

WTL-HC 4: Restoration of the Southern Herbert Coastal Waterway Aggregation (Easter Creek south to Byabra Creek)

Restoring the Southern Herbert Coastal Waterway Aggregation will reduce sediment and improve water quality flowing into the Halifax Bay Wetlands National Park and out to the GBR, as well provide terrestrial and aquatic connectivity from the foothills to the ocean.

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| This strategy delivers on these Regional Themes | Biodiversity | Biosecurity | Coastal Systems | Sustainable Industries | Water |
| | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| This strategy delivers on these Strategic Outcomes | Supportive, policies, plans and regulations | Collaborative, adaptive planning and action | Traditional Owner Benefits | Sustained and diverse resourcing | Community stewardship, values and action |
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| Outcome | <p>Restoring the Southern Herbert Coastal Waterway Aggregation will achieve multiple outcomes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved water quality in freshwater river systems, in-shore lagoons and reef systems, through reduced sediment, pesticide and herbicide loads. ▪ Improved adaptability and resilience of our region’s waterways to impacts of climate change. ▪ Increased habitat and connectivity, benefiting a range of terrestrial and aquatic species, including the Southern Cassowary and the Mahogany Glider. ▪ Enhanced social and community benefits through involvement in on-ground activities, resulting in strong community stewardship and ownership of projects. ▪ Reduced bank erosion and sediment loads in waterways and coastal systems. ▪ Positive biosecurity outcomes, through long-term management of weeds and removal of pest habitat. ▪ Increased community awareness, particularly for restoration projects in high profile locations. ▪ Increased recreational and tourism opportunities around waterways. ▪ Providing potential for Traditional Owner involvement and benefits. | | | | |
| Justification | <p>Community support and involvement in waterway restoration projects is high. We can capitalise on this support by building on existing projects and transferring successful methodology to additional areas. A systematic approach to waterway restoration, based on agreed criteria and priorities, will provide extensive benefits to the health of our waterways. The aggregation of Southern Herbert waterways are culturally and environmentally significant and may provide opportunities for Traditional Owner involvement.</p> | | | | |
| Key steps | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) In collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, including landholders, research organisations, industry, Traditional Owners and government, develop an action plan based on priority issues for each of the waterways, using the Systems Repair Prioritisation and Community Engagement Toolkit developed by Terrain. 2) Identify opportunities for funding and implementation, including cash and other contributions and develop a delivery mechanism relevant to the area and issues, which maximises landholder and community involvement and fosters long term stewardship. 3) Implement on ground actions and monitor environmental and capacity building outcomes. | | | | |
| Feasibility considerations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There is already strong community capacity and support to plan and implement successful waterway restoration projects. ✓ There are many supportive landholders willing to contribute to riparian restoration activities on their properties. ✓ A Systems Repair Prioritisation and Community Engagement Toolkit has already been developed, in collaboration with a range of stakeholders (including the landholders), and trialled successfully by Terrain in the Waterview Creek sub-catchment. ✓ On-ground works and landholder engagement have already commenced in two of the waterways (Waterview and Insulators Creeks). ✗ The task can seem overwhelming and riparian restoration projects will require a long term commitment to ensure success – difficult for many community groups, given short term funding arrangements and volunteer succession. ✗ Riparian areas can be difficult to work in and often have poor access, steep, uneven terrain and risk of flooding. ✗ We need to be realistic – there is only so much that individuals can take on. | | | | |