

Serpentine Lagoon & Wetland Enhancement



Natural Heritage Trust Bushcare Funding

- \$28 500 for 3 years

Other Funding

TCC - \$16 000

QPWS - \$5000

Landholder in-kind - \$18 100

Private sector in-kind - \$15 790



Site Significance:

The Serpentine Nature Refuge covers 248 hectares and incorporates an emergent lacustrine lagoon and wetland. The Nature Refuge falls within a freehold grazing property and is recognised as a Wetland of National Significance and is listed on the Register of National Estate.

The site is adjoined to the Mount Elliot National Park and is an important habitat refuge and corridor within the Majors Creek and Haughton River catchment.

It is an important waterfowl habitat and a popular birdwatching site. The area is used for feeding and daytime roosting, especially in the post-breeding season. Examples of species present include: the rare Cotton pygmy-geese; vulnerable Squatter pigeons and Black-throated finches; Black swans; and Brolgas.

NHT funding was sought in 1998 to repair the bund walls of the lagoon that were damaged in the extreme wet season 1997/1998.

Aim:

To protect the national conservation and ecological values of the Serpentine Lagoon and Wetland complex, while maintaining the viability of the property for primary production.

Organisations Involved:

- Private landholders; NHT Bushcare; TCC; QPWS; Conservation Volunteers Australia; Townsville private sector

Activities Undertaken:

- Registration of the lagoon and wetland as a Nature Reserve under the Qld Nature Conservation Act, in 2000.
- Listing of the wetland on the Register of National Estate
- Repair of two bund walls through civil on-ground earthmoving works
- Hydromulching of bund walls with native grasses
- Planting of native seedlings on bund walls
- Fencing to deny stock access to the bund walls to prevent their degradation
- Removal of weeds including chinee apple and hymenachne
- Two Ecotourism tours for government and non-government officials visiting the lagoon and wetland
- Aquatic monitoring and a scientific ecological survey to identify specific values and management recommendations

Future Activities:

- Production of interpretive signage and brochure
- Possible construction of a birdhide

Outcomes:

- The wetland has been restored to its former size and water holding capacity
- Retained the sites value for primary production
- Heightened awareness of the lagoon and wetlands conservation value
- Ensured the long term protection of the site and increased recognition for its national significance