



## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2025**

### **VISION STATEMENT**

Working together with partners and the community to deliver measurable improvements through adaptive management in the protection, restoration and rehabilitation of rivers, streams and catchments in the trusts area.

### **FUNCTIONS & ROLE**

The Cassowary Coast River Improvement Trust is a statutory body constituted in 2013 following the merge of the former Cardwell Shire and Johnstone Shire River Improvement Trusts and operates in accordance with powers under the *River Improvement Trust Act 1940* and Regulation.

Trust responsibilities include:

- Undertaking works to repair flood damage to the bed and banks of rivers and streams in urban and rural areas;
- Planning, implementing and maintaining flood mitigation works of community benefit;
- Regulating activities with the potential to result in erosion to the banks of rivers or to worsen flooding;
- Participation with the community and other natural resource management groups to achieve healthy and stable catchments and river systems, with a strong focus on improvements to water quality entering the inner lagoon of the Great Barrier Reef;
- Assist with community recovery following major natural disaster events such as flooding and cyclones.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPMENT**

The Trust has an ongoing role to identify and analyse its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and the development of the Strategic Plan reflects the desired goals, objectives and strategies of the organisation to achieve its strategic vision.

**KEY CHALLENGES:**

ISSUE	IMPACT	RESPONSE
Flooding and prolonged periods of wet weather	Delays with implementation of on-ground works and projects approved under AWP's	Reschedule projects to drier period of year
Financial constraints	Inability to carry out an adequate level of stream bank restoration work	Program and prioritise urgent projects and encourage landowners to contribute.  Lobby State and Federal Governments to provide and maintain an adequate level of grant funding towards Annual Works Programs.
Declared Natural Disaster Events - Asset Damage Repairs Changes to Funding (DRFA (NDRAA previously)) Guidelines	Funding restricted to restoration of "Essential Public Assets" excludes Rural Industries and urban communities.  Decline in level of maintenance / restoration of a significant number of trust assets.	Government Representations

**INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS****Strategy**

To operate under the *River Improvement Act 1940*, which provides for the management of river catchments for their protection and improvement and comply with all other legislative obligations.

**FINANCIAL CAPACITY**

The Trust receives funding from the following sources:

- Annual Precept - Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- State and Federal Grant Subsidy programs
- Landowner contributions towards individual projects
- Partnerships – Other NRM bodies
- NDRRA funding – where available for essential public asset repairs.

**RELATIONSHIPS**

The Trust relies on a strong operational relationship with local government, government agencies, community and natural resource management organisations in the delivery of its programs and objectives.

## **KEY OBJECTIVES**

Interaction through

### **1. INTERACTION THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND LINKAGES 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.

Actions:

- Partner key agencies in the delivery of stream management works
- Interact/support other local bodies and agencies with similar interests
- Improve community understanding of problems facing the regions rivers and streams and accept not all demands can be met
- Encourage and influence others to take up their responsibilities.

### **2. MAINTAIN PHYSICAL & ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY OF WATER COURSES**

#### **Strategy**

1. Continue to progress and implement the priorities of the Trust's strategies and action plans to accomplish the objectives of those plans. Studies have been undertaken for sections of the Johnstone, Tully & Murray Rivers, Jarra Creek and Meunga Creek.
2. Develop and maintain bank protection, bank stabilisation and stream bed improvements and levees where appropriate to reduce erosion, changes to in-stream alignment during flood events and impacts of water quality on Great Barrier Reef.
3. Encourage retention and protection of riparian vegetation areas and corridors and wetland areas.
4. Adopt an integrated, sustainable and innovative approach across the whole of catchment with the goal of improvement in water quality outflows to the Great Barrier Reef".

Actions:

- Include priority works in Annual Works Programs
- Assist landowners with self funded and subsidised works
- Promote the value of wetland areas and well structured riparian zone vegetation and encourage landowners to protect and maintain these areas
- Continue to seek additional government funding support and maximise funding opportunities from external sources
- Work with stakeholders to plan, devise and implement equitable and sustainable river management practices.

## **MONITORING PROGRESS**

The Trust will develop key performance indicators where possible to measure effectiveness and efficiency of strategies in its plan. These indicators will be developed internally, in respect of outcomes achieved in meeting Trust objectives.