

BURDEKIN SHIRE RIVERS IMPROVEMENT TRUST
STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2026

VISION

The protection of people and property from damage associated with riverine flooding, as well as stabilisation and protection of the bed and banks of the Burdekin River, Haughton River and associated streams in the Burdekin Local Government area.

PURPOSE

The Burdekin Shire Rivers Improvement Trust is a statutory body constituted under the *River Improvement Trust Act 1940* and Regulation and operates under the powers and responsibilities of that legislation.

ROLES

The roles of the Trust are to:

- Provide flood mitigation as far as possible working within legislation to residents within the Trust's area.
- Undertake Riverine protection works to address erosion, vegetation management and associated issues.
- Raise awareness of riverine management issues and to undertake projects which improve the health of stream banks, waterways and riparian lands and the health of downstream waterways.
- Restore and stabilise the bed and banks of rivers and associated streams in the Burdekin Local Government area.

FUNCTIONS

The functions of the Trust are to:

- Operate within its statutory limits; referencing relevant acts, institutional policies and other sub regional and local waterway management plans in its decision making.
- Maintain strong networks with key state, regional and local organisations to ensure that the Trust's programs and activities are well targeted, consistent and coordinated to achieve the best outcomes.
- Operate very closely with Burdekin Shire Council.
- Commit to improving the health of waterways and riparian lands within the Burdekin Shire region by:
 - The systematic eradication of destructive invasive vegetation.
 - Promoting and, where possible, implementing re-vegetation, bank stabilisation and debris removal projects.

FINANCIAL CAPACITY

The Trust operates on funding predominantly provided by the Burdekin Shire Council via the annual Precept and from subsidies for identified works through the Department of Natural Resources & Mines.

The Trust applies for State and Federal grant funds when available to assist with various activities including flood mitigation works, training and planning.

KEY OBJECTIVES

1. INTERACTION THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND LINKAGE WITH STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITY

Strategy: The Trust will actively engage with stakeholders and the community in the development and implementation of works programs and to ensure any concerns are addressed and priority projects delivered.

This will be implemented by:

- Partnering with key agencies in the delivery of stream management works
- Interacting with other local bodies with similar interests
- Improving community understanding of problems facing the regions rivers and streams and accepting that not all demands can be met
- Encouraging and influencing others to take up their responsibilities

2. MAINTAIN PHYSICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY OF WATER COURSES

Strategy: The Trust will continue to progress and implement the priorities of the Trust's vision by developing and maintaining bank protection, bank stabilisation and stream bed improvements to reduce erosion, changes to in-stream alignment during flood events and impacts of water quality on Great Barrier Reef.

This will be implemented by:

- Including priority works in Annual Works Programs.
- Promoting the value of well-structured riparian zone vegetation and encouraging landholders to protect and maintain these areas.
- Continuing to seek additional government funding support and maximising funding opportunities from external sources.
- Where approved undertaking identified works for protection of assets.

3. PHYSICAL INTEGRITY OF RIVERS

Strategy: To limit the impacts of stream siltation and to ensure the control and prevention of stream bank erosion that threatens public and private land and infrastructure or stream aesthetic and habitat values.

This will be implemented by:

- Identifying key sediment source
- Undertaking works to limit sediment generating from these sources
- Undertaking erosion control works on a needs basis
- Promoting the adoption of stream and riparian management practices that will minimise the exposure to and potential for stream bank erosion
- Alleviating flow constrictions that are contributing to erosion, causing flood break-outs or otherwise are threatening stream stability

4. RIPARIAN ZONE MANAGEMENT

Strategy: The Trust will encourage landholders to adopt sound riparian zone management practices in order to reduce accelerated stream bed and bed delete degradation and erosion and improve the ecological functioning of the stream.

This will be implemented by:

- Undertaking and maintaining riparian tree plantings where applicable;
- Encouraging land owners to allow for riparian buffering where applicable;
- Implementing erosion control works
- Removing pest vegetation
- Improving riparian zones with native vegetation where applicable

5. FLOODING

Strategy: The Trust will maintain previous works to minimise flooding and areas at risk of bank breaches.

This will be implemented by:

- Inspecting and removing debris and inappropriate dense vegetation where identified to enable clear flows.