

# Tongarra Creek Bank Stabilisation and Coral Tree Removal, Albion Park

**Location:** Albion Park, NSW

**NRM Region:** Southern Rivers CMA

**Industry:** Lifestyle / Bush Regeneration

**Issues:**

- Riparian Weeds
- Water Quality
- Bank Erosion

**Landholder Vision:**

- To stabilise Tongarra Creek, improve water quality and re-establish native rainforest vegetation, providing habitat for local fauna.

**Funding:**

- The Australian Government Envirofund is the local action component of the Australian Government's \$3 billion Natural Heritage Trust.



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Small Farms and Rural Living Network

Southern Councils Group

**The Project**

The purpose of this project is to remove Coral Trees and other environmental weeds along the western banks of Tongarra Creek and revegetate, enhance and connect existing stands of riparian vegetation on neighbouring properties. This will greatly improve water quality in the creek, prevent further erosion and sedimentation of Tongarra Creek and provide habitat for native fauna.

**Project Results**

The completion of this project has been a remarkable achievement considering the amount of Coral Tree, Lantana and industrial rubbish that was located on the site.

Initial work in October 2006 involved cutting access tracks into the tangled mess of Lantana, Coral Tree and flood debris. This assisted contractors to remove and mulch the various weeds found on site, in particular the large volume of Coral Tree wood.

After removing car bodies, concrete and road base waste from the Illawarra Highway, a temporary water line was installed to assist with initial plantings. From February 2007 onwards the landholders pegged wooden barriers on steep roadside verges, mulched and planted extensively with Lomandra's to stabilise soil. The RTA inspected the site and agreed to install a new drainage structure to reduce soil erosion and protect the project site for free. This work was completed as a direct result of the landholder's passion to complete the project to best practice and their negotiation / bargaining skills.



*Illawarra Highway- Coral Trees*



*Drain installed and road verge planted heavily with Lomandra cells*



*Coral Trees marked for removal along Tongarra Creek*



*Coral Trees removed, area planted and mulched heavily*

Working in a systematic way, the landholders have transformed the riparian zone into a well-revegetated area. The stream banks were planted with hundreds of *Lomandra* and *Juncus* cells, which has had a great stabilising effect on the banks. Despite the area being flooded heavily on numerous occasions, the landholders have maintained and replanted this section to ensure stability is achieved.

A permanent water line was installed in October 2007, which assisted greatly with maintenance and establishment of various native rainforest species. Through out the site a number of local species have naturally germinated and are emerging through the mulch and along the stream banks, in particular Cabbage Tree Palms, Native Hibiscus, and Sandpaper Fig.



*Installing irrigation in preparation for planting*



*Planting out Highway bank with *Lomandra* cells*



*Creek planted with *Juncus* and *Lomandra* cells*

There is still more work to be completed on the site, which was not factored into this grant, the landholders will continue to plant and mulch the site, and ensure a dense riparian zone will be established. Work on the eastern side on Tongarra Creek will occur through out 2008-09, which will double the size of the rehabilitated area overall.

The landholders have recorded in detail species planted, activities undertaken and established photo points across the site. It is hoped an ongoing update on the Small Farms Network website will occur as the project develops.

Due to its location on the Illawarra Highway, the project has been watched by a number of tourist's and locals, with some stopping and congratulating the landholders on their efforts and asking more about their work. Over the next 5 years as the plants grow, this project will inspire and encourage other landholders to undertake their own rehabilitation projects.



*Lantana, Willows, Coral Tree log over stream bank looking towards highway*



*Site after clearing and mulching, with *Casuarina* stand in background*



*Site mulched and planted along Tongarra Creek*

## **More Details**

For more details about this project or to plan your own revegetation project, contact Andrew Britton, Small Farms Coordinator on (02) 4232 3200 or email [abritton@southerncouncils.nsw.gov.au](mailto:abritton@southerncouncils.nsw.gov.au)