

UPPER MITCHELL RIVER CATCHMENT
- WET TROPICS HABITAT RESTORATION
SMALL GRANTS SCHEME 2009 - 2010

Dear Resident/Landowner of the Upper Mitchell River Catchment

The Mitchell River Watershed Management Group has recently received additional funding of \$90,000 from the Queensland government to provide grants for habitat restoration works in the Wet Tropics area of the upper Mitchell River catchment. This funding will enable the recently completed habitat restoration grants scheme to be extended for another year.



Community tree planting - Julatten

The \$80,000 of grants awarded to landowners in the Julatten-Mt Molloy corridor in 2008-9 assisted them in restoring the habitat values of their land. Individual projects have replanted rainforest on cleared land (including land used for grazing and sugarcane), restored the vegetation in riparian (stream bank) areas and fenced off wetland areas to exclude feral pigs. Grants awarded between December 2008 and February 2009 have, to date, resulted in the planting of at least 13,000 trees on 6.5 hectares of previously cleared land on 12 different properties. The efforts of landowners have both increased the habitat value of these properties and improved the connectivity between the World Heritage Wet Tropics sections either side of this valley.

The area in which grants will be available forms a corridor between the high biodiversity Mt Lewis Forest Reserve / the Mossman Gorge section of the Daintree National Park / the Australian Wildlife Conservancy Property Brooklyn Station and the Mowbray and Kuranda National Parks. The planting of appropriate vegetation over large enough areas and in the right locations will create habitat islands that will make it easier for the unique fauna of the Wet Tropics to move between these protected areas. This will not only assist their survival but, by allowing movement of individuals between protected areas, will also help maintain as much genetic biodiversity as possible in these species.

Landowners are invited to apply for grants, typically from \$2,000 to \$6,000, for projects making a contribution to the biodiversity of the region through building habitat islands / stepping stones and removing barriers to movement of species between the protected areas of the Wet Tropics

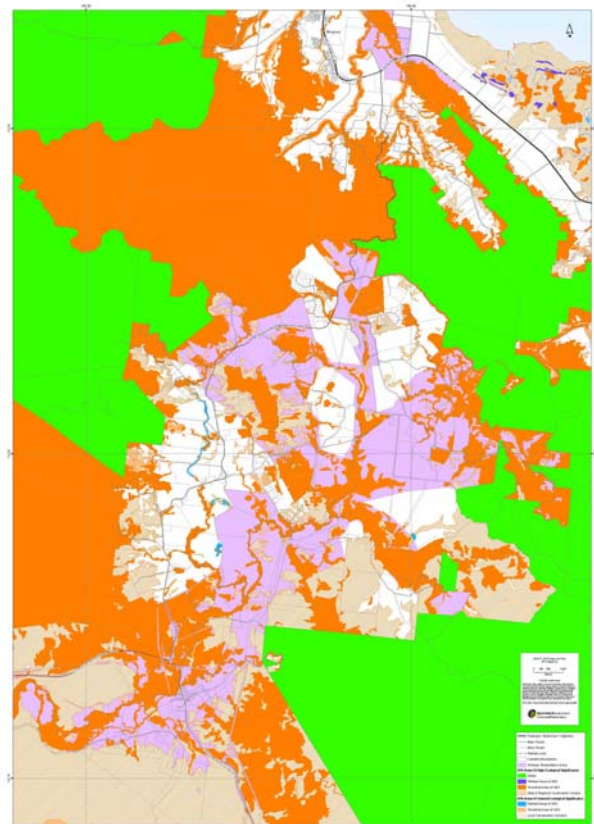
World Heritage area. However, requests for larger grants will be considered for projects having a significant outcome in key locations.

Grants can also be applied to the removal of barriers to fish movement and the restoration of wetlands and riparian vegetation to enhance biodiversity in the streams of the project area. Applicants will be expected to make significant in-kind contributions in time and resources, if not expenditure of additional funds.



The satellite image above shows remnant vegetation in the project area, Rifle Creek and other streams in the Julatten – Mt Molloy valley, the Mitchell River and the Rex and Mulligan highways. The map on the right was prepared by EPA for the FNQ2025 Regional Plan and shows areas of high ecological significance (the solid orange-brown and green areas) and Strategic Rehabilitation Areas (the solid purple areas). The pale orange hatched areas are identified as Conservation Corridors. A larger version

of this map is attached at the end of this document and available on the website: www.mitchell-river.com.au



Grants will be targeted in specific areas where maximum connectivity improvements can be made. This would include:

- areas identified as Strategic Conservation Areas or Conservation Corridor on the EPA FNQ2025 mapping;
- areas in which rainforest regeneration/replanting has already taken place to build on previous work in the area;
- areas where landowners have not widely embraced the opportunities for rainforest regeneration/replanting and habitat creation and there are significant linkage opportunities;

- agricultural properties where there are opportunities to expand on remnant rainforest or regenerate rainforest areas of a size or in locations that would have an impact on overall biodiversity and linkages;
- properties where there are identified fish barriers, such as old road crossings and culverts, that prevent free fish movement into the headwaters of local streams; and
- restoration of wetlands and riparian vegetation along streams where this will create a significant improvement in stream health and aquatic habitat.

Grant applications will be assessed for:

- level of landowner contribution and multiplier effect on grant;
- scale of the project;
- sustainability and long term maintenance requirements;
- how the success of the funded work will be measured;
- significance of project (e.g. location and proximity to other critical habitats);
- ecological and cultural impacts, especially protection of any aboriginal or other cultural heritage sites.

Grants may be spent on:

- materials such as, but not limited to, seedlings, pots, potting mix, posts, fencing to protect plantings, mulch, watering systems, etc.
- contract labour for tasks such as minor earthworks, hole digging, fencing.



**Conservation Volunteers
pricking out seedlings**

Grant recipients would be expected to:

- seek the advice and assistance of the local tree planting group(s) for tree planting projects; and
- give the Mitchell River Watershed Management Group prior advice of any community tree planting sessions to enable a representative to attend; and
- participate in planting sessions on other properties to expand the existing community network of property owners actively re-establishing rainforest habitat on their properties; and
- carry out the funded works in the timeframes specified, unless extended by agreement ; and

- post a supplied sign stating “Wet Tropics Habitat Restoration Work – Funded by Queensland Government” on a gate or fence in a location visible from the closest public road.

Project progress will be checked regularly by participation in planting sessions, telephone calls and site inspections. Project sites will be inspected for final payment on advice of completion of the funded works.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE:

Applications must be received by Close of Business on **Friday 16 October 2009** by mail, email or FAX – Address details below.



Rainforest replanting near Hunters Ck, Julatten

ASSESSMENT AND AWARD OF GRANTS:

Grant applications will be assessed by a panel of experts. Grant applicants will be advised of the outcome of their application by **1 November 2009**. The successful applicants will receive a first payment of 80% of their grant on signing a contract with the final 20% on completion of project and grant acquittal.

COMPLETION OF PROJECTS:

All project funds must be expended by **30 June 2010** with final advice of project completion required by Friday 9 July 2010

FURTHER INFORMATION:

For further information on the project application process, please visit Mitchell River Watershed Management Group website <http://www.mitchell-river.com.au> and/or contact:

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