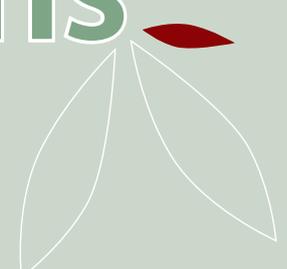


for
**future
generations**



Fitzroy River and Coastal Catchments Inc.
Annual Report 2008/09



FRCC staff in April 2009. On left side front to rear: Janeen Whiting (Executive Assistant), Lisa Sutton (Project Officer) and John Rodgers (Project Officer). On right side from front to rear: Cameron Wearing (Executive Officer), Sandra Grinter (Project Officer) and Stefanie Carusi (Project Officer).

Fitzroy River and Coastal Catchments Inc.

Fitzroy River & Coastal Catchments Inc (FRCC) was established on 7th January 2005 as a not for profit incorporated association. For over two years prior the catchment group operated as a sub-committee of the Fitzroy Basin Association and during this time received tremendous stakeholder support and input to develop a natural resource management plan. Through the implementation of the plan, the organisation has continued to grow and expand its membership base and now coordinates the delivery of a range of on-ground projects and capacity building activities across the catchments of the Fitzroy River and the coastal catchments of the Capricorn Coast and Broadsound.

Today FRCC employs a team of six and here they are pictured on the front steps of the office.

The photos on the cover and pages 2 to 5 and 7 were taken at the Wycarbah Landcare Q150 Cat-fish derby on 26th September 2009. FRCC supported the event and we greatly appreciate their permission to include the photos in our report. The photo on page 6 was provided by Ian and Sandy Groves and we greatly appreciate their permission also.



President's report (Michelle Hanrahan)

Following the period of review and restructure in 2007/08, the FRCC Management Committee has, in the past financial year, been able to focus its attention more fully on strategic matters. Central to this was the establishment of a strategic planning group which when required drew upon other members of the committee, staff, and representatives of partner groups for their insights. This process culminated in FRCC's first strategic plan being adopted by the Management Committee at its annual retreat in May. Key projects are now being identified from the plan and they will be incorporated into the day to day activities of FRCC.

At the same time, as part of its commitment to continuous improvement the FRCC Management Committee has continued to oversee the implementation of the business improvement review. Importantly this has seen the establishment of a finance, audit and risk subcommittee which will see further streamlining of Management Committee decision making.

The Management Committee's change in focus has meant that it has been able to reach out and engage more fully with the community. In doing this an aim of FRCC's is to demonstrate to the wider community the valuable experience of our members and how they can use this to make a positive contribution to solving the environmental challenges of our time. One way we do this is through providing the opportunity for members to participate in discussions which shape environmental management in the region such as our highly successful member forums.



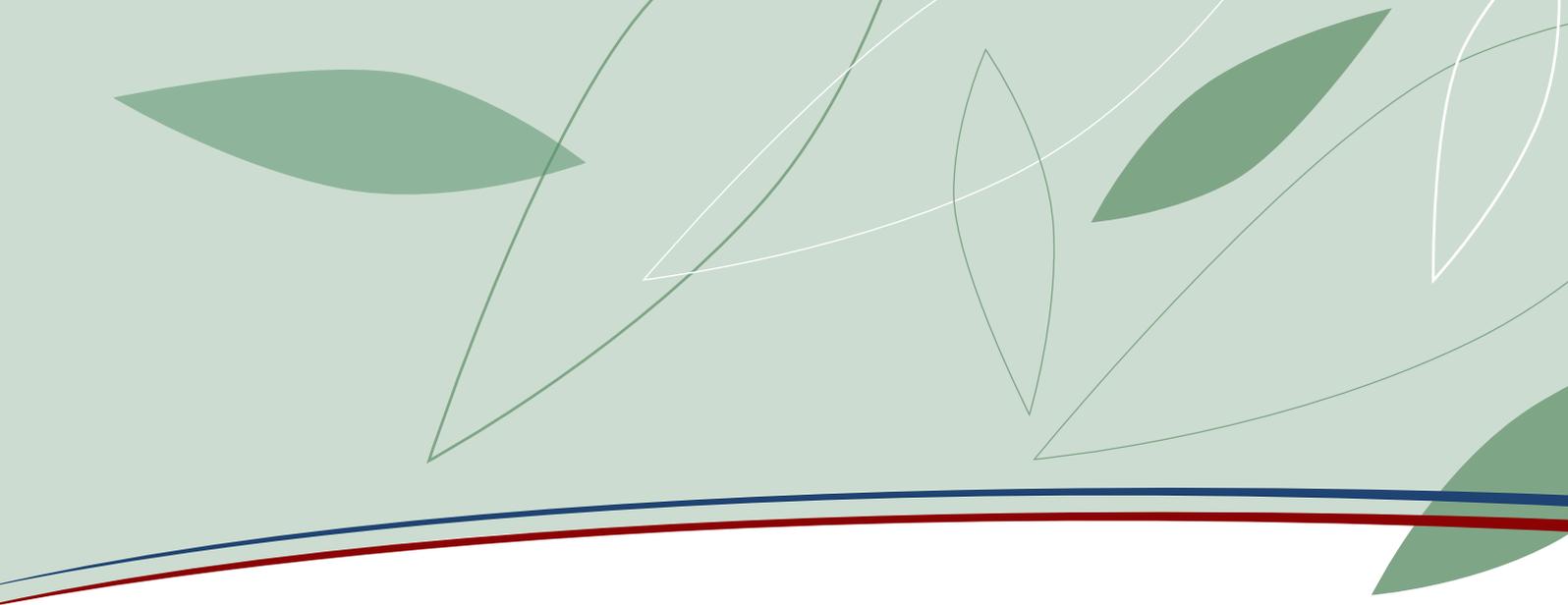
Future generations enjoy the Fitzroy River.

President's report (continued)

We also seek to celebrate the voluntary contribution that FRCC members make to looking after our land and water for future generations. In its simplest form this can be seen in the financial contribution individuals make to their projects where at least every dollar of public money is matched by an in-kind contribution, but it is also so much more than this. It is the hours spent at community meetings, the days spent in the sun building fences and installing watering points, and the nights spent at the kitchen table discussing plans for the future.

Eight of our eleven committee members are popularly elected from the membership and the other three are special members who have been invited to join due to their particular skills. Some committee members have been with FRCC from as early as 2002 while others have joined us in the past year. FRCC's committee, like our members, volunteer a large amount of their own time, to provide the strategic direction for the group.

Another important service that FRCC can make is to ensure that individuals who are doing the right thing are recognised for their efforts. That is why at our 2009 Annual General Meeting we will, for the first time, be recognising those on-ground projects, developed in the previous financial year, which stand out for their contribution to looking after our land and water for future generations.



Executive Officer's report - an overview of achievements (Cameron Wearing)

In difficult economic times I am proud to report that FRCC has had its biggest year on record with roughly \$860,000 of government funds invested in on-ground projects. This investment was more than matched by the landholders we worked with who invested roughly \$1,340,000 (1.6 times the government funds) bringing the total investment in the region to in the vicinity of \$2,200,000. The scale of this investment highlights the resilience of our regional communities and their commitment to looking after our land and water for future generations.

These projects are innovative and practical on-ground projects developed in partnership with landholders. Combined the projects developed with landholders in the 2008/09 financial year contribute to the following outcomes:

- Riparian zone (length and area): 161 km and 6,914 Ha
- Grazing lands managed for increased ground cover: 5,223 Ha
- Coastal ecosystems: 6,806 Ha
- Endangered and Not of Concern & of Concern vegetation: 2,017 Ha



Fitzroy River on dusk.

Executive Officer's report (continued)

Our Reef Rescue partners Growcom have also developed projects which have led to 573 Ha of improved nutrient and water use efficiency, 347 Ha of sediment reduction, and 21 Ha of improved ground cover involving highly innovative "living mulch" trials.

At the same time staff and committee have continued to build capacity in the region and actively engage with the wider community by:

- holding a Neighbourhood Catchment launch at St Lawrence;
- running a number of well received workshops including a pasture monitoring and feed budgeting workshop as well as two computer mapping workshops;
- attending landcare meetings;
- hosting two member forums;
- participating in Beef 2009, manning a stall and also taking part in property tours to discuss projects FRCC has previously developed; and
- supporting and participating in the St Lawrence wetlands discovery day and Wetland Care Australia workshop.

Attendance at these events has taken the total number of people who have participated in FRCC events to almost 700 in the 2008/09 financial year.



Executive Officer's report (continued)

There has also been strong growth in FRCC's membership as well with two new group members being approved along with 125 new individual members. This takes the total number of group members to 41 and individual members to 212 at the end of the 2008/09 financial year. Interestingly we have noted that a number of the new individual members

These achievements have occurred during a period of very uncertain funding. New arrangements under the Australian Government Caring for our Country program require groups to contest funding that had previously been guaranteed. It is a new approach that addresses national rather than local priorities. In late 2008 early 2009 FRCC staff worked with Fitzroy Basin Association (FBA) staff to prepare Caring for our Country applications and we congratulate FBA on their successful bids.

FRCC was also successful in its bid to secure a small amount of funding to provide co-ordination support to some of our local community groups, hold a community forum with indigenous involvement and provide devolved grants to groups for strategic local projects to support the implementation of the Neighbourhood Catchment program. Given that across Australia there were 1300 submissions to Caring for our Country and only 300 were funded this is a great result.



Fitzroy River is where we live.

"6 best things"



HELP PROTECT OUR RIVER!

- 1. GET INVOLVED**
- 2. RECOGNISE BEST PRACTICE**
- 3. WATCH YOUR DRAIN**
- 4. KEEP IT CLEAN**
- 5. CARE FOR YOUR CATCHMENT**
- 6. KEEP YOUR GROUND COVERED**

Executive Officer's report (continued)

"We want a river, not a drain" was a clear message from the FRCC member forum in October 2008. This message shows that feelings in the community run deep when it comes to protecting water quality. Since the forum FRCC has worked hard to keep our membership informed of the work underway to address their concerns. It is important to respond when problems occur but it is equally as important to get on the front foot and be proactive and this is why in August 2009 FRCC launched the "6 best things – help protect our river" campaign. The campaign is about turning the passion which was on display at our October 2008 member's forum into action. The 6 best things are:

- 1. Get involved:** Make time to participate in local events, get to know your local landcare and environmental groups.
- 2. Recognise best practice:** Seek out the latest knowledge, learn from others and get advice, and celebrate those who are at the forefront of best practice.
- 3. Watch your drain:** Don't turn our river into your drain. Be careful about water usage, watch what goes down the sink and think about how it will affect the river and reef.
- 4. Keep it clean:** Don't rubbish the river. Work with your local council to prevent pollution and help with clean-up activities.
- 5. Care for your catchment:** Understand catchment management, work with your neighbours to plan on-ground works, and consider whole of catchment problems and solutions.
- 6. Keep your ground covered:** Maintain minimum of 30% ground cover, manage cattle to avoid overgrazing, and reduce erosion.

FRCC will work to showcase each "best thing" and encourage people to participate, learn, and help protect our river for future generations.

FRCC Management Committee activities

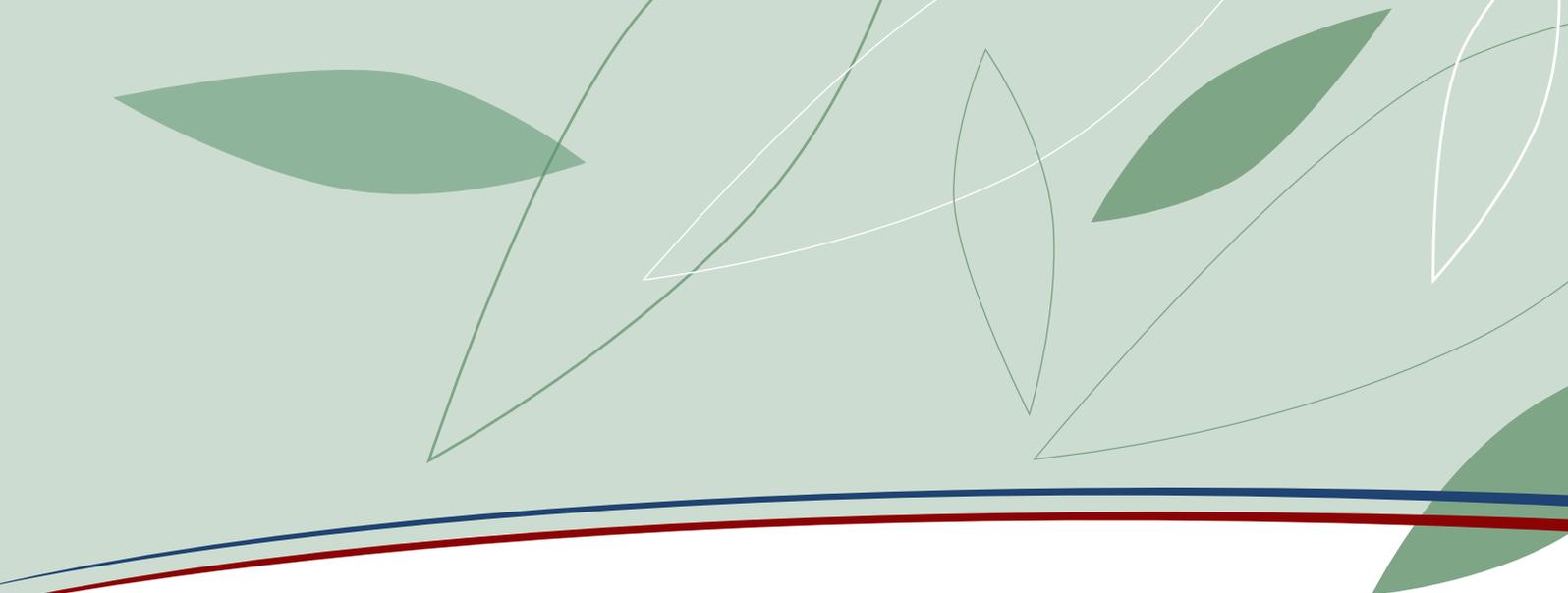
	Management Committee meetings (attended / held)	Management Committee workshops (attended / held)	NC project assessment panel (attended / held)	Interests of Management Committee members
Michelle Hanrahan (President)	6/6	1/1	4/4	Landcare & Industry
Peter Baggett (Secretary)	6/6	1/1	4/4	Grazing & Weeds
Leise Childs (Treasurer)	5/6	1/1	4/4	Conservation
Ian Dare	5/6	1/1	3/4	Local Government
Ken Rutherford ²	3/6		1/4	Grazing
Ian Groves	4/6	1/1	2/4	Horticulture
Robert McArthur	4/6	1/1	3/4	Grazing & Landcare
Malcolm Mann ⁴	1/6		1/4	Cultural Heritage
Paul Birch	6/6	1/1	3/4	Finance
Donald Black	4/6		2/4	Grazing & Local Government
Jeff Mills ³	2/6	1/1	2/4	Grazing & Landcare
Cr. Sandra O'Brien ¹	2/6		1/4	Local Government

(1) Commenced 23 January 2009

(2) Retired 23 January 2009

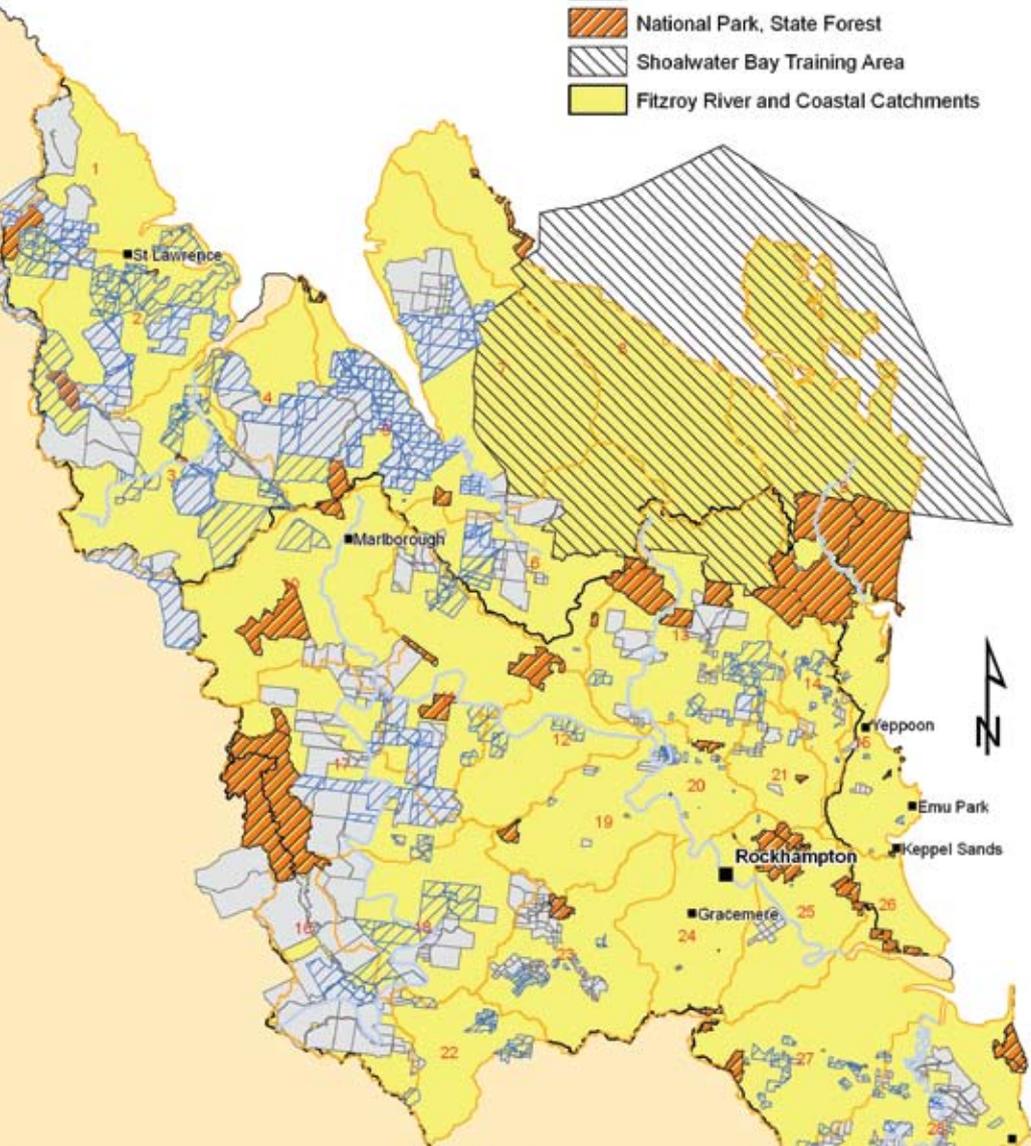
(3) Commenced 27 March 2009

(4) Commenced 12 June 2009



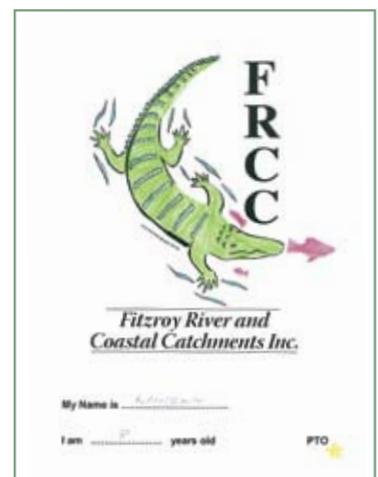
Legend

- Major Centre
- Town
- major drainage
-  FRCC members
-  Neighbourhood Catchments
-  Neighbourhood Catchment projects
-  National Park, State Forest
-  Shoalwater Bay Training Area
-  Fitzroy River and Coastal Catchments



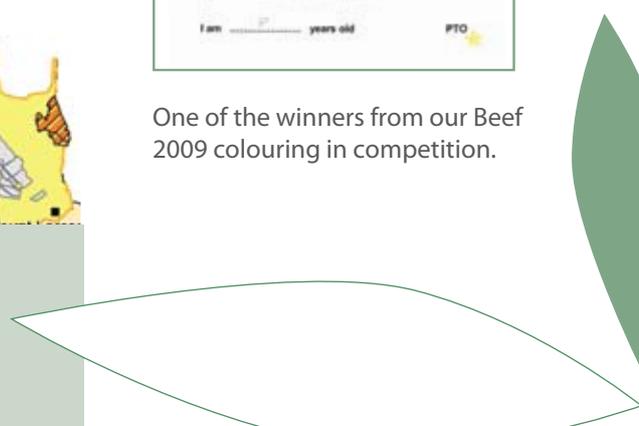
FRCC on-ground

Each year FRCC chooses new priority Neighbourhood Catchments in which to focus our efforts but at the same time we continue to provide support to past priority areas. In 2008/09 FRCC focused its efforts on the St Lawrence, Waverley Creek, and Torilla Plains Neighbourhood Catchments.



One of the winners from our Beef 2009 colouring in competition.

The map above shows the properties which have undertaken projects with FRCC since 2001 and the distribution of our members.





Images from 2008/09

FRCC publishes a quarterly newsletter detailing its activities. Following are some of the images that have featured in our newsletter over the past year. To obtain a copy of past newsletters please visit www.frcc.org.au

Funding Acknowledgement

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CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY



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