



MEDIA RELEASE

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MEDIA OPPORTUNITY: MEDIA ARE INVITED ON SITE 11AM WEDNESDAY 24 OCTOBER.

To arrange an interview outside this time or to request photographs in advance please contact:

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Mackay farmers embrace Engineered Log Jam

Landholders around Mackay have donated more than 270 logs to create some of the region's first 'Engineered Log Jams' (ELJs) and help restore life to local rivers.

Log jam construction is set to begin this week in Owens Creek, near Gargett, using 8 metre hardwood logs delivered from properties in Bloomsbury and Mirani. Leading the construction activities will be noted Australian river expert and ELJ designer, Dr Andrew Brooks, from Griffith University.

A series of three log jams will be constructed at a badly eroding stretch of the river.

The project is being delivered by Pioneer Catchment and Landcare Group in partnership with Reef Catchments, and follows the success of a similar project in the O'Connell River near Bloomsbury last year.

Reef Catchments' Water and Waterways Project Officer, Iona Flett, said the ELJ installation was an exciting concept designed to help restore the Mackay region's riverine health.

"The logs will be arranged in a man-made 'jam' – essentially a criss-cross stack to slow and control water flow. This changes the behaviour of water flow, and over time will create pools and direct the channel away from the bank," Ms Flett said.

"As well as the pools, the logs themselves also provide a more natural river environment for native fish, including barramundi and jungle perch, who need snags and woody debris to hide under.

"The ELJs will stabilise the river bank, which means less sediment going down-stream and into the reef. Native trees and bank revegetation will also play a key part in reducing erosion."

Gargett property owner, Andrew Meredith, said he was looking forward to seeing the results after trials with rocks had proved limiting. He said sitting back and doing nothing was not an option.

"The creek would only continue to widen and erode the bank, which on a personal level means a real loss of property. There would also be negative impacts further downstream," Mr Meredith said.

"We really want to see the river banks and fish habitat looking healthy and there is a lot of interest in seeing how log jams will work in the Mackay area."

The project is funded by the Queensland Government as part of the Everyone's Environment Grants program.

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