

MEDIA RELEASE

16 October 2007



Get paid to manage remnant vegetation

Landholders in the southern Brigalow Belt can now access stewardship funding from the Australian Government to help them protect or improve high quality remnant native vegetation on their properties.

The Queensland Murray-Darling Committee's (QMDC) 'Bush Tender 2007' will allocate Australian Government funding to land owners and leaseholders under the *Australian Government's Maintaining Australia's Biodiversity Hotspot Programme*.

Project Coordinator for QMDC, Emma Taylor, said that the programme had now invited bids for funding under a stewardship arrangement, with the aim of protecting valuable intact ecosystems - but not at the expense of productive land.

"The Australian Government and QMDC recognise the role that landholders play in protecting and improving native vegetation," said Emma.

"The *Maintaining Australia's Biodiversity Hotspots Programme* will provide funding to offset the costs that are usually borne by landholders in managing important patches of natural habitat," she said.

Ms Taylor said the project would run as a commercial tender, where landholders enter bids based on the costs of managing the area, as well as the value of their vegetation to the overall biodiversity health in that area.

"Involvement in the project is totally voluntary and eligible landholders will be given the opportunity to set their own price for the stewardship services they're prepared to provide," she said.

"The first step to participating in the project will be to complete a simple Expression of Interest form. We will then contact applicants to find out more information about their vegetation and discuss management options," she said.

Programme funding will be available for landholder management on remnant vegetation that has already been retained for high biodiversity values and has already been mapped by the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Water. For a full list of eligible vegetation, visit www.qmdc.org.au/get-involved/bush-tender-2007.html and download the brochure.

Expressions of Interest opened in September, and will remain open for a period of five months. For more information contact Emma on 07 4623 3478 or visit the website.

ENDS

Media contact/s

Released by:

Amelia Radford, Communications Officer, QMDC, 07 4637 6234

More information:

Emma Taylor, Project Coordinator, 07 4623 3478

Kate Steel, Native Vegetation & Biodiversity officer, QMDC, 07 4622 8446

Images

Caption: A map of the areas eligible for Bush Tender 207 funding.



For an electronic copy of this image, email Amelia Radford at ameliar@qmdc.org.au

Caption: The management of valuable areas of vegetation like this has often been the responsibility of landholders. QMDC's Bush Tender 207 will try to help make conservation more realistic for landholders.



Photo courtesy of Kate Steel, QMDC. For an electronic copy of this photo, email Kate on kates@qmdc.org.au