

Springvale Station Erosion Management Plan, Cape York

Background



Springvale Station is a 56,000ha property in Cape York, purchased by the Queensland Government in May 2016 to add to the State's protected area network.

Springvale Station, in Far North Queensland.

The State's vision for the property is 'to manage and conserve Springvale Station's biophysical values and to contribute to improved water quality within the Normanby River catchment — a significant catchment draining to the northern Great Barrier Reef'.

Springvale Station is comprised of a complex mosaic of vegetation types described across 52 regional ecosystems. It provides important habitat for endangered or vulnerable flora and fauna including the Cooktown orchid, ghost bat, northern quoll, red goshawk, spectacled flying-fox, spotted-tailed quoll and two bat species (the Semon's leaf nosed bat and large eared-horseshoe bat).



The Cooktown Orchid (Dendrobium bigibbum).

The property forms part of a significant tract of protected areas including the adjoining Ngalba-bulal National Park (CYPAL) and Kings Plains–Alkoomie Nature Refuge. It is also connected via remnant vegetation to the nearby Kalkajaka National Park (CYPAL), Annan River (Yuku Baja-Muliku) National Park, South Endeavour Nature Refuge and Rinyirru (Lakefield) National Park (CYPAL).

The Normanby River runs through Springvale Station, and the Normanby catchment flows into Princess Charlotte Bay and the Great Barrier Reef. As described in the State's vision for the property, it is the government's aim to reduce the loss of sediment from the property and the transport of sediment to the catchment.

Sediment management on Springvale Station

Wider property planning and operational activities such as road and track management, fire management and pest (plant and animal) management are improving the values on the property and reducing the risk of sediment leaving the property.



Gully erosion.

The destocking of cattle from the property by the end of 2017 directly supported improved sediment management.

There are some large areas with significant early onset and established gully erosion occurring, particularly down the central alluvial river valley.

This is a major source of sediment leaving the property, which scientists estimate as contributing up to 40% of sediment loads from this catchment to the Great Barrier Reef. Further research is ongoing to confirm this.

Gully prevention and management on Springvale Station requires focused attention and additional investment. Through the Queensland Reef Water Quality Program, the government has explored opportunities to work with experts and external investors to trial gully management responses.



Gully erosion.

What is the project about?

The Springvale Station Erosion Management Plan provides recommendations to guide erosion control activities for priority gully areas on Springvale Station. The Plan provides a framework to manage sub-catchments above priority gully areas and recommends how established alluvial gullies could be managed in the future. Examples of management options include earthworks and revegetation to restore eroded gullies and fencing to exclude cattle from gullies.

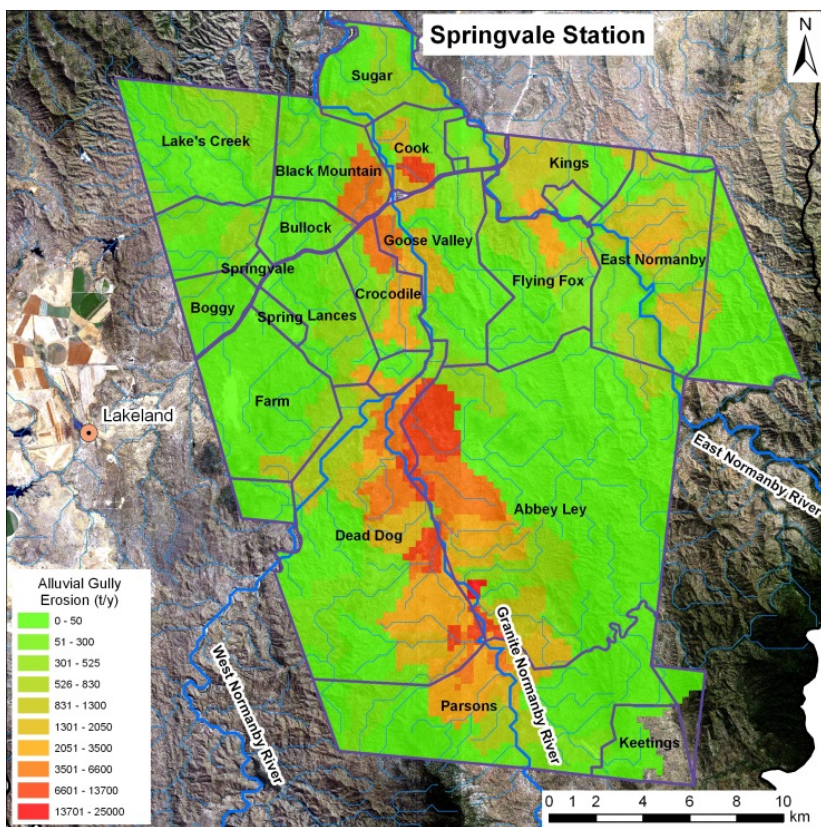
The Plan is one of a suite of operational plans that support station management e.g. fire management.

Who is involved?

The Department of Environment and Science contracted Cape York Natural Resource Management (Cape York NRM) to work with Traditional Owners, Griffith University, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, and erosion, water quality and vegetation scientists to develop the Springvale Erosion Management Plan.



West Normanby River.



For further information

Visit:

www.qld.gov.au/environment/coasts-waterways/plans/catchment-management/springvale-station

Visit:

www.capeyorknrm.com.au

Springvale Station depicting areas of gully erosion (derived from data presented in Brooks et al. (2013))