



WINTER 2008

E-brief

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NRM scoops spatial science awards

The Regional Groups Collective (RGC) won the People and Community category award, as well as the prestigious JM (Mac) Serisier Award for Overall Excellence at the recent Queensland Spatial Science Institute Awards.

Fitzroy Basin Association Inc. (FBA) GIS Coordinator Kristian Smith played a major role in the win, helping pull together the award submission.

RGC represents the state-wide interests of the fourteen Regional Natural Resource Management Bodies in Queensland including FBA.

The win recognises the excellence shown by RGC's Lee Blacklock and his state wide Spatial Imagery Capture Project team in the delivery of GIS support and training for groups and individuals across the state.

FBA has benefitted significantly from GIS training provided by RGC, which has improved the capacity to deliver a range of GIS products and services, leading to better natural resource management outcomes on-ground.

Queensland has the largest single capture of spatial imagery in Australia. This area is 1.72 million km², stretching from the Torres Strait, west of Townsville to the Qld/NSW border and across the NT border.



Above: RGC's Lee Blackblock, Michael Digby, and Kristian Smith accept the Queensland Spatial Science Institute Award.

Below: FBA's Kristian Smith and wife Gemma enjoy the awards evening.



GIS AT AgGROW

FBA joined forces with the Burdekin Dry Tropics Natural Resource Management Group (BDTNRM) to host a display at AgGrow in Emerald during July. New GIS Cartographic Officer with FBA, Cyndi Thomson (far left) is pictured with BDTNRM's Jenny Russell and Amanda Laurie. Cyndi joined FBA in March 2008 and provides mapping support to sub-regional groups and landholders. For more information on mapping products email cyndi.thomson@fba.org.au.

Reflections on the flood AND THE FUTURE

Around 150 people attended a forum in Rockhampton from August 5 to 7 to share their knowledge and stories about the impact of flooding across the Fitzroy Basin in early 2008.

The Fitzroy Flood Forum was organised by the Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA), partnered by the Department of Natural Resources and with the support of sponsors, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority and the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre.

The forum kicked off with a launch event on August 5 at the Walter Reid Cultural Centre, which also included the judging of the Flood Foto Competition. This was followed by two days of informative and interesting presentations from a wide range of speakers. A dinner on 6 August at Kershaw House was well attended and gave forum participants the chance to relax and socialise.

FBA Water quality Coordinator Nathan Johnston said the forum was successful in improving understanding of the flood, which would assist planning to manage the impact of future flood events.

Presentations from the forum will be made available on the M3Alliance website at <http://m3a.boab.info/>.



Top: Emerald landholders Larry and Nancy Daniels relaxing at the forum dinner.

Middle: Shane Flint (Ensham Resources), FBA CEO Suzie Christensen and Colin Moffat (Ensham Resources) at the dinner.

Above: Forum organisers from FBA were Rachel Bryan, Nathan Johnston, Janeen Whiting and Jody McDonald.

Above left: At the launch event were Dr Britta Schaffelke (AIMS), Michelle Devlin (JCU) and Zoe Bainbridge (JCU).

Left: Enjoying the dinner were Di Walker (GBRMPA), Cameron Wearing (FRCC), Sally Harman (GBRMPA) and Margie Atkinson (GBRMPA).

Reflections on the Fitzroy Flood Forum



Above: Rebekkah Hearn (CQ Environmental), Patrice Brown (CQ Environmental), and Di Walker (GBRMPA)

Above left: Shaun Pobar (DPI&F), Mick Sullivan (DPI&F), Neil Hoy (DME), and John Grimes (DPI&F) at the forum.

Below left: Mike Keane and Chris Carroll (both NRW) chat to David Midmore (CQU) at the dinner.

Below: Allison Jones (CQU) talking to Sara Hanggi (CCC).



\$17.2m for NRM in Bligh budget

The Bligh Government's first State Budget has provided \$17.2 million in 2008-09 to continue regional natural resource management programs across Queensland after federal funding arrangements changed in March.

Acting Natural Resources and Water Minister Warren Pitt said regional natural resource management (NRM) groups had gained certainty for the future of their programs under the new funding.

"The Federal Caring for our Country program replaced the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality and the Natural Heritage Trust programs, which ceased on June 30, 2008," Mr Pitt said.

"Some regional groups were concerned for their future after these new arrangements were announced.

"However, the Queensland Government will commit \$17.2 million to an interim arrangement for continuing a regional NRM program in 2008-09.

"The interim arrangements will provide certainty for staff and for ongoing management of contracts and projects in the regions."

CATCHMENT PROGRAMS TEAM

The Department of Natural Resources and Water's (NRW) Community Partnerships business unit has changed its name to Catchment Programs. The reason for the name change, is the unit will now also administer the policy aspects of operational water quality for NRW.

Catchment Programs will continue to provide regional NRM coordination and to assist regional NRM bodies with the Commonwealth's Caring for our Country and Queensland's complementary program.

Catchment Programs has a role in coordinating NRW's actions for the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan and its whole-of-catchment approach to regional NRM.

Bob Speirs is the General Manager of Catchment Programs and his team leaders are:

- Regional NRM Policy and Programs: Fred Tromp 3224 7520
- Contract Management and Grants: Wallace Yuen 3225 1608
- Office of the General Manager: Rob White 3224 7447

Director named 'Elder of the Year'

FBA Board Member Bob Muir was named NAIDOC 'Male Elder of the Year' for 2008. This national honour recognises Bob's strong standing in the local community.

The following profile has been sourced from www.naidoc.org.au:

Leader, speaker, activist, mentor, and innovator – all are titles that can describe Bob Muir, whose deeds in the Central Queensland region over the past two decades have become the stuff of legend.

Born in 1958, Bob Muir is a descendant of the Woppaburra people of the Dharumbal nation. Since the age of 24, Bob has devoted his life to three major goals:

- the retention of Woppaburra history
- the reclaiming of Crown land for the Woppaburra people and;
- the maintenance of cultural heritage sites.

Bob has been a powerhouse in the Central Queensland community, working with government agencies and higher education institutions to promote awareness of Indigenous cultural heritage and environmental protection issues.

He has mentored, influenced and educated students and young adults through programs instigated by Education Queensland and Greening Australia.

Through his diverse and tireless work, and a readiness to extend the hand of friendship, Bob has won respect and admiration for himself and built bridges between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

As an admirer observed, Bob has inspired others to believe that dreams can come true and, in pursuit of his dreams, he has touched many lives and achieved many things for his people and the Reconciliation process within Queensland and the nation.



FBA Board Member Bob Muir

E-inbrief

- Check out the FBA events calendar [online here](#) for all the latest happenings around CQ.
- Landcare Conference Registrations Now Open. The 2008 Queensland Landcare Conference in Monto from 21-24 September is an event not to be missed. You can find out more and download a registration package [here](#).
- The 11th International Riversymposium will be held in Brisbane from 1-4 September 2008. Register before June 30 for the earlybird discount. Find out more [here](#).
- The Queensland Coastal Conference 2009 is now calling for papers - submit your paper by Wednesday 3 September via the website at www.iceaustralia.com/qldcoast09.
- Agforce State Conference will be held in Proserpine from September 16 to 18. Find our more [here](#).
- With the theme 'A climate change on the Rangelands', the Australian Rangeland Society 15th Biennial Conference will be held from September 28 to October 2 in Charters Towers. Find out more [here](#).
- A report on the impact of the introduction of the Carbon Emission Reduction Scheme on State Governments has been released by The Australia Institute. Find it [here](#).
- Landcare Queensland is calling for nominations for the Landcare Leadership Bursary, SKM Landcare Innovation Award and the Landcare PlaceStories M&E Award. These awards are designed to help recognise Landcare champions. Application details can be found [here](#). Nominations close on Thursday 17th September 2008.

GRASS ROOTS EXAMINED AT LANDCARE GATHERING

More than 160 people gathered in Baralaba on June 26 to hear a great line-up of speakers at the Baralaba Landcare Forum.

The one-day event included presentations on topics such as soil carbon, carbon trading, off-farm investing, diversification, grass-fed certification, and the latest beef industry research.

Dr Christine Jones, who has received funding from FBA to conduct research into soil carbon capture in the CQ region, gave an interesting talk on the potential for soil to store carbon and the conditions under which carbon is deposited.

Jock & Mina Douglas provided much food for thought with their presentation about how they switched from a traditional enterprise to harvesting native desert limes on their property.

They now have a thriving gourmet food business involving all family members and selling within Australia and overseas. See their products at www.australiandesertlimes.com.au.

Below left: The crowd at the Baralaba Landcare Conference.

Below: Mina and Jock Douglas with some of their desert lime products.



Play the game, and save your catchment

You can now look after your very own 'virtual catchment' online!

Catchment Detox is a national initiative of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, in partnership with eWater, the CSIRO, the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research (DIISR), and National Science Week.

Catchment Detox features an online game where you are responsible for sustainably managing a virtual river catchment.

Players of the game will manage their own virtual catchment by making choices about natural resource management activities to improve the catchment's health while remaining financially sustainable.

Participants will learn about the complexities of catchment management, which although difficult, is so critical to our survival.

Catchment Detox is available at: <http://www.catchmentdetox.net.au>.

DIGITAL CASE STUDIES ONLINE

<http://landcare.placestories.com/>

You can now see and hear digital stories about achievements being made on the ground through Regional NRM Bodies and their many partners across Queensland in a flash.

The new Queensland Regional NRM section of the PlaceStories website features projects, people and places in state-wide and regional contexts. The first state-level digital story, Protecting and Expanding Queensland's Nature Reserves, is now live for public viewing.

PlaceStories is hosted by Landcare Queensland in partnership with Feral Arts who are working with Landcare groups and Regional NRM Bodies from across the state in developing a PlaceStories digital storytelling system customised to the specific needs of the NRM network.

Keep an eye on this space to see the monthly collaborative state stories showing how regional bodies and partners are addressing the six national priorities under Caring for our Country.

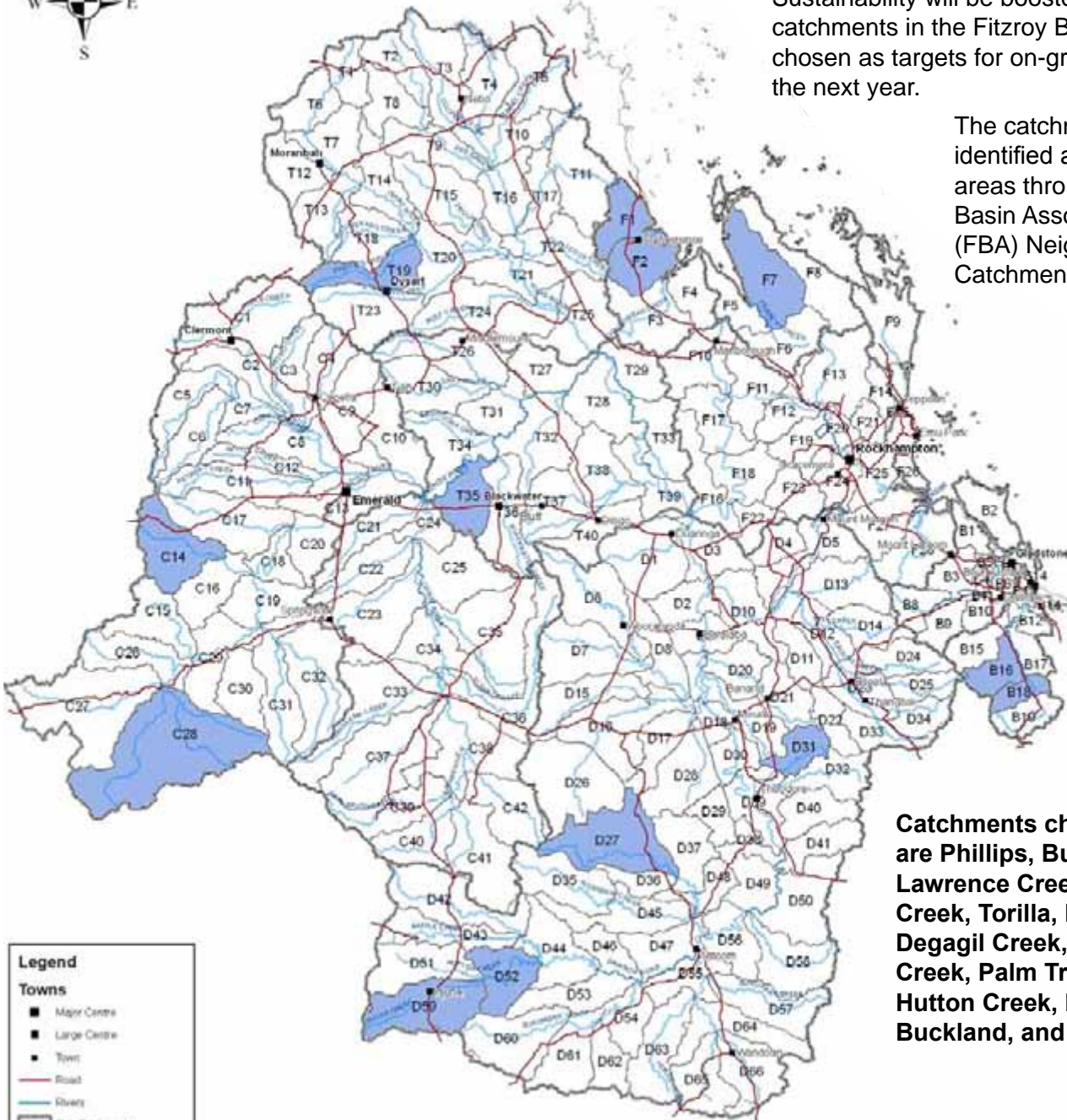
Visit PlaceStories to see the first digital story of regional NRM partnerships across the state: Protecting and Expanding Queensland's Nature Reserves.

PRIORITY AREAS CHOSEN FOR ON-GROUND WORK



Sustainability will be boosted across 13 catchments in the Fitzroy Basin region chosen as targets for on-ground work over the next year.

The catchments were identified as high priority areas through the Fitzroy Basin Association Inc. (FBA) Neighbourhood Catchments approach.



Catchments chosen (in blue) are Phillips, Burngrove, St Lawrence Creek, Waverley Creek, Torilla, Ridler Creek, Degagil Creek, Tarramba Creek, Palm Tree Creek, Hutton Creek, Injune Creek, Buckland, and Billaboo.

Legend

Towns

- Major Centre
- Large Centre
- Town
- Road
- River
- Sub-Catchments
- Neighbourhood Catchments
- JULY 2008 - JUNE 2009

FBA Chief Executive Officer Suzie Christensen said Neighbourhood Catchments (NC) encouraged neighbouring landholders and communities to work together to address environmental issues to improve productivity and sustainability.

“The Fitzroy Basin covers around 156,000km², which is more than twice the size of Tasmania, so we can’t work everywhere at once,” Ms Christensen said.

“By focussing our attention in priority neighbourhood catchments, our money is spent as strategically as possible and we have the chance to make a real impact,” Ms Christensen said.

“FBA held a series of community workshops to help determine the neighbourhood catchments, based on

a combination of scientific and local knowledge.

“We considered such things as erosion, biodiversity, weeds, and the location of coastal assets. In this way we are able to link current land management with its impact on the reef.”

Ms Christensen said on-ground works and engagement activities would be carried out in collaboration between FBA and five sub-regional catchment groups.

She said while efforts would be focussed on the new catchments, activities would build on work done in prior Neighbourhood Catchments and there would be ongoing follow-up with those communities.

Almost 200 Neighbourhood Catchments have been identified by FBA in central Queensland.