

\$3.85m to restore habitat for threatened species in the Discovery Coast

Burnett Mary Regional Group secures funding and forms consortium

The Australian Government has announced \$3.85m of funding awarded to the Burnett Mary Regional Group to restore habitat for threatened species in the Discovery Coast over the next three years.

As part of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area, the Discovery Coast supports a range of threatened habitats and species including marine turtle nesting sites, dugong and a variety of fish and migratory shorebird species.

Burnett Mary Regional Group is leading delivery of the project through the newly formed Discovery Coast Consortium, which includes key members from Central Queensland University's Coastal Marine Ecosystems Research Centre (CMERC), LESS industries, Gidarjil Development Corporation and Alluvium Consulting.

The consortium will deliver on objectives for the Integrated Habitat Restoration for the Discovery Coast project. These objectives will address issues facing threatened species by removing causeways in the Rodd's Harbour Fish Habitat Area, rehabilitating shoreline on the Kolan River and installing marine turtle nest cages to protect nesting sites at Wreck Rock.

CMERC, directed by Dr Emma Jackson from Central Queensland University are a key member within the consortium. CMERC is the newly established headquarters for practical and sustainable solutions for coastal and marine environments. This will support the project by bringing cutting edge scientific insight and knowledge within this space.

The project will also be supported by LESS Industries, who will supply their latest sensory technologies for monitoring and evaluation through each of the project sites.

Burnett Mary Regional Group's well established partnership with Gidarjil Development Corporation will ensure Traditional Owner knowledge and practices will be integrated within delivery of the project, in particular Gidarjil's new water quality monitoring laboratory led by all-female indigenous sea rangers.

BMRG CEO Sheila Charlesworth says:

"BMRG is proud to have formalised the Discovery Coast Consortium which will focus on the restoration of habitat for threatened species along the

Discovery Coast. Collaboration is the key to successful resource management; through this newly formed consortium we will achieve great things with the range of expertise and knowledge of all the members within."

CMERC Dr. Emma Jackson says:

"The consortium arrangement fits well with CMERC's holistic approach to working in coastal and marine ecosystems, recognising the integral part communities and industries play in coastline environments."

"While CMERC research focuses on the coastal fringe and the impact of catchment management on the marine environment, BMRG has a long history of working with land managers in the catchment and promoting land management strategies known to improve water quality."

"Sustainably managing our coastal ecosystems requires collaboration and scaling up. This partnership provides both and will make a real difference for the health of our coastal ecosystems and the benefits they bring to our coastal communities"

The project will be funded under the Reef Trust and delivered through the Australian Government's National Landcare Program Regional Land Partnerships Program.

Top left to Right (Nick Maclean – BMRG, Nadia Campbell - Goondicum Pastoral, Kerry Blackman – Gidarjil)

Bottom left to Right (Prof Emma Jackson – CQU, Sheila Charlesworth – BMRG, Tony Ricciardi – BMRG)

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