Far North Queensland pests and weeds – local action on big issues

Project summary

Proponent: Terrain Natural Resource Management Ltd
Value: $1,285,000
Project duration: 1 October 2013 – 30 June 2016

Project description

This multi-pronged project will deliver urgent region-wide, targeted treatment of priority weeds across the reef catchments of Far North Queensland. This project is implemented through established local-level partnerships, leveraging significant co-contributions, and capitalising on the passion of the community tackling pest and weed problems.

The project has three integrated components.

1. Six hundred hectares of local action on local weeds and pests

Using $10,000 to $15,000 of seed funding in each catchment of the Wet Tropics region as leverage, this component of the project will bring together community, local government and industry partners to identify and collectively invest in tackling local weed and pest priorities, including pigs. The pests and weeds impact on community and economic values, natural resource management, and water quality, will be tackled according to the following criteria:

- the level of threat that the weed and/or pest poses to key community assets
- the extent to which the collective investment can deliver a sustainable outcome
- alignment with relevant regional council and Regional Pest Management Plans
- value for money and co-contributions
- capacity building and community awareness raising opportunities.

2. Slamming Siam in the Upper Herbert – scouring 5,000 km²

Siam weed is a Queensland Class 1 weed and a Weed of National Significance that poses an enormous threat to the condition of important biodiversity assets in Northern Australia (in particular the Burdekin, Lower Herbert and Gulf). The 5,000 km² Upper Herbert is a priority target area where urgent treatment can achieve local eradication. To effectively limit the threat of this weed requires a cross-tenure approach. Incentives to target landholders in the identification and treatment of this insidious weed will be coupled with strategic partnerships delivering significant co-investment and coordinated planning and action and includes partnerships with North Queensland Dry Tropics, Tablelands Regional Council, Powerlink,
CSIRO, Biosecurity Queensland, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils and Bush Heritage Australia.

3. Emerging weeds across 4,425 hectares

The sleeper weeds *Brillantaisia lamium, Stevia ovate* and *Hiptage benghalensis* are currently restricted to isolated locations in the Wet Tropics region. However, CSIRO habitat suitability and spread potential modelling shows that these weeds have the potential to be a major weed problem for large areas of Australia, posing a major and widespread threat to both agricultural production and environmental assets. It is at this early stage of infestation that local eradication is possible, but to be successful, early intervention and eradication efforts must cross private and public land. This project will be a major step towards local eradication of all of these weeds, mobilising local councils, industry, community groups and landholders to maximise the narrow window of opportunity that currently exists to eliminate these threats. This will be achieved through partnership formation, landholder engagement and/or incentives, funding targeted on-ground control and communications.

Within all three components of this project, communication and awareness-raising of early detection, control and spread prevention will be a priority, as well as enhancing the cross-tenure partnerships that are critical to sustaining action around the control of weeds and pests.

**Project outcomes**

**Long-term outcomes (5-10 years)**

- Sound and productive local partnerships effectively manage the threat of local weeds on the productive and natural landscape.
- The threat that Siam weed poses to the Upper Herbert River, Lower Herbert River, Burdekin River and Gulf catchments is minimised through strategic control and community engagement and awareness-raising.
- The full extent of the known infestation of key emerging weeds (stevia, brillantaisia and hiptage) is eradicated or requires monitoring.

**Intermediate outcomes (3-5 years)**

- Local action: Targeted action (including surveys, treatment and monitoring) of local pests and weeds undertaken across 600 hectares in the Wet Tropics.
- Slamming Siam: Strategic control of Siam weed in priority locations across the 5,000 km² of the Upper Herbert.
- Emerging weeds: Emerging priority weeds (stevia, brillantaisia and hiptage) controlled across 4,425 hectares of the Wet Tropics, to prevent further spread through the region and beyond.

**Further information**

For further information on the ‘Far North Queensland pests and weeds – local action on big issues’ project, please contact Terrain NRM Ltd.