



FITZROY BASIN ASSOCIATION

*Our country. Our future.*

# FLOOD RECOVERY

## Focusing on weed control



Flood waters rose up to the third rail on cattle yards at Trevor Dunne's Pink Lily property in the 2010-11 wet season, inundating the entire grazing enterprise and causing significant damage.

### Restoring productivity on Pink Lily

Pink Lily is situated just 5km from Rockhampton, central Queensland's major suburban centre, and is one of two properties in the region owned by Mr Dunne.

Since the flood damage occurred, Trevor has been facing the challenge of bringing his flooded country back to productive pasture, which began with reseeded and resting his paddocks for six months before running cattle again.

Trevor said that as well as the major flood event, further minor flooding combined with good growing seasons, resulted in prickly weeds flourishing. "These weeds have a negatively compounding effect on the land," he said.

Weeds had taken root in 220 ha of Pink Lily and were out-competing pasture plants, causing the loss of valuable soil nutrients and water and ultimately a downturn in cattle production.

### Project supports weed control

Eager to be rid of prickly Parkinsonia and Acacia now sprawling through his paddocks, Trevor was one of the first land managers to develop a project under Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangement funding made available through Fitzroy Basin Association Inc. (FBA).

By working with FBA's delivery partner, Fitzroy River and Coastal Catchments, Trevor successfully applied for \$8000 in co-funding to put towards weed control efforts, allowing him to hire a contract sprayer to treat weed infestations.

The work also augments his regular strategic weed control efforts that involve treating weeds annually, using their flowering season as an easy on-ground identifier, which has meant less production of seed so further spread of infestations are prevented.

### A visible difference

Trevor's enthusiasm for getting on top of the weed problem saw him complete his project quickly, and enabled his property to become an example of what could be achieved under the funding program – neighbours driving by could easily compare the difference between Pink Lily and nearby paddocks.

The fact that Pink Lily was in close proximity to town and situated on a major road meant the project team was able to draw on Trevor's good standing in the community and the success of his on ground work to hold a public demonstration day showcasing treatment strategies for prickly weeds.

### Trialling biocontrols

As part of continued scientific research into biocontrols to kill woody weeds with native soil pathogens by the University of Queensland, some paddocks on Pink Lily are now in trial targeting Prickly Acacia testing fungi strain combinations, dose rates and inoculation techniques. This trial complements two other long-term trial sites within Rockhampton started in May 2012.