

Reef Water Quality Improvement Grant: Stage 1

Over \$19 million will be provided to eleven projects under the *Water Quality Improvement Grant: Stage 1*. These projects will see gullies restored, on-ground action with cane farmers and graziers to reduce run-off of the highest priority pollutants (sediments, nutrients and pesticides) in the highest priority Reef catchments and training opportunities for early career agricultural experts (extension officers) boosted.

The Reef Trust Partnership includes \$201 million to improve water quality on the Great Barrier Reef over six years. This first round of investment will focus on water quality projects that maintain or develop capacity and seek to build on existing programs with proven beneficial outcomes. Future funding rounds will provide opportunities to explore innovative approaches.

The projects are being delivered in partnership with landholders and industry who plan to contribute a projected \$13m of in-kind co-contributions.

The eleven projects are located throughout regional Queensland:



An Evidence Based Approach to Improving Water Quality in Barratta Creek Catchment (Stage 2)

Project Delivery Partner: BRIA Irrigators Ltd

Reef Trust Partnership funding: \$950,520

Region: Barratta Creek System (Burdekin River Irrigation Area)

Farmer (cane) led project which raises awareness and drives practice change through improved fertiliser application, modifying pesticide type and quantity and improving irrigation efficiency.

Cane Changer 2.0

Project Delivery Partner: Queensland Cane Growers Organisation Ltd

Reef Trust Partnership funding: \$1,413,500

Region: Wet Tropics, Mackay, Burdekin and Southern Reef catchment regions

This behaviour change program uses co-design principals to elicit improved practises through accreditation in the SmartCane Best Management Program and other forms of 'commitment' towards improved practices. This phase of the project will build on the existing program in the Wet Tropics and initiate new programs in Mackay, Burdekin and Southern Regions.

Cane to Creek 2.0

Project Delivery Partner: Sugar Research Australia

Reef Trust Partnership funding: \$2,226,806

Region: Mossman, Mulgrave-Russell, Johnstone, Murray, Herbert and Haughton catchments

Works on farm with small cane grower groups to address nitrogen and pesticides. The program breaks down the barriers between scientists and growers, maximises peer-to-peer learning opportunities and improves understanding of the drivers of water quality impacts.

Early Career Extension Officers

Project Delivery Partners: Queensland Farmers Federation

Reef Trust Partnership funding: \$1,146,720

Region: Very high, high and moderate priority Reef catchments as outlined in the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan (from Burdekin to the Burnett Mary)

This project will increase the delivery capacity related to agronomic extension by training early career extension officers (agricultural experts) in practices relevant to addressing sediment, nitrogen and pesticide runoff. The project will involve a 12-month placement of up to eight early career extension officers within various organisations in reef catchments, to increase capacity to support land management practice change.

Gully erosion control in the Mary River Catchment

Project Delivery Partner: Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee

Reef Trust Partnership funding: \$646,500

Region: Mary River catchment

Addresses sediment discharge to the Great Barrier Reef lagoon through gully restoration on grazing land. The project will also work with graziers to increase awareness and actively manage lands that are susceptible to erosion through the adoption of best land management practices.

Innovative Gully Project - Phase 3

Project Delivery Partner: Greening Australia

Reef Trust Partnership funding: \$2,092,040

Region: Lower Burdekin

This project aims to reduce the amount of sediment discharging to the Great Barrier Reef lagoon by approximately 3,200 tons per annum through remediation of alluvial gullies by using established techniques. In addition, the project will aim to pilot the Reef Credit system and investigate how Reef Credits could be used to fund gully remediation works and ongoing maintenance requirements.

Project Bluewater

Project Delivery Partner: Farmacist

Reef Trust Partnership funding: \$1,243,500

Region: Haughton, Pioneer and O'Connell Rivers and Plane Creek catchment areas

This project reduces the runoff of pesticides into the Great Barrier Reef lagoon through the adoption of improved sugar cane farming practices. The project will directly engage over 70 growers, managing over 12,000 ha of land, in the catchments of Haughton, Pioneer, O'Connell Rivers, and Plane Creek identified as high priority in the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan.

Project Catalyst - extension

Project Delivery Partner: Catchment Solutions

Reef Trust Partnership funding: \$2,407,751

Region: Wet Tropics, Burdekin and Mackay/Whitsunday regions

Supports a network of cane farmers in the Reef catchments to improve farming practices to reduce nutrient run off to the Reef. This is achieved by focusing on soil testing, nutrient management plans and implementation of controlled traffic management systems (reducing soil compaction by confining heavy machinery to permanent traffic lanes). This phase of the project will engage new farmers and continue to work with previously engaged cane farmers in Mackay Whitsunday, Burdekin and Wet Tropics.

Project Pioneer - extension

Project Delivery Partner: Resource Consulting Services

Reef Trust Partnership funding: \$2,899,500

Region: Very high, high and moderate priority Reef catchments as outlined in the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan (from Wet Tropics to the Burnett Mary)

Project Pioneer promotes the adoption of regenerative grazing operations to increase ground cover in grazing lands and reduce sediment in runoff to the Great Barrier Reef. In addition to the improved water quality entering the waters of the Great Barrier Reef, other environmental outcomes include reduction in carbon loss from soils, increased biodiversity on-farm, particularly soil and aquatic life, and increased landscape resilience to the effects of climate change.

Reef Alliance Project, Phase 2

Project Delivery Partner: Queensland Farmers Federation

Reef Trust Partnership funding: \$3.5 million

Region: Very high, high and moderate priority Reef catchments as outlined in the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan (Wet Tropics, Burdekin, Mackay/Whitsundays, Fitzroy and Burnett Mary)

Supports cane farmers and graziers by using one-to-one agricultural experts (extension officers) to move 462 land holders, covering 209,750 ha, towards best practice to reduce sediment, nitrogen and pesticides.

Reefwise Grazing of Burdekin Rangelands

Project Delivery Partner: NQ Dry Tropics

Reef Trust Partnership funding: \$659,984

Region: Burdekin

This project will produce dedicated and specific education, training, capacity building and incentives that will take 12 grazing landholders on a progressive journey towards techniques that proactively manage stock grazing pressure and minimise potential for declining land condition leading to reduced sediment runoff. The project will also result in a further 50 landholders using increased knowledge and skills to apply management changes to improve the quality of water discharged from their property.