

City of Ipswich

Enviroplan Annual Report

2021-2022

📍 Denmark Hill



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DISCLAIMER

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Ipswich City Council respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners as custodians of the land and waters with which we share. We pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging, as the keepers of their traditions, customs, cultures and stories of proud peoples.

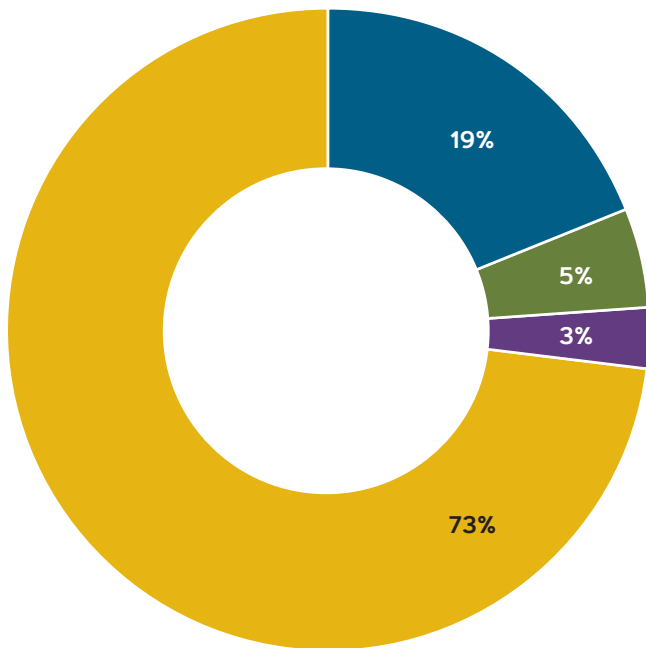
ENVIROPLAN SNAPSHOT

The Enviroplan Annual Report provides information on the deliverables and outcomes of the activities undertaken within the Enviroplan Program during 2021-2022 financial year, including the progress on the Levy.

The year saw the opening of Denmark Hill upgrade at Denmark Hill Conservation Reserve and the opening of the Hardings Paddock Hut, Kup Murri and Horse Trail Head at Hardings Paddock in Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate.

Flooding had major impacts on the Enviroplan estates leading to extended closures and extensive repairs to tracks and trails within the estates.

Where did the funds go in 2021-2022?



- Acquisition of significant nature conservation land and loan servicing – \$861,028
- Community nature conservation partnerships and support – \$252,776
- Nature conservation planning – \$130,992
- Embellishment, capital and operational management within the Natural Area Estate – \$3,414,240

Total Spend: \$4,659,036



Enviro Comp Entrant: A Sword, Where The Living's Easy

INVESTMENT TREND COMPARED TO PREVIOUS YEAR



Acquisition of significant nature conservation land did not occur during 2021-2022. The change from 2020-2021 represents loan servicing only therefore a decrease in trend is represented.







2021-2022 saw an increase in allocation of funds for the nature conservation partnerships and support.



The overall reduction of investment in nature conservation planning activities was closely linked to the limited koala conservation and habitat management activities undertaken due to resources put to the development of the Natural Environment Strategy.



A significant increase of investment in the Natural Area Estate occurred with capital investment or visitor management and nature-based recreation infrastructure.

TREND	THEME	CHANGE FROM 2020-2021
	Acquisition of significant nature conservation land and loan servicing	(-) \$738,972
	Community nature conservation partnerships and support	(+) \$15,776
	Nature conservation planning	(-) \$359,008
	Embellishment, capital and operational management within the Natural Area Estate	(+) \$914,240

HIGHLIGHT 1

Adoption of the Natural Environment Policy and the development of the Natural Environment Strategy

HIGHLIGHT 2

Completion and activation of Denmark Hill upgrade

HIGHLIGHT 3

Completion and activation of Hardings Paddock facilities
– Hut, Kup murri, trailhead

HIGHLIGHT 4

Flood damage requiring significant investment for repairs to tracks and trails

YOUR LEVY IN ACTION

Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate is one of the largest, and most significant conservation areas in Ipswich.

Since 1998 council has progressively acquired parcels of ecologically significant land and consolidated into the Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate of more than 2,200 hectares.

Looking to the future, council has started detailed work on a Masterplan to guide future investment into Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate.

It is home to rare and threatened species, such as the Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby and Flinders Plum, but also one of Ipswich's most popular destinations for nature-based recreation. The Masterplan will aim to balance those needs.

During the 2021-2022 financial year there were many actions at Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate that showcased the Enviroplan levy in action.

The new Hardings Paddock Community Hut was opened to public use, creating new options for nature-based activities. This off-the-grid facility features a wastewater treatment system, solar power, and rainwater tanks. Other features include a kitchen and access for people with disabilities.

Improvements also came with the construction of a Kup murri cooking area, new trailhead and landscaping. These new facilities were activated with a Community Open Day in celebration of Reconciliation Week.

The open day offered a rare opportunity to see and smell Kup murri cooking and experience a range of First Nations cultural practices.

The ongoing management of Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate spanned fire and flood in the 2021-2022 financial year.

Council undertook hazard reduction burns in late 2021 to reduce fuel loads near the Hardings Paddock day use area.

Then from early 2022, storms and flooding led to significant damage, closing the estate for several months. It required significant Enviroplan investment and labour to gradually re-open day use areas and trails to the community.

This important investment was in addition to regular maintenance such as weed control, pest animal control, service trail works and fuel reduction zones.



ACQUISITION OF SIGNIFICANT CONSERVATION LAND AND LOAN SERVICING

- There were no land acquisitions in 2021-2022
- \$861,028 went towards servicing the loan

There were no new land acquisitions within the past 12 months.

Council continues to investigate acquisition opportunities as they arise, assisting properties against a set of criteria including ecological values.

COMMUNITY NATURE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT

- \$12,909 in Land Management Payments
- \$34,283 of grants provided to the community
- \$6,443 was spent on incentive activities

RENEWED REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- \$12,724 went towards the regional coordination of SEQ Land for Wildlife
- \$45,550 went towards the Little Liverpool Range Initiative





NATURE CONSERVATION GRANT HIGHLIGHT **NEW LCPP PROGRAM GATHERS MOMENTUM**

A new Landholder Conservations Partnership Program rolled out in financial year 2021-2022.

About 50 new landholders registered during this period, which included 60+ site visits for both new and historic partners. During these site visits more than 550 plant species were identified, with about 20 per cent being environmental weed species.

Registration to the new program requires a site visit to assess the property's ecological values, discussion of landholders' conservation priorities, and the collaborative development of a Management Plan.

As part of program incentives, a flood bursary was awarded to successful landholder applicants who were directly affected by the February/March 2022 flood event. The funds supported debris and rubbish removal, remediation of stock exclusion fencing, revegetation, weed management, creek bank reprofiling and bank stabilisation.

On the biodiversity front, officers collected seeds from more than 50 native species to propagate and distribute to landholders through council's Free Plant Program.

A hands-on weed management workshop was held at Hardings Paddock, in Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate. This assisted landholders to improve their weed identification skills and practical weed management techniques.





SUPPORTING ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

By Deborah Metters, re-published from the Land for Wildlife South-East Queensland annual report 2021-2022.

Chris Wiley generously opened his Land for Wildlife property at Pine Mountain to other landholders over two days to talk about the extensive weed control and revegetation that he is undertaking.

Chris has a vision for his property, and he is working tirelessly to achieve it. As an ecologist, he has a detailed understanding of the native plants, wildlife and weeds that are on his property and he is aiming to bring highly degraded ecosystems back to good health.

Supported by Ipswich City Council, Chris is controlling large infestations of the invasive Cat's Claw Creeper weed that had taken over the dry rainforest scrubs. Slowly, native plants are sprouting up where once it was just a carpet of weeds. He has also planted thousands of

native plants, many of which he has propagated himself from seeds collected on his property.

Workshops like these are opportunities for Land for Wildlife members to connect with other landholders who are also doing conservation on their properties. It is a place to share knowledge and skills about weed control, managing wildlife habitats and to see different land management techniques.

Workshop attendees were also treated to seeing 'platelets' – the circular scrapings of the rare Black-breasted Button-quail that lives in the dry vine scrubs on Chris' property. This is a nationally threatened bird that is only found in South East Queensland. These button-quails have been found scratching around in areas that were once dense weeds, but are now filled with native plants and leaf litter, perfect for these shy birds. Thank you, Chris for restoring these precious ecosystems.





MEMBERS CONTRIBUTING TO CONSERVATION

The 2021-2022 financial year was a busy time for Little Liverpool Range Initiative (LLRI).

The membership stands at 27 properties, spanning Ipswich City Council and Lockyer Valley Regional Council.

Four workshops were held across the year on a range of topics including koala habitat restoration and developing effective fire management plans with the Queensland Fire and Biodiversity Consortium.

The LLRI has a growing focus on citizen science and how members can contribute to conservation, on their properties and across the region.

Members participated in iNaturalist competitions across a 9-month period with a goal to document the most records of a target group each month ranging from amphibians to invertebrates.

The iNaturalist program skyrocketed with 5,157 total observations across the range and a massive 1,493 species documented.

This project was conducted with assistance from the Queensland Government's Citizen Science Grant funding, which supported purchasing resources to upskill our members in species identification and various forms of documentation.



EXPERIENCE NATURE

Regular guided bushwalk activities in Enviroplan estates were dampened by storm and flood damage and COVID lockdowns.

Experience Nature facilitated 10 events, with a total number of 160 participants. This included Moonrise Nightwalks, Nature at Night as part of Kids Go Wild school holiday program, Habitat and History, and Trail of Tree Tales school excursion.

The officer also attended the White Rock Trail Festival, which was a major event with 300 people.

The Experience Nature program has regularly delivered guided walks at White Rock – Spring Mountain Conservation Estate. In June 2022 a Goolman walk, at Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate, was introduced as a new package.



CONTINUED CELEBRATIONS MARKED 25 YEARS

In 2021 Enviroplan celebrated 25 years of conservation achievements in Ipswich.

Throughout the year a number of events and activities were held to mark the occasion. This coordinated awareness campaign encouraged conservation and environmental education and increased awareness of the Enviroplan initiative.

In total (across the 2021 calendar year) the campaign had 333 participants at 8 events, more than 30 media articles published, and reached almost 139,000 people through digital channels.

Key highlights within 2021-2022 financial year included:

- **MOUNT GRANDCHESTER EXPERIENCE**
Special guided bushwalks were organised for the community to access the Mount Grandchester Conservation Estate, which is normally closed to public access. The walks on 31 July 2021 had 37 attendees and showcased the ongoing work undertaken by Enviroplan including revegetation, weed control and acquisitions.
- **GREAT RESTORATIONS**
As a way of celebrating the new Landholder Conservation Partnerships Program a series of workshops were run, also open to the general public. One of the workshops was an open property at Pine Mountain that was halfway through a 10-year restoration project. More than 30 people attended the open property.
- **ENVIROFORUM**
The 2021 Enviroforum event was held at Hardings Paddock, in the Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate. This special outdoor event showcased an Enviroplan-funded estate in celebration of 25 years of Enviroplan. There were 75 attendees at the ticketed event. The speakers and activities had a strong focus on conservation and cultural heritage.



NATURE CONSERVATION PLANNING

- **\$130,992 funded operational expenses such as staff wages, vehicles and equipment necessary to deliver the Enviroplan Program**
- **The Natural Environment Policy was adopted along with the development of the Natural Environment Strategy which undertook extensive internal and external stakeholder consultation.**



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT POLICY SETS STRATEGIC DIRECTION

A major strategic achievement for council was delivered in September 2021 with the adoption of a Natural Environment Policy.

The policy was identified as a catalyst project in council's Corporate Plan 2021-2026 (iFuture) under the Natural and Sustainable theme.

The policy provides strategic direction for green elements, such as bushland and waterways, which make up the city.

It informs decision-making, investment and natural environment programs including Enviroplan.

Extensive internal and external consultation, research, benchmarking and national strategy review was undertaken in the creation of the policy. This work will be used in future strategy development.

The natural environment is an important topic to the community of Ipswich and council, as demonstrated by the feedback received. The seven policy focus areas directly reflect his consultation feedback.

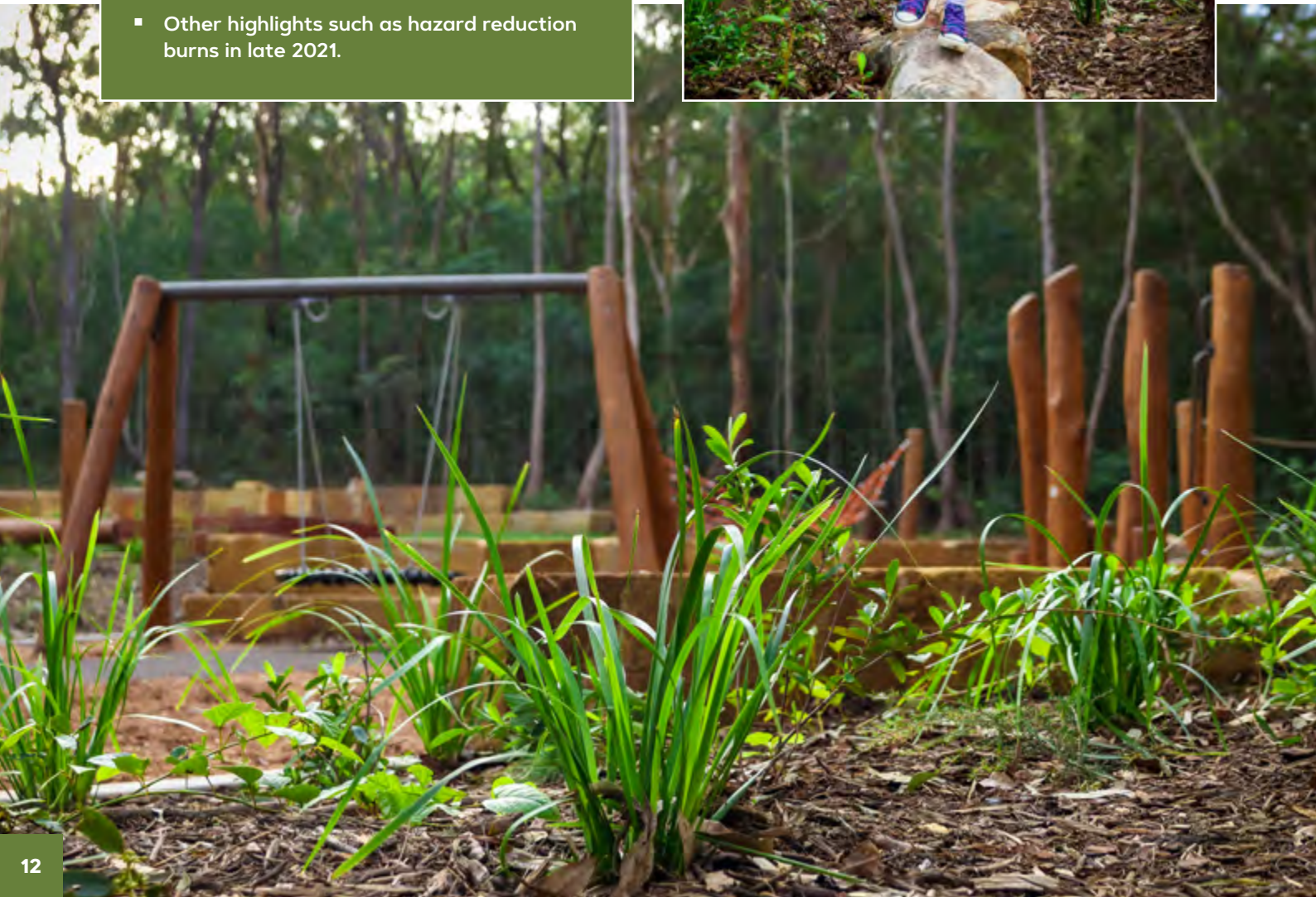
- Biodiversity and threatened species recovery
- Wetlands and waterways improvement
- Urban biodiversity enhancement
- Natural area restoration and protection
- Experiencing nature
- Community awareness and support
- Governance, measuring and reporting.

It was timely to have an adopted policy position ahead of updating key corporate documents such as the Nature Conservation Strategy (with a Natural Environment Strategy) and the Ipswich Planning Scheme.



EMBELLISHMENT, CAPITAL AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT WITHIN THE NATURAL AREA ESTATE

- \$3,414,240 was spent on projects across the Natural Area Estate. Highlights include:
 - \$121,323 on the construction of the Kupmurri at Hardings Paddock
 - \$64,421 on the completion of Denmark Hill
- \$228,574 was spent on maintaining previously installed fuel reduced areas and following up weed treatments and rehabilitation of previous burn blocks
- \$331,800 funded restoration works which included rehabilitation and weed management on habitat for koalas, rock wallabies, black breasted button quails and high value conservation sites
- \$106,943 funded operational expenses for pest animal monitoring and management
- Other highlights such as hazard reduction burns in late 2021.



ESTATES IMPACTED BY STORM AND FLOOD DAMAGE

One of the greatest challenges that faced Enviroplan estates in financial year 2021/2022 was the severe and ongoing impact of storm and flood damage.

Hardest hit assets were the track and trail network, with erosion and damage to infrastructure leading to Flinders-Goolman and White Rock – Spring Mountain conservation estates being closed from early March.

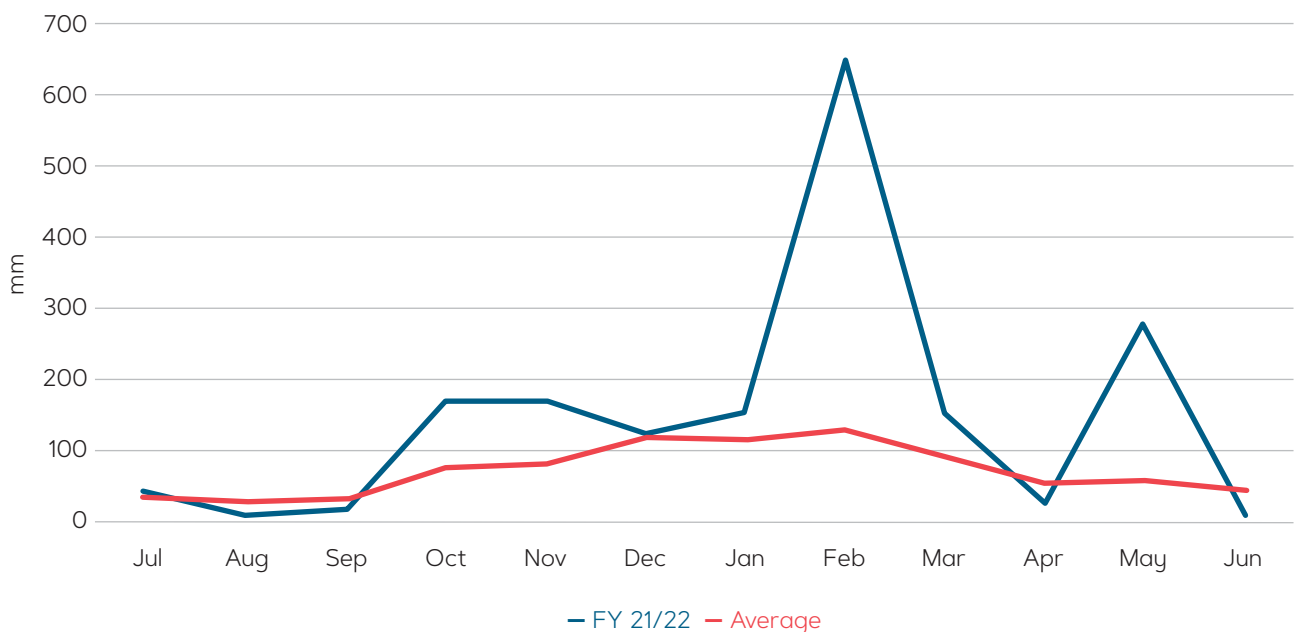
It was a level of damage never before seen by Natural Areas teams who maintain the Enviroplan conservation estates and reserves.

Anecdotally, the incessant above-average rain from October 2021 onwards led to potholes two metres wide and up to a metre deep in places. Fences and tracks were also washed away and roads became impassable.

Assessing and repairing the damage took many months, with ongoing rain making progress difficult. Materials such as rock, road base and decomposed granite had to be imported for repairs. Much of the work was completed with bobcats and excavators, with some bulldozer work required at Mount Granchester and Flinders-Goolman conservation estates.



RAINFALL TOTALS - RECORDED AT AMBERLEY



HABITAT PROTECTION THROUGH PEST MANAGEMENT

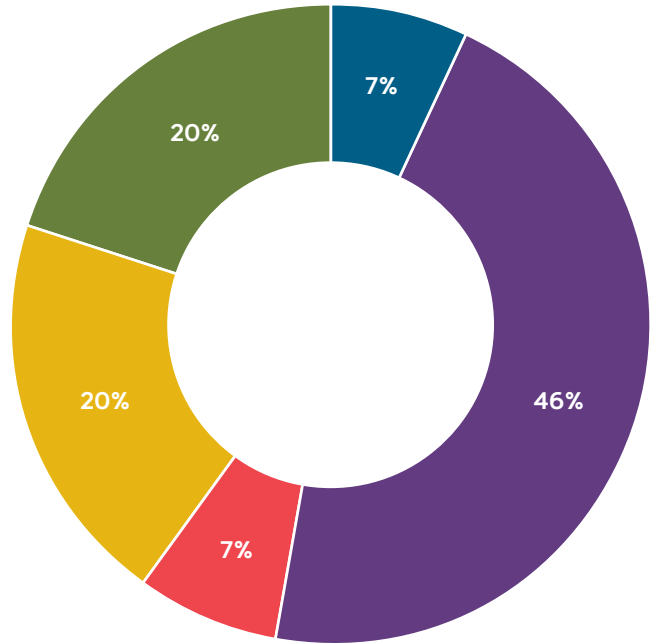
Over 1,875 hours were spent undertaking pest management in priority habitat areas across the Natural Area Estate.

Access was difficult in some areas due to flooding and associated damage to tracks within the Estates. High rainfall contributed to increased growing conditions which provided additional cover for pest animals therefore proving difficult to find for removal.

Management involved activities such as:

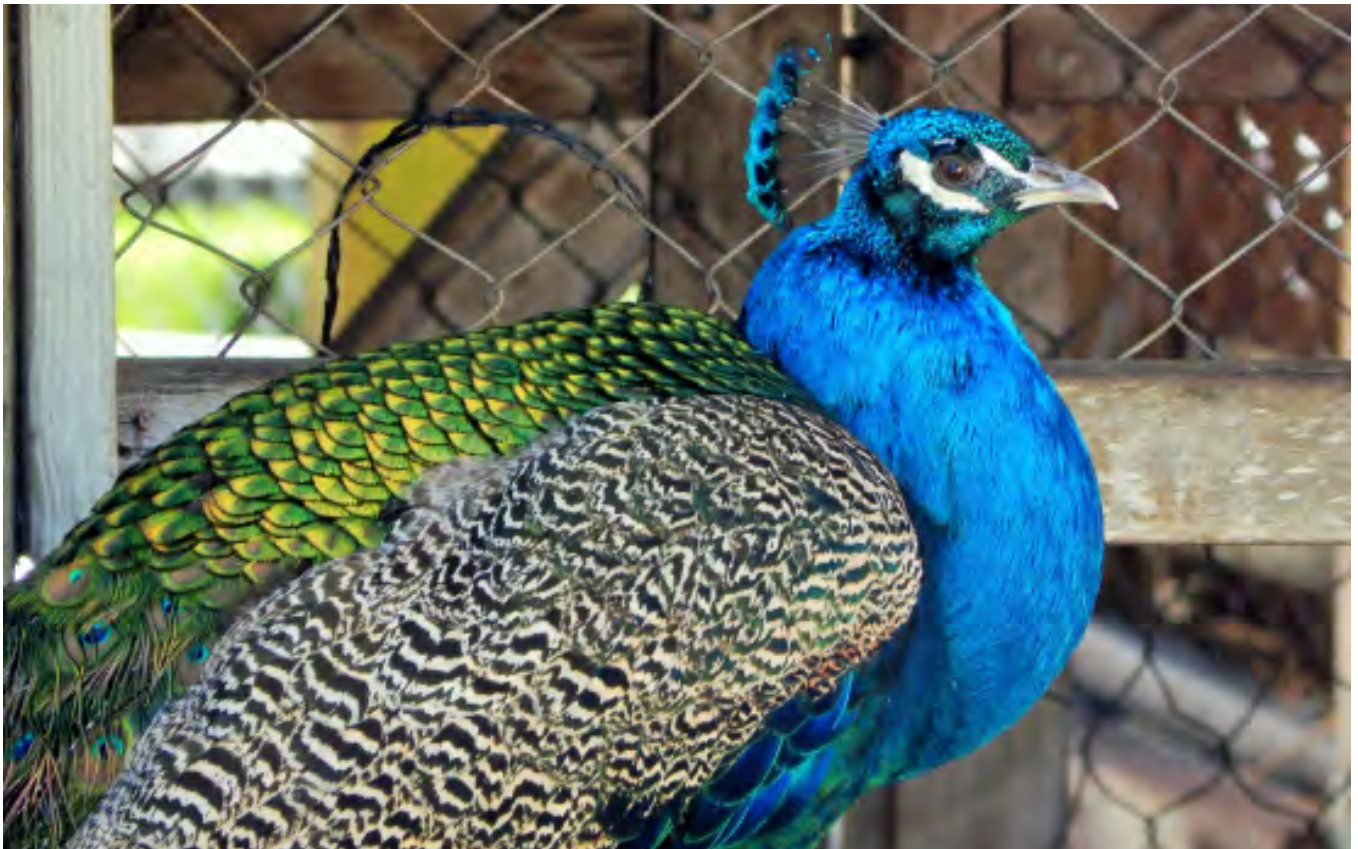
- Deploying, monitoring and retrieving traps and cameras
- Reviewing camera data
- Monitoring trails and tracking pest animal activity
- Maintaining equipment
- Active hunting
- Humane destruction and carcass removal
- Opportunistic pest plant control
- Reporting.

As a result of implementing the program, 15 pest animals were removed along with several areas of pest plants control.



Per cent of total controlled pest animals

- *Vulpes vulpes* (fox)
- *Pavo cristatus* (peacock)
- *Sus scrofa* (pig)
- *Lepus* (hare)
- *Canis familiaris* (wild dog)





MAJOR UPGRADE BRINGS VISITORS BACK TO DENMARK HILL'S NATURAL BEAUTY

A major visitor upgrade has reactivated a hidden bushland gem in the heart of Ipswich CBD.

Enviroplan funds were invested into visitor facility upgrades at the Denmark Hill Conservation Reserve.

The old degraded infrastructure was demolished and replaced with exciting new facilities that celebrate the forested nature reserve.

Works included a large disability access bridge, nature-based playground, open grass areas, three shade shelters, barbecue, viewing platforms and upgraded lighting and pathways.

The new facilities were activated with a series of events to entice visitors and groups to enjoy the renewed conservation area.

This included guided bushwalks, bird-watching tours with Birds Queensland, Kids Go Wild school holiday activities, citizen science sessions and more.

Denmark Hill is also one of the few Enviroplan estates that allows dogs on leash.

The site has a strong connection to Traditional Owners and part of the extensive construction project had involved creating cultural totem landscape poles.

One of the site's uses was as a high location where Traditional Owners could communicate via smoke signals internally and with others seeking permission to travel through their homelands.





NATURAL AREA VISITATION

Enviroplan conservation estates and reserves continued to be popular locations for a range of nature-based recreation including bushwalking, horse riding, mountain biking, orienteering and more.

An annual count of visitor numbers at key locations was not available due to equipment malfunction and closure of estates due to COVID lockdowns, hazard reduction burns and storm and flood damage.

These factors also affected visitation generally across the Enviroplan natural area estate.

2021/2022 Financial Year Breakdown:

Visitor counts undertaken from 11 September to 12 October 2021 (31 days). Note that this included the September school holiday period.

- White Rock – Spring Mountain Conservation Estate (Paperbark Flats only) – 9,545
- Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate (Flinders Peak Track only) – 2,440
- Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate (Hardings Paddock only) – 2,265.

ESTATE ENFORCEMENT 'FOR THE LOVE OF NATURE'

A new campaign was launched in response to problem behaviours at White Rock – Spring Mountain Conservation Estate.

'For the Love of Nature' was a collaborative effort between council and Queensland Police Service, to provide a proactive and positive on-ground presence at high-visitation areas.

Organised activations provided an opportunity to engage with the public, providing information and awareness about appropriate behaviour in conservation areas, including prohibited activities such as trail bikes and dogs.

It also provided options for reporting antisocial or illegal behaviour, with the ability for enforcement if required.

Highlight – 8 patrols during estate closures for hazard reduction burns:

- 407 interactions in total
- 71 people left without entering estate
- 64 verbal and formal warnings issued for breaches of entry and dog offences
- 2 infringements issued.

Highlight – 6 joint estate enforcement patrols with council and QPS:

- 2 trail bike riders intercepted
- 9 warnings given regarding dogs
- 578 interactions for engagement and education.



DOGS ARE NOT ALLOWED HERE

For the love of nature, if you see dogs in this estate, report it.

Walking dogs here threatens the safety of native wildlife, visitors and the environment.

Report to (07) 3810 6666 or lpswich.qld.gov.au/lovenature



DOG-FRIENDLY LOCATIONS



TRAIL BIKES ARE NOT ALLOWED HERE

For the love of nature, if you see trail bikes in this estate, report it.

Riding trail bikes here threatens the safety of native wildlife, visitors and the environment.

Report to (07) 3810 6666 or lpswich.qld.gov.au/lovenature



RIDE LEGAL. RIDE SAFE



EMBELLISHMENT, CAPITAL AND OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT INVESTMENT HIGHLIGHTS WITHIN THE NATURAL AREA ESTATE



Various sites

- \$37k on signage at the entry to Hardings Paddock, Flinders Plum and White Rock
- \$42k on minor emergent projects across several sites.





1 Denmark Hill Conservation Reserve - \$378k

- \$353k invested on constructing a pedestrian bridge and installing lighting and playground
- \$25k spent on addressing gully erosion.



2 White Rock - Spring Mountain Conservation Estate - \$276k

- \$144k on constructing walking trails
- \$91k on barrier fence installation along the interface with Greenbank Arterial and Wild Iris Terrace
- \$40k on erosion control and track work.



3 Flinders-Goolman Conservation Estate - \$612k

- \$612k spent on constructing the environmental community hut within Hardings Paddock.



Note: some projects are currently in design stage only, and construction not commenced.

2021-2022 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE STATEMENT

This statement is certified by the Chief Financial Officer (Mr Jeffrey Keech) on the 9 November 2022.

PROJECT/ACTIVITY	ACTUALS
STRATEGIC THEME: ACQUISITION OF SIGNIFICANT NATURE CONSERVATION LAND	
Land Acquisition Program	
Land Acquisition Program Implementation: Assessments and Purchases	\$0
Loan Service for Land Acquisition	\$861,028
Sub-program total	\$861,028
Theme total	\$861,028
STRATEGIC THEME: COMMUNITY NATURE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT	
Landholder Conservation Partnerships Program	
Landholder Conservation Partnerships Program Management: Operational expenses	\$0
Voluntary Conservation Agreements Payments: Annual landholder land management payments	\$12,909
Landholder Nature Conservation Grants: On-ground landholder support projects	\$34,283
Voluntary Conservation Agreement Incentives: Education and capacity building activities	\$6,443
Landholder Partnerships Workshops: Education and capacity building activities	\$0
Sub-program total	\$53,635
Community Partnerships Program	
Community Partnerships Program Management: Operational expenses	\$115,431
Community Awareness and Engagement Events: Annual city-wide events	\$25,905
Community Support Grants: On-ground community projects	\$24,513
Community Education Resources: Digital and printed material	\$13,499
Strategic Community Partnerships : Building community capacity	\$4,105
SEQ Land For Wildlife Program Partnership: Regional partnership contribution	\$12,724
SEQ Fire and Biodiversity Consortium Partnership: Regional partnership contribution (Payment shown in 2022-2023)	\$0
Citizen Science Program	\$2,965
Sub-program total	\$199,142
Theme total	\$252,777
STRATEGIC THEME: NATURE CONSERVATION PLANNING	
City-wide Nature Conservation Planning Program	
Nature Conservation Planning: Operational expenses	\$130,992
Nature Conservation Planning, Management and Research: Continual improvement projects	\$0
Sub-program total	\$130,992
Threatened and Key Species Recovery Program	
Note: No funds were spent on the Threatened and Key Species Recovery Program due to internal resources directed to the development of the Natural Environment Strategy. Additionally, due to flooding estate were closed and on-ground projects were unable to be undertaken.	\$0
Sub-program total	\$0
Theme total	\$130,992
Strategic Theme: Embellishment, Capital & Operational Management Investment within Natural Area Estate	
Natural Area Maintenance Program	
Natural Area Maintenance: Operational expenses	\$743,271
Sub-program total	\$743,271
Natural Area Management Program	
Natural Area Management operational expenses	\$205,295
Conservation Works Program: On-ground operational projects	\$331,800
Fire Management Program: On-ground operational projects	\$228,574
Natural Area Capital Investment Program: On-ground capital projects	\$1,693,581
Pest Animal Management Program: Operational expenses	\$106,943
Natural Area Estate Visitor Management	\$88,375
Natural Area Activation Program	\$1,376
Natural Area Estate Enforcement Program	\$15,025
Sub-program total	\$2,670,969
Theme total	\$3,414,240
PROGRAM TOTAL	\$4,659,037
Revenue	\$4,509,334
External Grant Funding for Enviroplan Projects	\$97,891
Adjustment to Reserve (Drawdown)	-\$51,812
Reserve Balance	\$4,519,508






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