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Looking for landholders with native grasslands

Landholders on the Central Highlands can now apply for incentive funding to help protect and restore threatened native grasslands.

Elyse Riethmuller from Fitzroy Basin Association Inc (FBA) said the group wanted to support landholders who managed areas of the endangered grassland community.

“Native grasslands are an important part of our landscape in central Queensland – they are often highly sought after by stock, and they also provide habitat to more than 340 species of plants and animals,” she said.

Ms Riethmuller said FBA was funded under the Australian Government’s Caring for our Country to support a range of on-ground actions that would regenerate, or reduce threats to, native grasslands.

“We can help landholders install infrastructure, access technical advice and training, and undertake rehabilitation such as seeding,” she said.

“We may also provide financial incentives to de-stock grasslands or enter a long-term conservation agreement.”

Less than half the original native grasslands in the Central Highlands and northern Fitzroy Basin remain, and they have been listed as endangered under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act.

Ms Riethmuller said native grasslands often occurred on highly fertile soils and as such much of the community had been lost or heavily modified through cultivation.

“Other threats include poor land management such as overgrazing, weeds, pest animals, mining activities and the construction of roads and other infrastructure,” she said.

She said the implementation of recovery actions was being guided by a workshop FBA held in March to gather knowledge about native grasslands and determine the best way to support land managers to protect the community into the future.

“The workshop brought together government agencies, local council, researchers, conservation and natural resource management groups, mining bodies and landholders – and gave us a solid foundation of information on how to best manage native grasslands.

“We are now looking to work with people that are involved in the day-to-day management of native grasslands to help make some practical on-ground changes.”

For more information on how to get involved people should contact FBA Biodiversity Officer Rhys Kellow on 4982 3344 or email rhys.kellow@fba.org.au.

For further information or interviews contact: Jody McDonald, Media and Communications Co-ordinator, 4999 2816, 0429 992 808, jody.mcdonald@fba.org.au.

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