Wet Tropics Management Authority Board Meeting Minutes

No 91: 2 November 2012

| Wet Tropics | Assoc. Prof Peter Valentine | Chair | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|--|--|
| Board Directors | Dr Alastair Birtles | Director | |
| Directors | Dr Ro Hill ¹ | Director | |
| | Ms Leah Talbot | Director | |
| | Cnr Julia Leu | Director | |
| | Mr Andrew Maclean | Executive Director | |
| Departmental | Mr Brett Stallbaum | Area Manager, Wet Tropics QPWS/DNPRSR | |
| Observers | Mr Scott Buchanan | Director, Biodiversity Implementation, DEHP | |
| | Mr James Newman ² | Regional Director, Northern Region, QPWS/DNPRS | |
| Committee | Prof Darren Crayn | Member, Scientific Advisory Committee | |
| Chairs | Ms Rhonda Sorensen | Chair, Community Consultative Committee | |
| Board guests | Ms Sandra Levers | Representing Rainforest Aboriginal interests | |
| WTMA staff | Mr Max Chappell | Manager, Planning and Conservation | |
| | Dr Paul Chantrill | Manager, Tourism and Partnerships | |
| | Mr Nigel Hedgcock | Manager, Indigenous Partnerships | |
| | Patricia O'Loghlen | Team Leader, Community Engagement | |
| | Ms Ellen Weber | Board Secretariat, Business Management | |

attended 8.30am to 10.15am

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chairperson's Welcome and Introduction (Monday 9.15am to 9.17am)

The Chair Peter Valentine opened the meeting at 9.15am and acknowledged the Traditional Owners, the Gimuy Yidinji and the Yirriganydji people of the Cairns area.

The Chair acknowledged the 18 Rainforest Aboriginal Groups of the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

The Chair welcomed Directors Dr Ro Hill, Dr Alastair Birtles, Cnr Julia Leu and Ms Leah Talbot to the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Mr Scott Buchanan, Director, Biodiversity Implementation, Ecosystem Outcomes, DEHP to the meeting.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine

² attended 1.00pm to 2.30pm

The Chair welcomed Mr Brett Stallbaum, Area Manager QPWS Wet Tropic Region, and DNPRSR to the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Prof Darren Crayn, representing the Scientific Advisory Committee to the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Ms Rhonda Sorensen, recently appointed Chair of the Community Consultative Committee to the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Ms Sandra Levers to the meeting who was invited to participate to represent Rainforest Aboriginal interests.

1.2 Apologies (Monday 9.15am to 9.20am)

Ms Jane Ambrose and Mr Ian Mason from the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities advised the Authority were not able to participate at the meeting and provided a report at **Attachment 1.2 (1).**

Mr Paul Martyn, Deputy Director General, Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games was unable to attend the meeting and provided a report at **Attachment 1.2** (2).

Helen Cox from DRET was unable to attend the meeting.

1.3 Previous Minutes (Monday 9.20am to 9.22am)

Resolution

The Board confirmed the Ordinary minutes from Meeting No. 90.

1.4 Actions Arising (Friday 9.32am to 11.15am)

Andrew Maclean referred to the Actions Arising from the previous meeting and updated on issues.

79/5.3

Wet Tropics Vegetation Mapping Project. The Chair requested the Authority give priority to finalising this work.

Resolution

The Board noted the status of Actions Arising from previous Board Resolutions, as updated.

1.5 2012 Cassowary Award nominations IN-CAMERA (Friday 4.30pm to 4.45pm)

Andrew Maclean addressed the Board.

Resolution

The Board:

- endorsed the list at Attachment 1.5 (1) as recipients of 2012 Cassowary Awards, and
- noted that the recommended Young Cassowary Award nominee is Gordonvale Primary and High School Excelsior Students.

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| Associate Professor Peter Valentine | |

2.0 REPORTS

2.1 Chair's Report (Friday 9.37am to 10.05am)

The Chair provided verbal report to the Board on a number of issues including that:

- he was pleased for the opportunity for Wet Tropics Management Authority and Terrain NRM
 Directors to meet and discuss opportunities for strengthening the two organisations working
 relationship
- he had a positive meeting with the DNPRSR DG John Glaister in Brisbane and discussed the complementary roles of the Authority and QPWS in on-ground park management of the Wet Tropics WHA
- he was invited, along with other QLD World Heritage Property Committee Chairs, to attend a luncheon with Minister Powell in Brisbane
- he met with Clive Cook at QPWS in Brisbane and discussed ways for the Authority and QPWS
 to work closely together to secure additional resources for pest and fire management programs in
 the Wet Tropics
- he was concerned that negative media and press about the process for the World Heritage nomination for Cape York Peninsula could potentially diminish public support for the World Heritage brand, and
- he agreed to provide a letter of support to Kuranda Envirocare for a funding submission to monitor Myola frog populations.

Resolution

The Board noted the Chair's report.

2.2 Directors' issues – verbal reports (Friday 10.05am to 10.45am)

The Chair invited Board Directors and departmental representatives to provide comments or advice.

Julia Leu

- the Queensland State Government were implementing a number of amendments to various planning legislation and these would impact on local government planning. One of the changes include repealing the FNQ2031 Regional Plan State Planning Regulatory Provisions, and
- the Cairns Regional Council were waiting on the Queensland Boundaries Commissioner's Report and a financial impact analysis by Queensland Treasury regarding a possible deamalgamation of the former Douglas Shire from the Cairns Regional Council. Once the report was handed down, the Queensland Minister for Local Government will make a decision on whether (or not) to have a public poll.

Leah Talbot

- attended the IUCN World Conservation Congress in JeJu, Korea. The meeting was a great opportunity to meet with leaders from government and non-government organisations, business, social organisations and UN agencies. Social equity, human rights and well-being and how they intersect with effective and equitable governance of the natural environment was a significant theme throughout the workshop, and
- welcomed the much anticipated announcement from Hon Tony Burke MP, Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities Government regarding the

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inclusion of national Indigenous heritage values as part of the existing National Heritage Listing for the Wet Tropics of Queensland. The Rainforest Aboriginal Peoples Alliance (RAPA) is working with SEWPaC officials to discuss appropriate recognition of Traditional Owners and further implications of the listing.

Alastair Birtles

- in his role on the Australian World Heritage Advisory Committee (AWHAC) met with SEWPAC officials, Jennifer Carter and Nigel Rough regarding the proper resourcing of the Australian World Heritage Indigenous Network (AWHIN), including AWHIN participation at the World Indigenous Network (WIN) Conference in Darwin (26-31 May 2013)
- thanked the Authority and in particular Paul Chantrill, Simone Wilson, Lesley Davis and Tracy Laird for their support in providing a venue, time and resources for JCU Tourism graduate students, and
- advised that JCU The Future Taskforce has been established to chart the course to create a university that included a sharper focus on the tropical agenda. The Authority was in a terrific position to engage with JCU, through the learning landscapes program, to explore how JCU and WTMA could work together to deliver core business of learning, research and engagement.

Scott Buchanan

 advised that the machinery of government changes were bedded down, including new ministerial portfolios established (19 Ministers and 19 Ministerial portfolios).

Resolution

The Board noted the Directors' and Observers' reports.

2.3 Executive Director's report (Friday 10.45am to 11.05am)

The Authority's Executive Director, Andrew Maclean addressed the Board and provided the following updates:

- as a follow up to the joint Authority and Terrain Board meeting on 12 October, he has scheduled to meet with Terrain NRM CEO, Carole Sweatman on 6 November 2012 to work towards a documented collaboration agreement, and
- that he Chaired as session at the Ecotourism Australia 20th GlobalEco Conference in Cairns (15-17 October 2012).

Resolution

The Board thanked the Executive Director for his report.

2.4 QPWS Wet Tropics Quarterly Activity Update (Friday 11.15am to 11.50am)

Area Manager Brett Stallbaum provided an update the Wet Tropics QPWS activities and provided Directors with a summary organisational chart of the new structure for QPWS Regional Operational units (**Attachment 2.4 (1)**), including reduced capacity for administrative support throughout the region.

The Board advised Brett Stallbaum that they always receive favourable feedback from Authority stakeholder groups and committees regarding the QPWS quarterly activity reports, and that the Board were keen for some level of reporting about on-ground management activities to continue in the future as part of the requirements outlined in the 2012/13 Partnership Agreement.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine

Resolution

The Board noted the QPWS Wet Tropics report.

2.5 Community Consultative Committee (Friday 11.50am to 12.15am)

Rhonda Sorensen presented the CCC report to the Board and advised the Board that she felt privileged to be nominated Chair of the Committee and be given the opportunity to work with the Authority.

The CCC remained committed to contributing ideas and developing community orientated agendas for the Wet Tropics regional forums.

Resolution

The Board noted the CCC minutes for 7 October 2012.

2.6 Scientific Advisory Committee (Friday 12.15pm to 12.54pm)

Professor Darren Crayn provided a report to the Board on behalf of the Scientific Advisory Committee and provided updates on the Wet Tropics Expert OUV workshop planned for Feb/Mach 2013; biodiversity prioritisation post cyclones, and the SEWPaC organised Myrtle Rust Expert workshop planned for December 2012 in Canberra.

Professor Darren Crayn advised that the committee discussed the outcomes of the Myrtle Rust workshop hosted by the Authority on the 12th October 2012. The purpose of this workshop was to seek expert consensus on what priority research activities are needed to assist with providing solutions for the management of myrtle rust; discuss options for slowing the spread of myrtle rust and the issue of appropriate hygiene measures.

The Board were very concerned to hear that myrtle rust is unlikely to be eradicated from the region and that the wet tropics community must learn to live with and manage the disease.

Resolution

The Board:

- noted the SAC minutes for 25 October 2012,
- thanked SAC members for their considered contributions on conservation prioritisation for biodiversity of non-iconic species post tropical cyclone(s),
- requested that the Authority consider this advice when updating the Wet Tropics 2010-14 Research Strategy,
- noted their grave concern regarding the impact of myrtle rust on tropical rainforests and agreed the Chair convey their concern to the Minister, and
- thanked Professor Jeff Sayer and Associate Professor Lea Scherl for representing the Authority at the IUCN World Conservation Congress Learning Landscapes Knowledge café.

3.0 WORLD HERITAGE PROTECTION

3.1 Situation and Issues Report – Protection (Friday 12.54pm to 1.09pm)

Date:

Associate Professor Peter Valentine Chair, Wet Tropics Management Authority Max Chappell briefed the Board and provided an update on the status of the Wet Tropics Amendment Plan. Directors were advised that the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection gave his approval to recommence the process for finalisation of the review of the *Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998*. On 3 October 2012 the Minister gave his approval, noting that:

- there has already been extensive consultation with stakeholders, industry and the community, and
- the first step will involve consultation with the following Queensland Government Departments: Environment and Heritage Protection; State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (in relation to planning and development assessment matters); Transport and Main Roads; Energy and Water Supply; National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing (in relation to protected areas), and Tourism.

Resolution

The Board noted the situation report relating to 'protection' issues associated with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

3.2 Rezoning to allow realignment of the Ingham to Tully powerline and community services infrastructure at Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Community (Friday 1.08pm to 1.10am)

This item was discussed and resolved out of session (OOS425).

Resolution

The Board:

- approved a rezoning from zone B to zone C to allow for the construction of the remaining Sunday Creek section of the new Powerlink 275KV electricity transmission line between Ingham and Tully within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area,
- approved a rezoning from zone B to Zone C to allow for potential housing and community infrastructure development on Lot 2 on SP171837 (the old football field and dump site) at the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Community within the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, and
- approved the two rezoning proposals to go promptly to Ministerial Council and then Governor in Council for approval and gazettal.

4.0 WORLD HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND REHABILITATION

4.1 Situation and Issues Report – Conservation and Rehabilitation (Monday 3.42pm to 4.00pm)

Max Chappell addressed the Board and provided updates on the status of the Ella Bay Integrated Resort Development; the planning study for the Bloomfield Road; and recent changes to Queensland government state planning laws.

The Board were advised that the Authority is working with park rangers and other land managers to develop road management plans for Mount Lewis Road, Tinaroo Range network, and Clohesy River/Shoteel Creek Road.

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| Associate Professor Peter Valentine | |

Resolution

The Board:

- noted the situation report relating to 'conservation and rehabilitation' issues associated with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, and
- requested the Authority provide a briefing on the management of the Blue Pools at Cooper Creek, Daintree for the next Board meeting.

WORLD HERITAGE PRESENTATION 5.0

5.1 Situation and Issues Report – World Heritage Presentation (Monday 4.00pm to 4.10pm)

Paul Chantrill addressed the meeting and provided updates on relevant issues including that:

- Authority staff met with Chief Executive of the Kokoda Track Authority, Mr James Enage, to progress a partnership and Twinning arrangement with the Wet Tropics Management Authority and that a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been drafted, and
- Authority staff continue to promote and advocate for the recommendations of the World Heritage Gateway prefeasibility report with local community, Cairns Chamber of Commerce, Cairns Regional Council and State and Commonwealth partner agencies, and
- The first of the Wet Tropics field schools is scheduled to be conducted on 7-8 December 2012.

Resolution

The Board noted the situation and issues report relating to tourism and presentation issues associated with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area.

ROLE IN THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY 6.0

6.1 Situation and Issues Report – Role in the Life of the Community (Tuesday 4.10 to 4.30pm)

Nigel Hedgcock addressed the Board and provided an update on Indigenous community engagement activities.

Patricia O'Loghlen addressed the Board and provided an update on the Wet Tropics community forums planned for the first half of 2013.

Resolution

The Board:

- noted the situation and issues report relating to 'role in the life of the community' issues associated with the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area, and
- requested the Authority provide a briefing on the implications of national heritage listing of the Wet Tropics for Rainforest Aboriginal Indigenous

| values at the next Board meeting. | | | | |
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| 6.2 | Welcome to Country – Internal O | perational Guideline 20 (4.30pm to 4.45pm) | | |
| | iate Professor Peter Valentine Wet Tropics Management Authority | Date: | | |
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Nigel Hedgcock addressed the Board on the draft Internal Operating Guidelines developed to assist the Authority in organising and implementing a Welcome to Country and an Acknowledgement of Country. The final guidelines will be put on the Wet Tropics website.

Leah Talbot and Sandra Levers offered to provide expert comment on the guidelines.

Resolution

That the Board noted the Internal Operational Guideline Number 20 'Welcome to Country'.

7.0 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

7.1 Tourism policy brief (Friday 5.00pm to 5.14pm)

The Board has previously agreed with the concept of the Authority preparing a policy brief to advise the State of opportunities and issues relating to the implementation of its tourism policies in the Wet Tropics World Heritage Area. The Board considered a draft at Board meeting 90 (August 2012) and requested further consultation prior to completion.

The draft brief has been considered by the CCC, CSLG and the RAPA also provided comments.

Resolution

The Board approved the core messages proposed for proposed tourism policy brief in advance of completion by the Executive Director and the Chair.

7.2 Wet Tropics Management Authority Strategic Plan (Friday 2.10pm to 3.40pm)

Andrew Maclean addressed the meeting and provided an update on the development of the strategic plan. The Board has considered the development of a new Strategic Plan for the Authority at each of the last three board meetings.

The Board considered the draft strategy and provided additional comments regarding wording for the Indigenous goal.

The Board reiterated their support for Rainforest Aboriginal people if they pursue World Heritage Listing for cultural values.

The Board requested the following specific activities are considered in the Strategic Plan:

- support for Rainforest Aboriginal people, through their organisations, to extract maximum
 value from the principles outlined in the Wet Tropics Regional Agreement in realising their
 rights and interests in the World Heritage Area, and
- establish high standards of staffing and resources to support Rainforest Aboriginal people; their relationships and connections with country; and the acknowledgement of their responsibility, respect and practices to their country, cultures and community.

The Board were pleased with the plan and advised that they would provide final comment by the 12th November 2012.

Resolution

That the Board approved the draft Wet Tropics Management Authority Strategic Plan for 2013 - 2018 at Attachment 7.2(1).

Date:

7.3 2012/13 budget (Friday 3.25pm to 3.40pm)

The Board were re-presented with the 2012/13 budget spread sheet which has been updated to reflect the newly implemented organisational program restructure (and strategic plan).

Andrew Maclean reminded Directors that they approved the 2012/13 at Board meeting No. 90 (August 2012).

Resolution

The Board:

- approved the annual workplan and budget for 2012/13, and
- approved submission of the 2012/13 budget to Ministerial Council.

7.4 2012/13 Wet Tropics workplan and budget – September 2012 review (3.40pm to 4pm)

Andrew Maclean addressed the Board on the 2012/13 work plan and budget.

Resolution

That the Board:

- noted the financial status report current as at 30 September 2012 at Attachment 7.4 (1), and
- noted the work plan progress report at Attachment 7.4 (2).

Meeting closed at 5.10 pm Friday

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| Associate Professor Peter Valentine Chair, Wet Tropics Management Authority | Date: | |

SEWPAC REPORT

November 2012

The next five years of Caring for our Country

- Caring for our Country is an ongoing initiative that will continue to offer multi-year funding to provide certainty for stakeholders.
- The Australian Government will commit more than \$2 billion to continue Caring for our Country from 2013–14 to 2017–18. This represents a strong commitment to the initiative
- Over the next five years, Caring for our Country will address a broader range of Commonwealth priorities such as Commonwealth waters and marine biodiversity, food security, and weed and pest incursions.
- In a time of economic constraint, the Australian Government has needed to ensure that funding under the next phase of Caring for our Country will be available for both our existing commitments and for emerging government priorities
- Caring for our Country addresses the protection and conservation of matters of national environmental significance under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999, such as listed species, ecological communities, Ramsar wetlands and world heritage. Caring for our Country addresses invasive species that threaten matters of national environmental significance or agricultural importance.
- The financial climate has forced some difficult decisions in the 2012–13 Budget. The Australian Government has remained committed to fiscal discipline in order to meet Budget pressures.
- This does not however, change the commitment of Caring for our Country to achieving an environment that is healthier, better protected, well managed, resilient and which provides essential ecosystem services in a changing climate
- Decisions on how the Caring for our Country funding will be divided against priorities, delivery mechanisms and activities have not yet been finalised.

Funding

• The next phase of Caring for our Country will begin in July 2013. We expect to finalise program arrangements by the end of 2012 to enable funding to commence from July 2013.

World Heritage Committee decision on the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area

• The Australian Government is undertaking a number of actions in response to the World Heritage Committee's recent decisions on the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (GBRWHA). Two major projects are the comprehensive strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and adjacent coastal zone, and the production of a State Party Report on the current state of conservation of the property.

Strategic Assessment

- The comprehensive strategic assessment will help identify, plan for and manage existing and emerging risks to ensure ongoing protection and management of the unique environmental values of the GBRWHA and adjacent coastal zone. This will be achieved by:
- investigating the adequacy of the existing management arrangements for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area, and
- assessing current and future development policies and planning in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and the adjacent coastal zone and analysing likely direct, indirect and cumulative impacts.
- The Great Barrier Reef strategic assessment has two key components a marine component and a coastal component. The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) will lead the marine component which will look at the arrangements in place to manage and protect the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

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- and World Heritage Area. The Queensland Government will lead the coastal component which will look at coastal development such as planning for urban, industrial and port development.
- In February 2012 the Queensland Government and GBRMPA sought public comment on draft Terms of Reference for the strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef. The public comment period closed on 30 April 2012.
- On 30 August 2012 the Australian Government environment minister approved the terms of reference for the comprehensive strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and adjacent coastal zone
- GBRMPA and the Queensland Government will undertake the comprehensive strategic assessment which will take approximately 12 months to complete.

State Party Report

- SEWPaC is working in collaboration with GBRMPA, the Queensland Government and relevant Australian Government agencies to produce a State Party Report on the state of conservation of the GBRWHA.
- The Report will include:
 - The State Party's response to each paragraph of the World Heritage Committee's decision and the recommendations from the reactive monitoring mission report;
 - An update and summary since the previous State Party Report of the current conservation issues and adaptive management initiatives which collectively protect the property; and
 - Notification of proposed developments currently being assessed under the EPBC Act for potential impacts on the world heritage values of the GBRWHA, both within and outside the boundary of the property. It also provides links to further documentation.
 - The State Party Report will be submitted to the World Heritage Centre by 1 February 2013.

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| Associate Professor Peter Valentine | | |

Attachment 1.2 (1)

Mr Paul Martyn, Deputy Director General, Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. *Email extract 30 Oct 2012*.

- Most recent tourism data suggests the industry is experiencing a recovery. Queensland recorded a 16% increase in visitor expenditure in 2011/12 over 2010/11, the second highest after WA.
- China Eastern has started flying to Cairns direct from Shanghai. This will lead to a significant increase in Chinese visitation to the region. The industry is now thinking about how best to capitalise on this opportunity and offer product and service that meet Chinese expectations. This could lead to more visitation to the Wet Tropics area.
- The Federal Government has announced a streamlining of visa requirements for Chinese tourists again, making it easier to access Australia
- The Federal Government is also releasing guidelines for its new regional tourism grants perhaps an opportunity for funding for the Gateway?
- The Queensland Government is working on an eco-tourism plan with a draft to be released in coming months this is an opportunity for WTMA to engage and highlight how some of its activities can contribute to growing the eco-tourism market segment. The Department of National Parks, my DTESB and TQ are involved in its preparation
- The Government will introduce legislation to enable sustainable eco-tourism investment on national parks in certain circumstances. Partnerships with the private sector in encouraging visitation are a priority. WTMA could be involved in this regard.
- In relation to indigenous engagement in tourism, the Federal Government has appointed Mr John King as the national indigenous tourism business advisor. We are keen to work with QTIC to get Mr King to come to Queensland to talk about how we can encourage indigenous tourism enterprises and employment we will be sure to let WTMA know about this. The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (DATSIMA) is keen to hold round-tables on indigenous tourism employment.
- From my point of view, the tourism policy paper highlights how WTMA can contribute to the Government's agenda.

| Associate Professor Peter Valentine | Date: | |
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| Chair, Wet Tropics Management Authority | | |

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List of Cassowary Award recipients 2012

Rhonda Brim (Kuranda/Mona Mona)

Djabugay Traditional Owner, Ms Rhonda Brim to be awarded for her dedication to advancing recognition of Rainforest Aboriginal people, their unique cultural heritage and rights in the management of Wet Tropics country.

Helen Underwood (Gordonvale)

For her role in developing the "Excelsior: A Whole Community Approach to Sustainability" program. Helen has enabled hundreds of wet tropics students to learn about the environment, develop skills to investigate and solve issues, acquire attitudes of care and concern for the environment.

Dave Hudson (Cairns/Tablelands)

For his tireless worked in the conservation field, undertaking a variety of roles which facilitated community engagement in "hands-on" conservation. Until recently he was employed fulltime by Conservation Volunteers Australia and has also been involved with Holloways Beach Coastcare, Terrain NRM, and the Tree Kangaroo and Mammal Group.

Keith Smith (Tablelands)

Keith Smith has shared his passion for his work with everyone he meets, and shows great enthusiasm when assisting those who are fortunate to come into contact with him. Keith's work with the Queensland government's Nature Refuges Program and their landholders is legendary in providing outstanding support and advice. Keith was a key player in the Cyclone Yasi disaster recovery of the endangered mahogany glider.

Associate Professor Peter Valentine Chair, Wet Tropics Management Authority