

Diary for Fraser Island Bush Regen and Monitoring 15th to 21st September, 2103

Summary

The group logged up an aggregate of 225 voluntary hour of work made up of :

Bush Regeneration (weed elimination & replacement): **166**

Monitoring (establishment and refinement of monitoring stations to asses the volume and impact of sediment movement from roads): **59**

Total: **225**

The group planted out about 130 plants with about 70 from the Kingfisher nursery and 60 from the QPWS Eurong nursery.

All known Easter Cassias have now been eliminated from the Eurong area. The only remaining fruiting Brazilian cherries are located on one private block that we haven't been allowed access to. We discovered another woody tree weed, *Luecaena* that has now been eliminated and except for one block we are in control of Eurong's woody weeds.

According to the SVC study Eurong was the most heavily visited site on Fraser Island and it is deemed important that it should be well presented and maintained. The progressive transformation of the Eurong Resort is continuing with the elimination of exotics and their replacement with natives. Conspicuously the potted Mother-in-Law's-Tongues at the entrance to the resort have been replaced with Foxtails.

The volunteers also installed additional monitoring devices to better assess the impact on the roads from sediment movement and the impact on the areas being inundated with sediment washed from the roads. This is aimed at being able to capture any new data from the anticipated summer rainfall events.

It was an exceptional and productive week of work on all fronts from an enthusiastic, energetic and competent team of volunteers.

Participants:

Miles Pritchett and Skye Mattaie (Tugun)

Tony and Margaret King (Noosa)

Greg Orr (Mermaid Beach)

Liz Dyer (Byron Bay)

Yoka Dolman (Petrie)

Su Dawson (Camp Hill)

John Sinclair *Fearless Leader* (Coorparoo)

Day 1

Sunday 15th September Brisbane to Eurong

The dates were nominated earlier in the year hoping to avoid the post mortems of the Federal Election which was then scheduled for 14th September. However the elections were held a week earlier and as a result we had to endure the post mortems as well as the election campaigns. Still the elections were far from mind on such a balmy Spring morning as Su, Greg, Liz and Fearless Leader headed out from Brisbane picking up Yoka at Petrie and meeting up with Margaret and Tony at Lake Macdonald outside Cooroy and making a heritage and nostalgic tip for Fearless Leader of his hometown Maryborough.

The latest FIDO planting guide was delivered to Tina Ravenau ??? to pass on to the Fraser Coast Regional Council who will post them out to all of the Fraser Island landholder in a mail-out this month. Tina though was attending a barbeque lunch for the Fraser Coast Branch of WPSQ and we were hard pressed to get away to maintain our scheduled tour of the town.



We made it to River Heads to rendezvous at the ferry with the other two members of our contingent, Miles and Skye. The voyage across was uneventful and quite a contrast to what awaited us on the island where the tracks were flour dry and there were a few places, where the axles of both Supe and the trailer were sitting stationery on the road crown unable to make progress. However determination prevailed and we arrived at Eurong at 6.30 in the dark. However we were soon unloaded, consoled with some Happy Hour wine and nibbles and an even tastier fish curry prepared by Su and eagerly anticipating the next day of really productive work for Fraser Island which Fearless Leader had outlined.

Day 2
Monday 16th September
Eurong and Southern Lakes

Everyone was ready at 7.30 for the orientation of Eurong to assess the situation of progress made and progress still needing to be made. First focus was on the resort and immediate environs followed by a look at our equipment and storage, the rubbish dump where salvageable and suitable timber for our monitoring posts were in short supply and then the monitoring plots, Cooloola and Kunyam. Then it was a brief exploration of Second Valley before going on to the QPWS nursery where we collected the plants set aside for FIDO by Michael Lowe. All of this was before morning tea back at "Winduna".

Following smoko many people set to work on many tasks. Su and Liz took the new planting stock to the resort and proceeded to work with supplementary plants around the main building of the resort. Yoka and Margaret went to work on the demonstration Roundabout garden (soon to be known as the Yoka and Margaret Memorial Garden) clearing it of couch grass and placing out about 15 new plants in a supplementary planting.

Meanwhile the other five set to work at the FIDO shelter making up monitoring posts. Miles set about with the drill putting together the foot bars, ground zero markers, rulers and in the taller posts monitoring nameplates with the aid Greg. Meanwhile Skye was busy on the paint-brush aided when he could Greg. They efficiently made up 10 satellite monitoring stations and four major new monitoring stations

Tony also wielded the paint brush as background in the sign shelter where he replaced many signs and featured three new posters on monitoring and two presenting a history of Eurong. These are intended to sustain a regular interest on the displayed information. However the worn grass in front is evidence that the display is already attracting some attention.

The workers continued to 12.30p.m when each had completed their respective tasks each contributing five hours to various projects.

After a delightful lunch the group set off on a tour of the Southern Lakes. Before leaving the beach though they had encountered two dingoes and several interesting birds. Then it was in to Dilli Village, the Boomanjin airstrip and seeing the difficulty had getting a controlled burn to take off in the Lake Boomanjin area. The depth of water over the road when last seen in April has significantly receded. The beach was again starting to be revealed at Lake Birrabeen where most of the team

had a dip and this time it was Miles who had to resort to using the Maxi Tracks to get himself moving forward. Supe today without a trailer just flew through the loose sand even almost collecting a couple of slow pedestrians dawdling behind Miles recovered vehicle.



The team at Lake Birrabeen

Back in Eurong though we had a pleasant Happy Hour, a wonderful dinner and great camaraderie.

	Hours worked:	
Bush Regeneration:		20
Monitoring:		23
Total:		43

Day 3
Tuesday 17th September
Kingfisher Resort and back

It was a relaxed and leisurely breakfast in contrast with the franticness and turbulence of the trip across Fraser Island to Lake McKenzie (*Boorangoora*). It was a slow bouncy journey made in low range that needed to be resorted to a number of times to negotiate dry loose sections of the road.

At the lake we established two new monitoring stations to assess the amount of sand migrating downhill that didn't include road sediment. *Nambur* station was established about 50 metres west of *Gunda* station and clear of the alluvial plume. GPS Reference: We assess the alluvial plume that seemed apparent from the semi circle of reeds spread around *Gunda* station. The lake out from *Nambur* was clear of reeds. GPS reading for Nambur was 25° 26'45" S and 153° 42'68" E

The other station, *Ti* (tallowwood) was located on the uphill side of the road in the same vicinity where there was no possibility of any road sediment and just the natural drift would be recorded. The amount of sediment movement can then be

compared with the sediment accumulated around *Gunda*. The sediment at *Gunda* was today measured at 80 mm. GPS reading for *Ti* was 25° 26'46" S and 153° 03'46" E.

Having completed that work we went on to Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) Day use area where we took some photo monitoring at Boorangoora 1, 2 and 3. The lake levels have fallen enough to allow people to walk along the still very narrow beach. There was some degradation of the lunette near Photo-Monitoring station Boorangoora 1 where people had scrambled up and over the lunette. It does need some sort of deterrent to stop people disturbing this natural area. I single rope across the area should help deter all but the most wilful from trespassing.

Although there have been attempts to stop the sand migrating to the lunette at the easternmost access point to the lake at the western end of the day-use area there was considerable erosion and sand migration down the track towards the lunette.



Squirrel glider observed in broad daylight on the Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) beach

From Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) we went to Kingfisher Resort stopping along the way to correct the name for Kumbartcho monitoring site. Then at Kingfisher we met Aaron and loaded as many plants as we could fit into the back of the ute and into the Troopie after offloading a couple of passengers. It was indeed fortunate that we didn't have a trailer because of the condition of the road which may have made it very difficult to get over the road and may have damaged plants bouncing over the road.

We had lunch in a picnic area by the Sandbar. It was a wild day and unusually unpleasant with a strong north westerly wind whipping up whitecaps in Great Sandy Strait and adding some chill factor to the otherwise pleasant temperature. We then headed back to Eurong via Cornwallis Break with a brief stop overlooking Stonetool Sandblow.

Back at Eurong we spent an hour strategically spacing out our cache of plants. They were all strong healthy plants although the range of species most suitable to planting on the eastern side of the island was limited

Hours worked:

Bush Regeneration:	30
Monitoring:	13
Total:	45

Day 4

**Wednesday 18th September
Planting and Wabby Lakes**

The gale of yesterday had partially relented and the day was again clear and sunny and the tracks were getting drier and more difficult

It took little time to get into a working mode with people going in all directions. After the trees in Yoka and Margaret's Memorial Garden were watered we splintered into several teams.

Tony set off painting the posts we had collected yesterday. He also tidied up the remaining panel of the sign shelter before joining the harem and becoming part of the production line that planted out an impressive number of trees

The Gold Coast mob set out to work in Second Valley with multiple tasks for the morning. One task was eliminating all of the Brazilian Cherry suckers. Many stumps were drilled and poisoned with a mix of dieseline and Starane but still more stumps remain for the morrow. Another task was to eliminate some *Luecaena* in the A Frame. Someone had attacked these already but the stumps were suckering and the stumps were poisoned. However a neighbour had bigger trees and with his agreement these were also removed. However many seeds have escaped and many seedlings had to be grubbed out. Also discovered was a climbing asparagus fern and these were quickly eliminated. A major assignment was to plant out four banksias on the embankment outside Mike West's place that had been set out yesterday as well as a few rainforest species to be tried under the figtree. However three of the four advanced Coastal banksias had been nicked overnight. Another task was to remove the last Ester Cassia from someone's back yard. This was located and the owner contacted and agreed and with difficulty the tree was duly dealt with. This led to yet another request to deal with a difficult weed tree at Bow-Allum but that too will wait another day.

After much liaison with residents the group returned to Winduna for a late smoko before setting off setting up more monitoring sites or rather

expanding the existing monitoring station by inserting some satellite monitoring posts with the alluvial plumes to gauge some measure of the extent of the dispersal of the sediment as a step towards estimating the volume of sand being accreted at the monitoring station. Two satellites were located at Cooloola and three each at Kunyam and Wungul. Additionally two control monitoring stations were established to assess the natural movement of sand in areas unaffected by road run-off.

Narang (forest) was established on the opposite side of the road from Kunyam. GPS reading for Narang was 25° 30' 12" S and 153° 06' 55" E.

Dhakka was established on the opposite side of the road from Wungul. GPS reading for Dhakka (Grass Tree) was located at 25° 26' 45" S and 153° 42' 68" E, This task went to after 12.30 pm.

Meanwhile the Womens Brigade with the lone male, Tony were busy and with admirable efficiency planted out between 60 and 700 Kingfisher propagated plants in addition to remainder of the 60 plants from the Eurong nursery plants mainly in the area around and between the Maheno anchor and the pub as well as weeding the areas planted and that included getting rid of one coconut palm. The gardens were mainly in front of the pub but other plantings were done around the Maheno anchor and around some box like units that look bare and ugly. Already they are looking more attractive.



The view across Hammerstone Sandblow on the way to Wabby Lakes.

The afternoon activity was a walk to Wabby Lakes setting off at 2.30 and leaving Miles and Skye with their nose in books swatting for their imminent exams with SCU on environmental science. The walk from the beach into Lake Wabby was easier because more people are now using the northern track despite the obstacles including a couple of recent tree falls across the track. The bush though was tinder dry due to the prolonged dry spell. On the walk out from the lake it took 30 minutes on the

northern track to the beach compared with one hour walking on the main designated track. We had only three other people sharing the lake with us.

Hours worked:

Bush Regeneration:	37
Monitoring:	8
Total:	45

Day 5

Thursday 19th September

Eurong Maintenance and Wangoolba Creek

Another day and another moderate to strong Nor-Westerly wind with no clouds and dry floury tracks. Except for movement about the island it was pleasant temperature and work conditions. We set off early. The RT&H crew (rough, tough and handsome) consisting of all of the Miles and Skye headed off to Second Valley after breakfast to eliminate more stray feral trees as per requests from property owners. We drilled and doused the stumps of many of the remaining and suckering Brazilian cherries, an umbrella tree at the back of Bow-Allum and along the top road. Su & Liz finished the planting in front of Mike West's place and did further weeding. Tony and Skye wiped out a large planting of Clivia lilies. Meanwhile after further planting in Jarvis Street, Su and Liz worked their way back towards the resort, weeding and assessing as they went.

Back at Winduna the dynamic duo of Margaret and Yoka were busy potting up and planting out Pigface. The aim is to plant out more viable attractive ground cover when FL and Sue return in early November they made up during the morning more than 25 Pigface pots and planted out over ten swamp hibiscus in pots with the view to placing them in the Eurong nursery to establish before planting them out.

Fearless Leader took the opportunity to travel down to the QPWS Office to meet up with Linda Behrendoff and Kimberley Fliefresher and discussed the weeding program the coming fens study in late November and the establishment and placement of automated remote weather stations that Fido is contemplated providing for some key sites on Fraser Island, particularly Central Station and Lake McKenzie (Boorangoora) as well as possibly Lake Coomboo.

After Smoko back at *Winduna* the RT& H crew returned to Second Valley to dispose of what FL thought was the last large Easter Cassia in the village and a large Cherry Guava at the taxi house. There to their astonishment they found a further large Easter

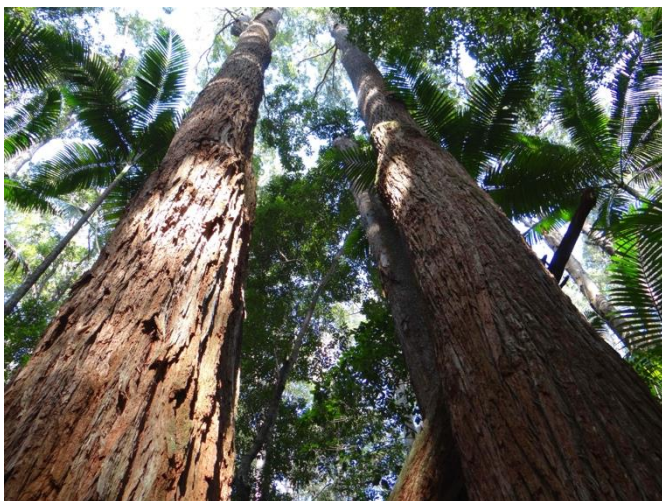
Cassia lurking in the back of the block. There wasn't room on the trailer for this specimen so it was left until the morrow to tackle this as well as again trying to shift the garden waste in the street. After dumping this they returned to

Meanwhile an enthusiastic Miles, Skye and Su set off to replace the Mother in Law's tongues immediately outside the Resort Reception with foxtails sedges that are much more appropriate to the World Heritage status of the resort. The actual transplant wasn't due to be completed until the morrow but enthusiasm got the better of them and the operation was completed in its entirety before lunch. The Reception crew at the Resort were particularly enthusiastic about their new indoor plants.

Greg, Tony and John after admiring the Memorial Garden and dumping prepared the posts to be used for the photo monitoring that are to be set up on Friday.

After five hours of work all assembled for lunch at *Winduna* but it appeared that the R, T & H crew retired from any further formal activity for the day and resorted to swatting, swimming or sleeping or a combination of the three.

The others attempted to reach Pile Valley to take the enchanting walk along Wangoolba Creek but on the way a RAV 4 stalled and was stuck in the sand at least four times adding almost an hour to the journey. As a consequence the walk had to be truncated with shorter forays from each end. At the Central Station end though Su could not be restrained when she spied some Mothers of Millions. She had no better container to carry away the offending weeds in than her hat.



Two giant Pibins on the walk from Pile Valley

Hours worked on Day 5:	
Bush Regeneration:	40
Monitoring:	5
Total:	45

Day 6

Friday 20th September

Eurong Maintenance and Wangoolba Creek

On our final work-day the wind abated and we had perfect holiday weather on the eve of the Spring school vacation. It had been a night much disturbed by the occupants of Ray' Place. It left Miles who was preparing for an exam this afternoon (and many others with sleep deprivation).

The group divided into the RT&H group (four males) and the FFF (Fabulous Fit Five — females). The RTHs subdivided initially with Tony and Greg sent on a Lantana elimination excursion (that they almost failed) and Miles and FL loading up to take the pots to the nursery where we are hoping that the Pigface will be nurtured and be in a stronger position for planting out in five weeks time.

Meanwhile the FFFs had started to work with vigour and enthusiasm cleaning out the weeds along the front of the Eurong Resort, starting at the dingo grid and progressing south. There were three loads of weeds delivered to the tip by Skye. These were lantana, Clivea lilies, Mosman River burrs, cassia, coral creeper, black berry nightshade, Morning Glory, asparagus fern, Fishbone fern and Purple agave. Singapore Daisy was also located amongst disposed of lawn clippings. In the process of their work they uncovered a cement pedestrian path almost buried under growth and leading down to the beach. All of this was carried on with agony sweat and good humour.

After delivering the stuff to the nursery Miles and John caught up with Greg and Tony almost at Second Valley and then the three proceeded to Second Valley to deal with some garden waste and an Easter Cassia. (See Miles Verse at the end)

The garden waste was opposite the appropriately named "Castaways" Holiday Units because it seems that all of the rubbish was either small palm fronds or lillypilly branches from the freshly pruned Castaways lillypillies. It seems that Castaways has an obsession with maintaining a perennial harbour for weeds and rubbish just over the road from these units.

After delivering the rubbish and eliminating the last of the lantana near the road the RT&H Crew set to work on the monitoring and confirming the placement of previous monitoring posts and satellites and establishing the new photo monitoring sites to get a more accurate assessment of the extent of the down-cutting of the roads. It appears that unless something is done to address this issue within a few years much of the "road" network on Fraser Island will be deep canyons with people who

came to see Fraser Island not being able to see above the walls of these deep eroding cuttings in the landscape. The satellite stations were:

Cooloola: One station 7.1 metres down from the post and the second station was 13.4 metres from the main station.

Kunyam: One station is located 4.7 metres up slope from the main station, another is 11 metres down slope to the south and a third station is 7.6 metres downslope to the East.

Dhomba has two satellites: One is 6 metres to the west and the other is 4.3 metres to the south.

Wungul has two satellites: One is 3.9 metres to the South and the other is 8.5 metres to the west.

Three photo-monitoring stations were established to assess the extent of down cutting on the roads. The sites chosen were all close to Eurong and none are in the sites of the more severe down-cutting.

Pirri (Butchulla = hand) was located near Narang and Kunyam (GPS Ref: 25° 26'46" S and 153° 03'46" E) and focusses on East on the Give Way inverted triangular sign. It is not currently deeply eroded. A machined stick was attached to the back of the Give Way post. This enables us to measure the centre of the nearest track where the perpendicular measurement is 440mm to the bottom of the track nearest the Give Way sign.

Dhinangdha (Butchulla = footprint) was located near a very difficult corner (GPS Ref: 25° 30' 20" S and 153° 06' 37" E) and focuses on two posts. One looks back down the slope about 100 metres to a satellite marker post. It views the head of a deeply down-cut section of road, A second satellite marker is closer but reveals the erosion and condition of the corner. Directly opposite Dhinangdha is a post placed by the QPWS. By dropping a perpendicular to the centre of the deepest track to that post a measurement of 1.59 metres was recorded. This establishes a benchmark for future reference.

Mi (Butchulla = eye) was located near the junction with the Eastern Break and based on a "No Entry" sign. (GPS Ref: 25° 30' 00" S and 153° 06' 09" E). A string was extended from a bolt in the sign to the base of a satinay on the opposite side of the road and a perpendicular was dropped to the centre of the wheel track closest to the Satinay. The perpendicular depth was 1.4 metres.

The mission was accomplished and we hope we will be able to assess the erosion against rainfall when we establish the proposed weather stations. Returning to Eurong we removed further lantana near the industrial site and tidied up our storage area in the shed.

The afternoon outing was along the beach as far as Red Canyon. The camping along the beach it approaching the greatest density Fearless Leader has ever seen and the traffic continued flowing in during the afternoon before the holidays have even formally started. At Eli Creek at 2.00 pm there were 30 standard 4WDs and three buses. Mercifully it had dropped to only 17 4WDs when we returned at 4.00 pm and was even further reduced when we left with only a handful of vehicles. On our way North we upgraded the Happy Valley sign shelter. It was a day when Miles sat for his Southern Cross University exam in land degradation at the Eurong Resort while we relaxed.

Hours worked:

Bush Regeneration:	35
Monitoring:	10
Total:	45

Day 7

Saturday 18th September

Heading for home

After a cooler night and only slightly less noise from our all night partying yobbo neighbours we had a early start packing up and cleaning up. Over breakfast Fearless Leader mentioned his experience with bush ballads on safaris and this prompted a now more relaxed Miles with the able assistance Skye to try their hand.

We left at 8.00 am anticipating some possible hold-up dragging the trailer over the dry track. However we made enough good time to be able to make a diversion to see the Ungowa Fens. Then it was to the Ferry noting on the way the Swamp Wallaby standing unperturbed by the passing traffic at the edge of the airstrip.

Once aboard a surprisingly very crowded ferry we assembled on the top deck to hear Miles give a world premiere performance of his bush ballad that was received with admiration and applause.

After a smoko and reinflation at River Heads the mob in Supe by-passed Maryborough and proceeded to Gympie for lunch. Then we farewelled Margaret and Tony at Cooroy and Yoka in Petrie. We made good time back to Camp Hill by 3.30 but Greg's vehicle demanded RACQ assistance and a new battery before he could head for Miami.

It was a wonderful week of achievement and fun which was enjoyed by the whole team, particularly the Fearless Leader because it accomplished much more than he dared hope for and the team working consistently from 7.30 am to 12.30 pm delivered so much more effort than was asked for.

The Saga of Fraser's Lantana

A bush ballad by Miles Pritchett

“Twas into the bush they were sent in search of a
noxious weed,
A nasty perennial beast, that propagates from seed.
Pommy Tony was on the team; no better man you'd
hire!
He hails from Old Blighty's North, a place called
Yorky shire.
Aussie Greg made up the other half; surveying was
his trade
Off they trudged into the scrub wielding pick and
spade.

Their Fearless Leader dropped them off at the start
of the track,
Till they'd killed all this weed they'd not be
welcomed back.
The Boss went out to check their work, to see how
they'd progressed;
Their eyes were diverted from the task as we should
all have guessed.
The passing traffic contained young ladies many of
whom were Swiss,
Occupying all their attention, hence many a weed
they did miss.

The Fearless Leader needless to say a happy man
was not.
A verbal spray he served them up before giving them
another shot.
Off they set this time with vigour and a steady
canter,
Eager to impress their chief diligently swinging tools
whilst limiting the banter.
The Englishman pulled out all stops to prove he
wasn't slack,
Whilst Aussie Greg was found beneath a gum tree
sleeping on his back.

But in the end the job was done and the boss was
very pleased,
He even told his lady friend and all the tension
eased.
So if you ever traverse this island to shelter in a
cabana,
Thanks to the lads hard work, you'll never see any
more lantana.

Acknowledgements:

FIDO would again like to acknowledge the support and assistance received from the following:

Volunteers: Not only do the volunteers contribute their time and effort but each one makes a \$200 contribution towards the cost of transport and sustenance. Miles Pritchett also contributed the assistance of his 4WD to help with the work.

Eurong Resort contributed helpful cooperation. Working on the Eurong Resort site has been mutually beneficial for both the resort and the natural integrity of Fraser Island in general and Eurong in particular. Our partnership with the resort has developed over recent years. FIDO is indebted to the resort for providing accommodation for volunteers who couldn't comfortably fit in the rented house.

Kingfisher Group provided additional support by providing ferry service to get vehicles and volunteers to and from the island and the nursery resources that have been invaluable in helping replace the weeds removed from Eurong Resort.

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service has provided access waiver, helpful advice on natural resource management as well as the nursery that has provided additional planting stock. The monitoring project is only possible because of QPWS's close cooperation.

Fraser Coast Regional Council allows FIDO to work in Eurong. It also provides critical support by allowing the ongoing access to a base to store tools and equipment at Eurong.

BMRG contributes by funding to this program that allows FIDO to be able to conduct three week-long working bees in this financial year with a \$7,000 grant.

Residents and landholders of Eurong: The trust and cooperation with residents and landholders in Eurong continues to grow. FIDO has been welcomed (indeed invited) into many private properties to remove problem weeds. There are now only a few weed infested properties where FIDO volunteers have not been given access. We hope soon to break these barriers down so that we can declare Eurong completely free of Brazilian Cherry and Easter Cassia and that there is no lantana within the dingo fenced area. We are working to eliminate many other smaller but targeted weeds but these may take longer before we can declare that they no longer exist in Eurong.

The Collaboration through FINIA makes all of this so much more