

**Monday 15 October 2007**

## **Community Environment Fund and Rotary join forces to plant 1,000 trees**

A Community Environment Fund project to help restore Stuart Creek's former dry tropical rainforest habitat continued on the weekend, with nearly 1,000 trees planted in the past month in conjunction with Rotary Club of Townsville Daybreak and Greening Townsville.

The \$1 million Community Environment Fund is a three-year project funded by a \$500,000 community grant from Powerlink Queensland, and \$500,000 from project partners the Townsville City Council and Thuringowa City Council.

The Fund brings business, Local Government and the community together on environmental projects which improve wildlife habitats, create recreational areas, provide job training opportunities, and minimise the visual impact of the electricity infrastructure owned and operated by Powerlink.

Community Environment Fund Project Officer Libby Guest said the Fund had provided more than \$25,000 towards the Stuart Creek Dry Tropical Rainforest Revegetation Project, which was designed to protect and enhance the habitat and biodiversity of the important wildlife corridor.

"The site was used as a transport depot for Allied Forces during World War II, after which it became overgrown with weeds which caused sediment problems and threatened native ecosystems," Ms Guest said.

"The site now hosts the Stuart Creek Information Centre and the Community Environment Fund has provided valuable assistance to the Rotary Club of Townsville Daybreak to achieve its vision for the local community and visitors to enjoy one of the last remaining pockets of dry tropical rainforest in a creek system close to the city," she said.

Rotary Club of Townsville Daybreak President Betty Stokes said Stuart Creek was one of the main permanent waterways in the Townsville urban environment and was home to important riparian vegetation and diverse freshwater fish species.

"For the past 10 years, the Rotary Club of Townsville Daybreak has been working hard to restore the site, through removing weeds along the creek bank and planting thousands of native trees," Ms Stokes said.

"In particular, Stuart Creek is a valuable fish breeding ground, so revegetating the area will help protect the fish nursery by reducing erosion and preventing sediment from nearby areas entering the waterway.

"We thank the Community Environment Fund for its ongoing support and making it possible for us to continue our enhancement of this environmental asset, which will be enjoyed by locals and tourists alike for many years to come," she said.

Townsville's Deputy Mayor Cr Jenny Hill said the Community Environment Fund was achieving great outcomes for the local environment.

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“The Community Environment Fund is building strong partnerships with the community on a range of greening projects that will have long term benefits for a sustainable Townsville,” Cr Hill said.

**For further information/assistance, please contact:**

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