

Fitzroy River and Coastal Catchments Inc.

NEWSLETTER • June 2009

President's Report

Michelle Hanrahan

Welcome to the June edition of our newsletter. In it you will find out more about where FRCC has come from and where it is going to.

An aim of FRCC's is to demonstrate to the wider community the valuable land management experience of our members and how they can use this to make a positive contribution to solving the natural resource challenges of our time. One way we do this is through providing the opportunity for members to participate in discussions which shape natural resource management in the region. Most recently this has been achieved through hosting the forum "We want a River, not a drain II" and a summary of the outcomes of this meeting can be found in the newsletter.

We also seek to celebrate the voluntary contribution that members make to sustainability. In its simplest form this can be seen in the financial contribution individuals make to their projects where at least every dollar of public money is matched by an in-kind contribution, but it is also so much more than this. It is the hours spent at community meetings, the days spent in the sun building fences and installing watering points, and the nights spent at the kitchen table discussing plans for the future.

Eight of our eleven committee members are popularly elected from the membership and the other three are special members who have been invited to join due to their particular skills. Some committee members have been with FRCC from as early as 2002 while others have joined us in the past year. Our most recent recruit Malcolm Mann is featured in this newsletter. FRCC's committee, like our members, volunteer a large amount of their own time to provide the strategic direction for the group.

Executive Officers Report

Cameron Wearing

Since our last newsletter considerable effort has been invested in the development of Neighbourhood Catchment Property Action Projects. This investment has paid dividends with 25 projects being presented for assessment at our most recent committee meeting. These 25 projects are innovative and practical on-ground projects developed in partnership with landholders and contribute to the sustainable and productive use of our regions natural resources.

Combined the projects developed with landholders this financial year contribute to the following natural resource outcomes:

Riparian zone (length and area): 128.5 km and 6,219 Ha

Grazing lands managed for increased ground cover: 4,988 Ha

Coastal ecosystems: 5,340 Ha

Endangered and Not of Concern & of Concern vegetation: 80 Ha and 1,937 Ha

Our Reef Rescue partners Growcom have also developed projects which have led to 573 Ha of improved nutrient and water use efficiency, 347 Ha of sediment reduction, and 21 Ha of improved ground cover involving highly innovative "living mulch" trials.

At the same time staff and committee have continued to actively engage with the wider FRCC community by:

- hosting a second member's forum on Friday 1st May which we were delighted had 73 people in attendance along with 29 apologies. In this newsletter you will find a summary of the forum outcomes;
- participating in Beef 2009, manning a stall on Tuesday 5th May and also taking part in property tours to "Glenprarie" and "Prior Park" on which FRCC has previously developed projects. These field trips were in great demand with approximately 240 people on the "Glenprarie" trip and 70 going to "Prior Park". Summaries of these trips are available for you in this newsletter; and
- participating in the St Lawrence Wetlands discovery day held on Saturday the 9th of May which was attended by approximately 40 people.

We want a River not a Drain II

Michelle Hanrahan and Cameron Wearing

FRCC member's, interested parties and invited guests attended an evening Member's Forum on Friday the 1st May. Originally it was envisaged that the forum would focus on whether there had been any progress since the Barry Hart report into mine discharge to Central Queensland waterways had been written. However, as the timing of the forum coincided

with the announcement of the moratorium on vegetation clearing and this was foremost in the member's minds it was decided to modify the night's discussion to provide FRCC member's with an opportunity to demonstrate their valuable land management experience. In particular that FRCC member's value trees in the landscape for a wide variety of reasons, that they understand the complex erosion process occurring, that the presence of trees does not necessarily equal better water quality and finally they have a positive contribution to make in terms of suggesting ways to improve water quality.

To highlight the extensive land management experience present on the night FRCC member's were first asked to add up their respective years of experience. With 73 individuals this experience amounted to almost 2,000 years of Land Management experience between them. In fact, 1,984 years was the grand total – some tables of attendees recorded slightly higher numbers than others...

Cameron Wearing FRCC's Executive Officer then gave an update on activities since the last gathering and following that introduced the night's guest speaker Claire Rodgers, Fitzroy Basin Association's (FBA) Operations Manager. Building on the theme of the night "We want a River, not a drain" Claire spoke on how, in recent times, FBA has been able to influence and guide decisions concerning water quality in the Fitzroy River in a number of instances through shifting paradigms – such as how community engagement with Ensham Resources led to a change in its development plans and discussions with Department of Environment and Resource Management led to the cumulative impact and condition monitoring assessment following the 2008 flood events and subsequent upstream discharges. Claire related the examples to the re-growth moratorium and encouraged FRCC member's to have hope that they can make a difference through positive engagement.

Claire's speech was well received for both its substance and its laid-back style.

The three Forum questions directly followed Claire's address. The three questions to focus on were:

1. Describe the value of trees in the landscape?
2. What forms of erosion are in your area?
3. Where is the greatest amount of sediment delivered to streams in the Fitzroy River and coastal catchments? What can be done?

The following is a summary of discussions from each of the above questions on the night.

Question 1.

Describe the value of trees in the landscape?

Upon reflection, FRCC member's identified that trees provided both positive and negative values in the landscape and further that these values could be broken down into three (3) main criteria: environmental, commercial, and social / aesthetic values.

Interestingly, in some cases multiple were identified for example (Riparian Zones – which are aesthetically pleasing, biologically significant, prevent erosion from occurring; provide wind breaks and animal shelter, and a host of others. In other cases, depending on where they were located or how they were being used and managed there could be both positive benefit for example managed Brigalow re-growth or if un managed negative impacts, such as crowding out of mature trees, competition between trees, saplings, grasses, weeds and encouraging erosion.

Question 2.

What forms of erosion are in your area?

There was a great deal of knowledge on evidence throughout the room with regards to this question. Not only did we get answers as to the "forms" of erosion, but our forum participants delved even further and listed some of the reasons behind why erosion occurs, why it happens in some places and not others, and they then started to list what can be done to stop it happening or to slow it down.

It was also interesting when reviewing the responses for this question that, in very broad terms, certain points of view could be distinguished depending on where your "table" came from. Three main areas were identified:

1. the coast – where clearing for development, the impact of high tides, development in low-lying areas and unnecessary 4WD activity led to erosion;
2. From the coast to the Barrage – where hill erosion, caused by thick seedlings was identified, the undercutting of river banks caused by flood and powered boats and gully erosion caused by cattle and wallabies over grazing and tracking down the river;
3. above the Barrage – where erosion occurred in clay areas following heavy rain, sheet / rill erosion in cultivation areas, and excessive tree clearing (during the old Brigalow development scheme).

A special mention was also made of feral species and the impact they have creating erosion. Animals such as feral pigs, rabbits, brumbies, deer, etc, are all extremely good at removing surface cover and disturbing the soil surface and/or digging-up the soil making it readily available to erosion.

Question 3.

Where is the greatest amount of sediment delivered to streams in the Fitzroy River and coastal catchments? What can be done?

The group had some definite answers here. Both for “where” the sediment was coming from and what could be done to remediate or lessen the amount of sediment ending up in our waterways.

Again answers were relevant to the entire area of FRCC from the coast, to above the Barrage, as they were in Question 2. There was also an underlying sense of urgency amongst the group for remediation efforts to start to happen quickly, in a coordinated approach, while we are still able to make a change.

Along those lines, education was a key item in the “what can be done” section; Education of the general public, urban, rural, and industries.

The night finished with a special presentation to retiring Committee Member, Ken Rutherford, announcements of our Student Bursaries, Weed Photo Competition and the drawing of lucky door prizes – entry tickets to Beef Week.

Meet our newest committee member: Malcolm Mann

In our last newsletter we included profiles of the 2009 FRCC Management committee and here we introduce our most recent recruit.

Malcolm is a descendant of Darumbal and part of his early origin extends from within the Shoalwater Bay region. Malcolm resides in Rockhampton and is married with two sons. Currently he is employed with Queensland Parks and Wildlife as a Marine Parks Ranger (nine years) based at Rosslyn Bay, Yeppoon.

As a ranger, Malcolm’s area of responsibility primarily focuses on the inshore Marine Park sections from Broadsound to Keppel Bay. He also serves as a secretary on the Gawula (Darumbal language for Mt. Wheeler) Aboriginal Land Trust (eight months) and was instrumental in developing the first Natural Resource Management Plan by an Indigenous Land Trust in Queensland. Malcolm is completing an Environmental Science degree which will be accomplished by the end of the year.

FRCC - Key events and achievements

Fiona Anderson

As FRCC looks to the future with the development of its strategic plan it is also important to take the time to understand where it has come from. It would not be possible to do this without acknowledging the hard work of former staff and tireless support of Management Committee members.

Fitzroy River & Coastal Catchments Inc (FRCC) was established on 7th January 2005 as a not for profit incorporated association. For over two years prior the catchment group operated as a sub-committee of the Fitzroy Basin Association and during this time received tremendous stakeholder support and input to develop a sub-regional natural resource management plan. Through the implementation of the plan, the organisation has continued to grow and expand its membership base and now coordinates the delivery of a range of on-ground projects and capacity building activities across the catchments of the Fitzroy River and the coastal catchments of the Capricorn Coast and Broadsound. Following is a summary of just a few of the key events and achievements since 2002.

13 November 2002

The first meeting of the Lower Fitzroy & Coastal Zone Sub-Committee would discuss admin arrangements, employment of a coordinator, planning requirements and determine a name. Michelle Hanrahan was appointed as chairperson of the Fitzroy River & Coastal Catchments Committee

Mid 2003 – August 2004

The Fitzroy River & Coastal Catchments Natural Resource Management Plan was developed through a comprehensive, two phase community engagement and consultation process. The plan would guide NRM activities and investment in the sub-region with the Neighbourhood Catchment programme being a primary delivery mechanism. Information sessions and target setting workshops were held at Yeppoon and Gracemere and were facilitated by Geoff Higgins (Performance People) and coordinated by Andrew Baldwin including technical support from government agencies. These community meetings identified assets and values and developed targets.

In August 2003, the Draft FRCC NRM Plan was released to the public for stakeholder feedback and many responses were received.

In March 2004, the Sub-Committee reviewed the final version of the NRM Plan and approved printing to commence.

Key aspects of the FRCC Plan and the plans of other sub-regional groups were included in the regional Central Queensland Strategy for Sustainability developed by the Fitzroy Basin Association.

Other key activities during this period included:

- Fitzroy Basin Association recruited a Field Officer to assist the Coordinator and Sub-Committee.
- Dwayne Johnson, a local indigenous artist, drew the crocodile logo for the group.
- In 2004, the group hosted a community meeting at The Caves to provide landholders with the opportunity to discuss

vegetation management and water related issues with representatives of state government agencies. This meeting also introduced the Neighbourhood Catchment concept.

- Fiona Anderson was appointed as Coordinator to commence in September 2004 following Andrew Baldwin taking on a new role within FBA.

7 January 2005

After months of extensive deliberations the Rules of the organisation were developed and the Sub-Committee became incorporated as an entity in their own right on 7th January 2005 – Fitzroy River & Coastal Catchments Inc (IA33574) and soon after applied for an Australian Business Number.

The previous Sub-Committee transitioned to the FRCC Management Committee. Members of the new FRCC Management Committee at this stage were:

- Peter Baggett
- Amanda Brumpton
- Leise Childs
- Ian Dare
- Michelle Hanrahan
- Joshua McKenzie
- Jeff Mills (President)
- Bob Muir
- Ken Rutherford
- John Thomas.

Early 2005

The following key activities occurred during this period:

- The organisation rapidly expanded to employ six (6) staff.
- The logo was digitalised to be that which you see today.
- Members and stakeholders celebrated the achievement of milestones following the establishment of an office and shopfront at Shop B, 31 East Street Rockhampton.
- Secured a new mailbox in Rockhampton City.

2 December 2005

Inaugural Annual General Meeting held at the Shearing Shed, Heritage Village Parkhurst. Later, Jeff Mills was elected as president for 2006.

Michael McCabe was appointed as Business Manager to replace Fiona Anderson.

6 July 2006

The revised NRM Plan (including the coastal amendments) was released to the public at an FRCC celebration hosted at the newly relocated office at 178 Denison Street, Rockhampton. The FRCC website was also launched at this event.

The first funding was received for the Great Barrier Reef Coastal Wetland Protection Programme in July 2006 for a pilot project. The success of this project resulted in FRCC receiving additional funding in 2007/08 to implement more wetland projects on the Southern Fitzroy Floodplain and at St Lawrence.

11 May 2007

In order to broaden funding sources and diversify activities the establishment of a commercial business unit within the not-for-profit FRCC structure was investigated by the Management Committee with support provided by Fiona Anderson. On 11 May 2007 the business name of FRCC Catchment Services was registered to Fitzroy River & Coastal Catchments Inc.

October 2008

FRCC Member Forum and dinner held at Kershaw House, North Rockhampton.

5 December 2008

4th Annual General Meeting at Kershaw House, North Rockhampton. Later, Michelle Hanrahan was elected as President for 2009.

Today FRCC employs a team of six people and here they are pictured on the front steps of the office.

BEEF 2009

Stefanie Carusi, John Rodgers and Lisa Sutton

Since our last newsletter one of the biggest weeks on the Beef calendar has come and gone, yes were talking about Beef week 2009. Weeks, months and in some cases perhaps years of planning gets rolled in to a hectic five day schedule of stalls, demonstrations, seminars, property tours, Rodeos, Music, Breakfasts and Dinners and of course the stock showing competitions. The hardest part was deciding what you would look at first!

FRCC together with FBA and other members of the Central Queensland network spent this year's Beef Week talking to hundreds of landholders from all over Queensland, Australia and the globe about what we do and how we help landholders improve their properties. We handed out many fact sheets on past FRCC projects to show firsthand what can be achieved with a little financial assistance and incentive. It was great to have so many of our members come up and say hi to us at the stall.

Glenprairie

Early on the Thursday of "Beef week" four busloads (aprox. 240 people) departed from Rockhampton for the premier property tour of the week. Westpac was the major sponsor of these tours and was very well represented on the "Glenprairie" tour with executives from the CEO down being present.

The Glenprairie aggregation is a 46,303Ha, organic beef producer running 15000 head of cattle. On the tour Sir Graham McCamley told the crowd about his almost lifelong ambition to own "Glenprairie". He passionately talked of his plans to continue improving the property from both environmental and production standpoints. As evidence of the environmental value of the property 56 types of birds have been identified on the Glenprairie marine plain including the endangered "yellow chat" and other relatively rare species.

Since 2006 Fitzroy River and Coastal Catchments and the Fitzroy Basin Association have assisted in the development and funding of property improvements at Glenprairie that started at the sea (Herbert creek estuary) and have worked inland. Stage one of this work involved 20 km of coastal fence between the sea wall, erected by previous owners, and the Herbert creek estuary. This fence eliminated the impact of cattle on the supratidal & intratidal zone and Sir Graham has been impressed with the improvement brought about in such a short time.

Stage two saw 4.9 km of land type fence erected to improve grazing management of coastal alluvial flats and iron bark ridges. At the same time a start was made on 12 km of riparian fencing along "Wellington creek" and associated off stream watering. The major aim of this fencing was to enable the use of fire to control rubber vine along the creek. Chemical treatment is impractical due to the "organic" status of the property.

Stage three has now been approved involving 18.6 km of fencing along the remainder of Wellington and Landsborough creek with more watering points to be constructed. When finished this project will be protecting 21.7 km of creek banks with 755 ha of riparian area as well as 2,890 Ha having improved ground cover due to wet season spelling made possible by 4.9 km of land type fence. On the marine side 400 Ha of "Wetlands of national significance" and 20 km of foreshore are being protected.

After the tour many people expressed awe at the size and intensity of the operation and were very complementary of the lunch served by the Marlborough locals.

Prior Park

Anne and Gordon Stunzner hosted a very informative tour of their property which was enjoyed by three busloads of Beefweek participants. Prior Park is 7000 Ha of rangeland, Bluegum flats and softwood scrub on which Gordon and Anne are balancing cattle and timber production with wetland protection in a sustainable way which enhances future productive potential.

Gordon and Anne were concerned that after prolonged drought the pasture had become degraded in parts of Prior Park and consisted mainly of white spear grass. To improve soil and pasture condition they destocked and renovated a 485 Ha paddock "Eulimbi". Eroded areas were mulched and 242 Ha of more stable soil were deep ripped in contours in August 2007. Other areas of poplar gum forest with duplex soils, steep slopes and creek and wetlands were not ripped due to potential for erosion. A 3P grass and stylo mix of Buffel, Gatton, Panic, Kattambora Rhodes, Bissett Blue Grass, Mega Stylo mix and Burgandy bean was developed and sown in the ripped area. This yielded a pasture volume of 4000kg/Ha, un-renovated pastures of other land types on the property yield 2500 kg/Ha. Black spear grass is beginning to replace the white speargrass, and the legumes in the improved pasture provide a good protein source while the Black speargrass is protein deficient during seeding. The renovated pastures improved condition of the females resulting in an increased of herd fertility by 25%.

The cost of this pasture renovation was considerable and it is offset by income derived from sustainable code compliant harvesting of timber from the property. Fifty hectares of Blue Gum, Narrow Leafed Iron Bark, Grey Iron Bark, and Moreton Bay Ash in this paddock is managed intensively for timber. Split posts, strainers, rails, saw and salvage logs are produced from this timber. Detailed costings of timber milled on "Prior Park" were provided to participants. Fred and Gayle De Costa from De Costa Timber Solutions demonstrated operation of the Lucas mill during the tour.

"Eulimbi", contains a wetland and flood plain which is an important habitat for 28 identified bird and other native animal species. The wetland is a CSIRO field site for a water Hyacinth bio control weevil. FRCC is helping to protect this area by partially funding 1.5 km of fencing around the wetland and providing off steam watering points. This will enable the wetland

to be managed separately with reduced grazing pressure which will improve ground cover and allow the growth of Blue gums which will reduce the water table and reduce soil erosion and therefore improve water quality. In summer following when water levels are highest cattle will be allowed into this area for short term grazing to reduce fire hazard.

This was an inspirational tour that demonstrated how the productive capacity of land can be enhanced while protecting its natural resources.

Thank you to Gordon and Anne for sharing your knowledge how forestry practices can be successfully integrated with cattle production.

Launch of the Gawula NRM plan

Janeen Whiting

On Wednesday, 13 May 2009 the Gawula Aboriginal Land Trust Committee celebrated the launch of the Gawula NRM Plan.

Sally Vea Vea (President) gave a talk on how the Gawula Aboriginal Land Trust Steering Committee with the assistance from Fitzroy Basin Elders Committee and Greening Australia developed the Gawula NRM Plan. Gawula was previously Mt. Wheeler and the land was transferred to the Gawula Aboriginal Land Trust Steering Committee by the Qld State Government in 2007 under the Aboriginal Land Act 1991. In the early years this area was mined for gold and used for cattle farming.

In developing the plan the group's desire was to monitor the property through best management practices and natural resource management values. They wanted to have measures in place for a sustainable resource, to care for the animals in the area, to have a low impact on the mountain, to control weeds and to monitor the water. Importantly they wanted a workable plan

The plan illustrates their goals and vision for the area, that Gawula is a sacred and ceremonial site where individuals can find peace in the presence of the spirits. An area to honour past and present traditions as well as reconnect with the country. Gawula is for the wider community as well as a place where teenagers can visit to learn of Gawula country and traditions.

As part of the ceremony, Bob Muir presented a Certificate of Appreciation to groups who had assisted in making the plan possible. Leise Childs (FRCC Treasurer) accepted the certificate on FRCC's behalf.

Meet the staff

Fitzroy River and Coastal Catchments is staffed by a small and dedicated crew. If you haven't had the chance to meet them in person yet you soon will and in the mean time we have included their profiles for you.

Dr Cameron Wearing

(Executive Officer)

Cameron joined FRCC in mid 2008 and prior to that worked for FBA in the Sustainable Landscapes and Salinity programme co-ordinator roles for a number of years.

Before coming to Central Queensland Cameron worked for the University of Queensland and their Japanese partners: the Hokkaido Electric Power Company (HEPCO) and Central Research Institute of Electric Power Industry (CRIEPI) on a project which aimed to assess the feasibility of reclaiming degraded lands in Australia for carbon credits. Part of this project involved the establishment of a large scale field trial on the "Darbalara" property of UQ Gatton.

Cameron's family has a long association with UQ Gatton and he has great memories of running around the Horti field paddocks as a kid. He even was married in UQ Gatton grounds in front of the Foundation Building (pictured). Cameron always finds it a surprise and pleasure to bump into former Gatton students in Central Queensland.

Janeen Whiting

(Executive Assistant)

Janeen's role as Executive Assistant is varied not only assisting the Executive Officer but assisting the Project Officers as well. Her day in the office is always full, busy and at times challenging. Janeen enjoys meeting people who come into the office or just being the friendly voice on the other end of the phone when they call. It has been a busy couple of months for everyone in the office and Janeen is sure that the next round of funding will be the same. Janeen says it is satisfying for her that an organisation such as FRCC is a point of contact for landholders to assist them with their property management. On a personal note her favourite things to do are being with her family, cooking and gardening.

Lisa Sutton

(Project Officer-Monitoring)

Natural resource management is an area that has always interested Lisa. Attending school in Toowoomba Lisa then completed an Environmental Science Degree at Griffith University in Brisbane. Lisa then became a research assistant working with freshwater and marine invertebrates, and then later worked with DPI in Brisbane following the outbreak of the Papaya Fruit Fly.

Also studying Environmental Health Lisa spent the best part of a decade working in this area for various local governments in Queensland. Lisa then left South East Queensland to head for the cattle country of Blackall, Katherine and Alice Springs before her arrival in Rockhampton five years ago. Lisa and her partner John have a small herd of cattle that regularly exasperate her, she takes her hat off to all serious cattle producers who keep hundreds/thousands of cattle under control, while caring for their country.

Stefanie Carusi

(Project Officer-Capacity Building)

Moving to Queensland two years ago Stefanie worked in the Forestry industry for the first 13 months implementing guidelines for native hardwood harvesting in State Forests in the Maryborough and Gympie areas.

Stefanie's role as project/capacity building officer is to engage property owners from various neighborhood catchments. She enjoys meeting them, and talking to them about what FRCC does and how they may be able to receive funding for property infrastructure on their land. Part of this process is to prepare projects for presentation to committee for funding approval. Stefanie also has a part in organizing workshops, newsletters, and other social events.

Dr Sandra Grinter

(Project Officer-Catchment Services)

Sandra has been employed in environmental science positions for state government agencies and has worked on natural resource management projects for community and natural resource management groups, primarily concerned with water quality issues and the sustainable use of water. Sandra, originally from South Australia, attended university in Adelaide and Armidale (NSW) and ended up studying limnology (limnology is the study of inland waters) almost by accident. She has worked in several locations, before "heading north" from Buronga (near Mildura), to Brisbane, Bundaberg and now Rockhampton.

Sandra's family relocated to Rockhampton quite a while ago so she is not really that new to the area; although Sandra is sure there is still a lot to learn. Her two children love exploring the bush looking for frogs, birds and lizards and Sandra is proud to contribute to the sustainable management of our natural resources through her work for the benefit of future generations.

John Rodgers

(Project Officer)

John has recently completed his first six months with FRCC. He is proud to work as part of an organization that can assist landowners in making a difference to the environment and their viability. John looks forward to continuing his work with producers who can see the bigger picture and encouraging all to look at their businesses holistically for improved long term sustainability.

Prior to coming to FRCC John had been a bookkeeper for a building firm and operated a courier business in Rockhampton for 3 years. Most of John's life has been on the land in Western Queensland with cattle and sheep followed by 5 years on the Darling Downs with cattle, pigs and cropping.

John's years of practical involvement, over diverse areas of the state, give him an understanding of the problems landowners experience. Observations of different management styles equips him for discussions aimed at the best outcomes for sustainability. Remembering always that in rural areas "without profitability there can be no sustainability"!

Wetland Care Australia Workshop

Stefanie Carusi

The Queensland Wetland Programme recently asked Wetland Care Australia (WCA) to roll out a series of workshops to let people know about the new and useful wetland information tools available to help in managing wetland sites.

The Rockhampton workshop was held over two days with a focus on wetland information tools and what to look for when attempting to manage a wetland site. There was abundant interest from local industry workers, with the participants representing a wide range of organizations such as Local Government, community bush care groups, FBA, Dept. of Environment and Resource Management, Fitzroy Basin Elders Association and CQ University.

On the first day Cassie Price and Rachael Nasplezes from (WCA) showed the group what impacts to look for as we visited 3 wetland sites around Rockhampton. (O'Shannasy's Reserve, Duckponds Environmental Reserve, and Gracemere Lagoon). The group shared knowledge on the history of the sites, what they knew about the threats and possible work that could be done to better manage the sites.

The second day of the workshop was held at CQ University and concentrated on showing the group the Wetlandinfo site developed by the Queensland Wetland Programme. This site aims to give people a central location for sourcing and contributing wetland information. Making the site a one-stop-shop for wetland info. The group also discussed the most recent Wetland Guidelines for the Great Barrier Reef Catchment and went through the theory of rehabilitating a wetland.

The Queensland Wetland Programme has developed a comprehensive range of information products to help land managers, regional Bodies, land carers and policy makers to conserve and manage wetlands.

For more information on the Wetlandinfo site please log onto www.epa.qld.gov.au

Murray Lagoon Management Plan

John Rodgers

"The Murray Lagoon Wetlands Management Plan" has now been completed by Greening Australia. This document records the history and current condition of the lagoon and then suggests a number of management solutions to enable the local ecosystem to return to a more natural/healthy state. FRCC will be working closely with the Rockhampton Regional Council to encourage this.

Engineering for the "Viewing Platform" is underway so we will soon be able to progress to the construction phase. The involvement of Bundaberg Rum through Landcare Australia has been the driving force behind this project and FRCC commends them for their commitment.

Below are photos taken at the Green Corps graduation presentation in February this year, Green Corps were instrumental in carrying out the on ground works at the Murray Lagoon site.

Neighbourhood Catchments

Priority Neighbourhood Catchments (PNCs) are the primary delivery mechanism for FRCC extension and incentive activities. A Neighbourhood Catchment (NC) represents a group of properties that reside in a common area. The philosophy behind this approach being that neighbours working together can address natural resource concerns at the property scale as individuals and at the NC scale as a group.

FRCC selects PNCs to engage landholders and invest scarce resources to achieve multiple natural resource benefits by combining catchment scale science with local knowledge. The success of neighbourhood catchments is demonstrated by the outcomes achieved for example 128.5km and 6,219 Ha of riparian zone in the last year alone.

This financial year Fitzroy River and Coastal Catchments (FRCC) will once again be looking for landholders in Priority areas to develop strategic property infrastructure and planning projects.

Neighbourhood catchments and their contact officers are listed below:

- **St Lawrence**
- **Waverley Creek**
- **Torilla**
Project Officer: **Lisa Sutton** ph: 49210573 Mobile: 0428123017
- **Marlborough Creek**
- **Herbert Creek**
- **Styx river area**
Project Officer: **John Rodgers** ph: 49210573 Mobile: 0428123060
- **Princhester Creek**
- **Yeppoon**
Project Officer: **Stefanie Carusi** ph: 49210573 Mobile: 0428123244

While focusing on these areas FRCC continues to support past priority areas as well.

The types of projects FRCC has funded include: **Riparian/Wetland Fencing, Land type/Remnant Vegetation / coastal fencing, Off stream watering points and pipeline, Erosion control fencing, Property planning, Salinity fencing, and land condition fencing to name a few.**

Fitzroy River and Coastal Catchments would love to hear from landholders wanting to make a difference on their property and interested in funding for their work.

You do not have to be from a priority area to find out more. If you would like regular FRCC news on events and activities join up as an FRCC member today! It's free!

Please call the office at 75 Canning Street Rockhampton on 07 4921 0573.