



Media release

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Help for cyclone affected landholders on its way

Repairing cyclone damage to nature refuges in north Queensland is one of the key priorities for NQ Dry Tropics over the next 12 months.

The natural resource management group recently received \$400,000 from the Australian Government for environmental recovery projects.

The funding will pay for restoration works like replanting native vegetation, restoring suitable fencing and reconstructing wildlife corridors.

A nature refuge is an area of land voluntarily protected by landholders for conservation purposes.

NQ Dry Tropics CEO Scott Crawford said cyclonic winds have caused significant damage to stock exclusion fencing on four nature refuges in north Queensland.

He said, "Nature refuges are, arguably, some of the highest value environmental assets we have in the rangelands.

"NQ Dry Tropics will work with other natural resource management groups and the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to help landholders repair vital fencing that protects the biodiversity within nature refuges."

Some properties in north Queensland have lost 50% of their trees due to February's Cyclone Yasi.

Fallen timber increases the risks of fires threatening sensitive habitats like rainforests, vine thickets and river bank vegetation.

The environmental recovery funds will help NQ Dry Tropics assess and manage fire risks.

Mr Crawford said, "A significant portion of the funding will also be used to help landholders plan for re-fencing that protects natural resources like rivers and creeks and helps landholders to control graze."

Community groups also play a role in repairing environmental damage caused by the Cyclone.

NQ Dry Tropics will help groups to restore damaged areas in Townsville and the Northern Beaches regions.

The Australian Government has also allocated \$150,000 to NQ Dry Tropics to employ voluntary labour through Conservation Volunteers Australia.

Teams of volunteers will play a key role in restoring natural environments in our region.

NQ Dry Tropics' region includes the local government areas of Townsville, Charters Towers, Burdekin, Isaac, Barcaldine, Etheridge, Hinchinbrook, Palm Island and the Whitsundays. **Media contact:** Kathy Cogo (07) 4722 5730 or 0438 163 232 email kathy.cogo@nqdrytropics.com.au

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