

A GREENING AUSTRALIA PROJECT SNAPSHOT

Grazing Land Management Project

MACKENZIE &
DAWSON RIVERS



“The success of the project was seen through the improved land management practices and conditions, but more importantly in the confidence and education of those who have always worked on and with the land – the Traditional Owners. Sharing knowledge and education with the Traditional Owners of this country has been both humbling and enlightening. Traditional landscape understanding has been paired with modern sustainable grazing to really see the land, people and cattle thrive through this project.”

Xanthe Willis
Greening Australia



Project duration:
August 2021 – May 2024



Property size:
42,890 hectares



Sediment saved:
1,164 tonnes/year



On-country discussions with partners
Photo: Mad Dog Productions

Aim

Greening Australia works to restore and protect Australian ecosystems and establish healthy, productive landscapes where people and nature thrive. In the Fitzroy region, cattle grazing and the health of the Great Barrier Reef are closely linked. Grazing practices can impact water quality through sediment runoff into nearby creeks and rivers that run out to the Reef. Through linking traditional understanding of the landscape features and cycles with modern grazing techniques, this project aimed to repair the land condition and in turn improve the quality of water reaching the Great Barrier Reef.

Works Summary

- 51 landholders in the Mackenzie catchment invited to partner with Greening Australia on the project.
- 575 hours of training and education provided to the Woorabinda Pastoral Company staff and the Woorabinda Rangers.
- 37,656 hectares of grazing land in the Mackenzie and Dawson River catchments now improving under a regenerative grazing Property Management Plan.
- A further 5,234 hectares of cropping country being shifted to a more regenerative approach.
- 5 km of riverine protection fencing has been installed along the Mackenzie River.
- 8 km of internal fencing installed to reintroduce rotational grazing.
- 56 km of barb wire installed as part of the project and 2,100 star pickets.
- 4 concrete water troughs installed to encourage cattle movement and decrease grazing pressure.
- 400 m of poly pipe installed to connect water points.

Project Outcomes

- 1,164 tonnes of fine sediment have been prevented from reaching the Great Barrier Reef annually.
- More than 20 indigenous representatives joined the project to learn about regenerative grazing to repair Country and improve water quality while sharing their own experiences and knowledge of the land.



Great Barrier
Reef Foundation

The Fitzroy Water Quality Program is supported by the partnership between the Australian Government's Reef Trust and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, Fitzroy Basin Association, Greening Australia, Verterra and Catchment Solutions.





BEFORE



AFTER

*These photos show the improvement in land condition over the project.
Photos: Greening Australia*

The Story

Woorabinda Pastoral Company (WPC) has a long history of grazing and farming in Central Queensland. CEO Tim Thomson identified a need to realign management practices to best practice approaches that would enable WPC to move forward with healthy country to produce healthy cattle. Through this identified need, a partnership with Greening Australia began on the Mackenzie Water Quality Project.

Beginning with a baseline assessment of the current Property Management Plan and a deep dive into the current business vision, land capacity, and stock management, Greening Australia and WPC started to formulate the best possible way to achieve lasting water quality improvements in the Mackenzie River and Dawson River catchments.

WPC has implemented rotational grazing practices and stronger herd management, through education and ongoing coaching to assist with implementing the changes. These practices were supported with on-ground works including internal fencing to provide more paddocks to rotate through, providing additional watering points to spread out grazing, and closing off the last section of stock access to the Mackenzie River banks.

The dedication and input from the ground up at WPC has been impressive. Managing 38,000 hectares of land requires an army of staff and the dedication they have to seeing the practices continue into the future has been remarkable. Most of the staff are local Traditional Owners, invested in looking after Country and the wider connections across the region. Traditional knowledge of the land directly compliments more modern farming practices that are coming to recognise the interconnectedness between the land, water and animals; an aspect traditional knowledge has understood for over 60,000 years.

Right: Healthy country for healthy cattle.



Photo: Mad Dog Productions

