

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) Gain Insights through Regional Tour

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Reef Catchments Limited (RCL), the Natural Resource Management (NRM) organisation for the Mackay Whitsunday Isaac region, recently hosted a two-day visit from members of the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW).

The purpose of the regional tour was threefold: discussing regional issues, showcasing Reef Catchments' commitment to partnerships across industry, landholders and natural resource management, and to showcase the diverse range of activities undertaken by Reef Catchments. These activities included current and completed projects, ranging from tending seagrass nurseries with Traditional Owners to hard-engineered works cared for and valued by landholders.

Reef Catchments Senior Project Officer Brendan Smith said, "By connecting our region's stakeholders and visiting government personnel, we were provided with a great opportunity to share learnings from previous projects and discuss how we work together to deliver benefits to the environment and the stakeholder enterprise."

The two-day tour involved visiting multiple project sites that demonstrate examples of regional issues such as erosion and declining water quality, along with the on-ground works implemented by Reef Catchments and their collaborators to help tackle these issues.

A riparian project site on the O'Connell River with engineered works and revegetation was visited to highlight the significant sediment saving that directly contributed to improvement of water quality. At this site 1337 tonnes of sediment per year was saved by ensuring that the bank profile had been re-established, strengthened and vegetation was utilised to help hold the soil to prevent any further erosion.

During the tour, landholder investment and commitment to improving natural resources in our region was made apparent. Many landholders involved in Reef Catchments projects generously shared time to guide DCCEEW representatives around their properties, highlighting land management improvement initiatives such as riparian fencing and revegetation which have been implemented with the support of Reef Catchments.

All sites were funded by grants or contracts provided by the Australian and Queensland Governments. For more information visit www.reefcatchments.com.au

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Photo Credit: Morgan Thomas

Photos:



Pictured: Landholder Peter Schembri showing DCCEEW staff the revegetation efforts surrounding his treatment train, located within his cane fields. Through the use of sediment ponds and vegetation this treatment train is designed to intercept, slow down and remove pollutants from water before they enter the local creek.



Pictured: Property owner Jason Bradford demonstrating to DCCEEW staff the wetland management techniques that help him to provide positive environmental outcomes while maximizing productivity.



Pictured: Illustrating the power of engineered structures coupled with revegetation to help stabilize eroding creek banks and build resilience in the landscape. The logs you see in the photo (pile fields) extend down another 4 metres to help stabilize the bank until the vegetation reaches a stage big enough to hold the bank itself.