilitation project that has cleared out and widened the old creek bank and has created four small wetland pools adjacent to the creek," Cr Morgan said.

"The first section of the site is ready for planting after initial earth works with some direct seeding, and our nursery supervisor Sue McCormack has 5000 local provenance trees, grasses and sedges ready to plant out," she said.

"The plants have been specifically grown for the revegetation of local waterways and are ready for planting.

"By June next year, there will be more than 25,000 plants at the site.

"The plants need to be planted, so we've arranged for the Green Army team to come on board to rehabilitate Little McCreadys Creek as part of their training program.

"This has been a great use of council's Mackay Natural Environment Centre nursery and the Green Army Riparian Team, and has achieved an ideal low-cost solution."

Reef Catchments coast and biodiversity coordinator, Stefanie Wabnik, said the project was an exciting one that would make a big difference to both the local environment and the reef.

"The project will rejuvenate the natural values of the waterway, which has lost much of its environmental worth due to development in the area," Ms Wabnik said.

"The design will create habitat for native fish species that would usually migrate up the creek, such as tarpon, empire gudgeon and barramundi," she said.

“We’ve also cleared the creek of weed species, such as para grass, Singapore daisy and penny leaf.

“Water quality is a major focus of the works, which will reinstate a natural system that is able to more effectively remove pollutants from our waterways.

“The instream grasses and sedges we are planting over the next few days actually feed off nutrients in the water, so they will help to improve water quality by filtering out fertilisers and chemicals that run off lawns in the area before they reach the reef.

“Their roots, along with the roots of some melaleuca trees the nursery is providing, will also help minimise erosion.”

Regional coordinator of Conservation Volunteers Australia, Martina Bennett, said nine Green Army participants had been improving catchment management within important riparian areas throughout Mackay for the past five months.

“The supervisor and team are very excited about the opportunity to learn more about urban stormwater development,” Mrs Bennett said.

“The Green Army is a Australian Government initiative open to young people aged 17 to 24, who are looking for employment to develop skills, undertake training and gain experience in the delivery of conservation.

“They’ve also spent one day a fortnight at the nursery learning about seed-raising and propagation of species endemic to this area, so it’s excellent they get to see the project to fruition.”

For more information on the Green Army, Mackay Region Riparian Scheme, go to [www.conservationvolunteers.com.au/green-army](http://www.conservationvolunteers.com.au/green-army).

**Photo caption:** [Some of the plants at the nursery ready for planting. Plants such as these help to filter run-off water.](#)

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