

## **Fraser Island Defenders Organisation**

*FIDO — The Watchdog of Fraser Island*

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*Aim: To ensure the wisest use of the natural resources of Fraser Island*

### **Report**

## **George Haddock Track Maintenance Working Bee Easter (23<sup>rd</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> March) 2016**

Over the 2016 Easter Weekend 16 volunteers helped honour FIDO's obligation to maintain the George Haddock Track.

- The team cleared 17 kms of track of any fallen timber and major regrowth. During 2014 FIDO and NPAQ volunteers cleared 22.7 kms of walking-tracks along former logging tracks and roads in nine different sections of the overall 52 kilometre George Haddock Track supported by a Friends of Parks grant. No maintenance had been done since October 2013 except for a little clearing between Lake Coomboo and Hidden Lake since.
- The swathe of cleared ground around the Harold Charles Barracks was greatly extended by stripping away regrowth and accumulated fallen debris. This provides a greater margin of safety for the critical infrastructure from potential fires. It also had the effect of creating a larger flat area for campers participating in future working bees.



**The Blackbutt tree on the western end of the Barracks (centre of photo) was previously a tinderbox that would have required little ignition.**

Time limitations and logistics prevented the volunteers dealing with some short sections of the proposed walking track. These will be a priority for the next track maintenance working bee tentatively planned for Easter 2017.

Despite the long period since the track was last tended sections cleared in 2013 were in surprisingly good shape. The proposed sweep of those 16 kms this time

should make the work in Easter 2017 should be much easier. It will allow more time to attend to those sections that were missed this time. Also the tractor was out of operation for all of Easter 2016. It is expected to make work next year easier.



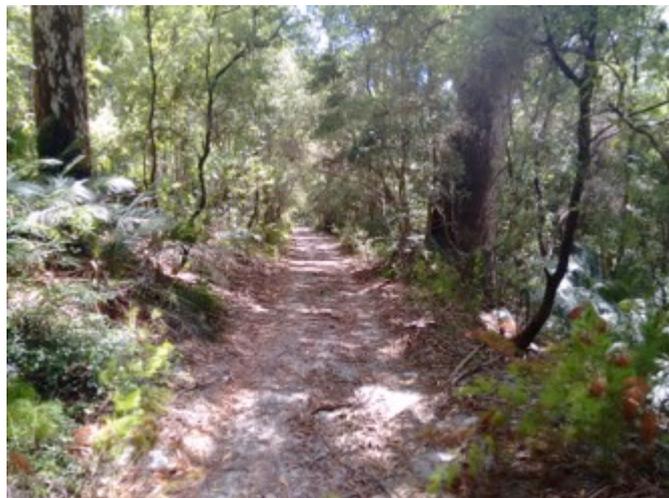
**All of the track clearing was done manually with a little assistance other than from battery operated chainsaws to deal with larger tree-falls across the track.**

The QPWS maintains 11 kms of the total George Haddock Track. These are used by QPWS and others for management — firebreak (Arch Cliffs to Awinya Road), access to Telstra Tower and the Forest Walk (Lake Coomboo to Pine Hill turnoff). However to reach the most northern area a very large tree fall across the Bowarrady Track had to be cleared.

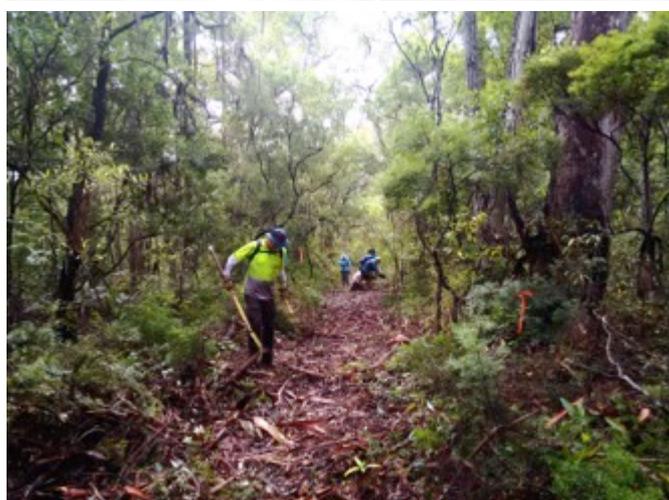


**Some sections had sprouted a considerable sized trees**

Native Title approval is a prerequisite to developing 18 kilometres of the proposed George Haddock Track although 7.2 kms are former logging roads. A lot of work will be required on some of these sections



Between the February preliminary assessment and Easter the QPWS slasher had worked on the Forest Walk between Lake Coomboo and Moon Point Road most of which forms part of the George Haddock Track



The standard for track clearing adopted was that the track should be obstacle cleared for walkers but wide enough to allow the passage of a small tractor for future maintenance where the tracks are using former roads.



The area cleared to the east of the Harold Charles Barracks allows for flatter campsites. Visual access to the Generator-tool shed is now possible



Lunch along the Forest Walk. Volunteers enjoyed good company and a great experience as well as the ambience of Fraser Island. They got to see parts of Fraser Island especially lakes that are now seen and known by very few



The cleared up backyard of the Harold Charles Barracks

*John Sinclair, AO Team Leader, 31 March 2016*

All of the photos published in this report were supplied by DEBORAH BROWN, a Fraser Island resident and a volunteer for this project,