South West NRM

On-Ground Project Fact Sheet

ROTATIONS & TECHNOLOGY FOR GRAZING ENTERPRISES - HOLLY DOWNS

Landholder Name: K.H. & M.J. HISCOCK

Property Location & Lot on Plan:
(Property & project location maps attached at the back of the document).
"Holly Downs" L36/OR344,L34,56,101/OR192,L102,103/05311,L35/05390,L38/05391 &L59/OR22

Property Outline:
(E.g. Property description, size in hectares, enterprise, annual rainfall, and current management practice)

Holly Downs (9713 ha; 650mm av. ann. rainfall) located 8 kms south of Augathella, is part of a suite of 3 properties owned and operated by K.H. & M.J. Hiscock. The other properties are *Ingeberry* located in the Quilpie district (15378 ha; 400 mm av. ann. rainfall), and *Kerang* (607 ha; 650 mm av. ann. rainfall) located in the Wandoan district. The family enterprise has expanded from *Kerang* where Cameron Hiscock grew up attending Wandoan State School and later Toowoomba Grammar School. Cameron is now a young man actively engaged in property management within the family enterprise. *Holly Downs* was purchased in 1993. The overarching aspirations for the Hiscocks are to develop all three properties, with *Holly Downs* as the primary administrative base for the aggregation; to increase cashflow for the enterprise attaining gross margins commensurate with returns through full property development; increased effectiveness and efficiency of watering systems, enabling an increase in cattle numbers and subsequent returns through rotational grazing, aligned with sustainability principles. The Hiscocks have previously successfully undertaken conservation and biodiversity projects through South West NRM on both *Holly Downs* and *Ingeberry*. The current *Holly Downs* project is a continuation of a staged property development program, and is an important project leading to introduction of new technology and production methods influencing the Hiscock enterprise. The *Holly Downs* project includes installation of telemetric watering points to the western paddocks complimenting efficiencies attained on the eastern sector of the property. This project will initiate a three staged process focussing on upgrade of waters through telemetry and further refinement of a property wide rotational grazing system (current project), install additional fencing to the Back Paddock (1619 ha) to bring it on-line for rotational grazing, and upgrading of waters to telemetric systems consistent with the rest of the property.

This project is supported by South West NRM through funding from the Queensland Government's Q2 Coasts and Country and Australian Government's Caring for Our Country.

Project Description

This project funds installation of water point telemetry infrastructure as part of a broader project, analysing impact on property management, environmental outcomes & business efficiencies, from incorporation of technological innovation. Analysis will investigate economic & operational returns to broadacre enterprises, leveraging economies of scale, refinement of grazing outcomes through rotational systems, & demonstrate innovative technological advances which can facilitate property management outcomes.

Project Aim

To quantify economic and environmental returns to a rangeland grazing enterprise based on a modified production system incorporating rotational grazing, technological innovation and modified work methods.

Project Outcomes

To further refine and integrate economic and environmental outcomes into property management outputs, reduced labour and property running costs, deliver better utilisation of water resources, encourage 3P grasses and more consistent ground cover, and reduction in carbon outputs.

Outputs

CB1.1 Events; 1 field day in conjunction with South West NRM; expect approximately 20 persons.

OG3.4 Enhanced terrestrial vegetation; 2986 ha project area, influencing 25698 ha through rotational grazing practices and property management across the enterprise.

OG14.5 Groundcover management; 2986 ha project area, influencing 25698 ha through rotational grazing practices; adopted management practices for 2 property managers and influencing up to another 20 through the field day.

Project Monitoring:

Objectives:	Monitor ground cover response, presence of pasture species and biodiversity, and production benefits in response to instalation and development of a telemtric stock watering system, coupled with expanded rotational grazing practices covering 2986 ha.
Indicators b& Methodology:	**Indicators:** 3P pasture species, percentage groundcover, pasture quantity, rainfall, grazing days, and land condition. **Methodology:** Transects and photo points, standing dry mass, use of grazing charts, *Stocktake* monitoring.
Monitoring Schedule:	Establish baseline data prior to the commencement of the project. To assist project collaboration and holistic data analysis under the project, the initial collection and onforwarding to South West NRM, of rainfall and ongoing production monitoring data (e.g. grazing days / location etc. incorporating actual rest periopds for each paddock, yields: stock days / ha, stocking rate), will be the responsibility of the landholder. Biophysical monitoring every six months in which South West NRM will be responsible for collecting, collating, interpreting and reporting data. Two pasture monitoring transects considering pasture species and ground cover established within the project area representative of the major land types. Two photo monitoring sites within the project area representative of the major land types. One pasture monitoring transect and one photo monitoring site located upon the property, external to the project site, as a comparison site. Analysis: Return on Investment. Develop a case study comparing return on investment of rotational grazing systems as developed under this project, and comparing the economic return on investment to the project comparison site.