

**11 March 2020**

## **A Statement from the Nature Refuge Landholders of Queensland**

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This statement has been signed by 44 Nature Refuge landholders representing 68 Nature Refuges and 2,008,279 hectares of Queensland's protected area estate.

As Nature Refuge landholders, we are concerned that the potential of the Nature Refuge Program is being compromised by a lack of adequate financial or on-the-ground support to Nature Refuge landholders to manage our land and protect some of Queensland's most incredible landscapes.

The Queensland Nature Refuges program is a voluntary conservation program for private landholders who wish to protect the natural and cultural values for future generations by dedicating part or all of their land for conservation. Nature Refuge landholders range from owners of small coastal lifestyle properties to graziers on large pastoral stations, nature conservancies, for-profit corporations and Indigenous Traditional Owners.

Over the past decade more than 500 landholders, and the dedicated program officers who have worked to support them in establishing their refuges, have successfully grown the Nature Refuges program into the largest private protected area network in the country by area, covering a total area of more than 4.4 million hectares across the state.

But managing your land as a Nature Refuge requires a significant responsibility both in terms of time and money needed to deal with land management issues like weeds, uncontrolled fires and feral pests. We fear that funding for the program hasn't kept up the pace with the growth of the program, placing a burden on landholders and impacting the program's ability to protect landscapes. This burden falls heaviest on those landholders in Outback Queensland managing some of the state's largest nature refuges often with limited access to support.

The consequence of under-investment in the program is that many landholders are not able to access technical and financial support for vital conservation planning, management and monitoring activities on their land. This not only leaves a significant burden on landholders wanting to protect wildlife, but also leads to increased risk of failed or insufficient land management as we struggle to keep up.

A recent analysis of the Nature Refuges program<sup>1</sup> found that over the past five years, the Queensland Government has provided, on average, less than 25 cents per hectare annually to nature refuge landholders to manage their lands for nature, with many landholders receiving no ongoing financial support at all.

In 2017-2018 the Queensland Government's total expenditure on the Nature Refuges Program was approximately \$4.6 million. By comparison, the NSW Government is investing \$247 million over the next four years to support private landholders to protect and conserve natural values on their land.

The Nature Refuge Program is already a wonderful example of individuals and communities taking significant action at their own cost to care for nature on their land. However, with a little more support, the quality of conservation outcomes could improve immeasurably. Queensland has a unique opportunity to deliver

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<sup>1</sup> Protected Area Solutions (2018) Nature Refuges in Queensland: Report to The Pew Charitable Trusts and Queensland Trust for Nature, October 2018

meaningful, measurable and very cost-effective conservation outcomes through better supporting the voluntary contribution and hard work of Nature Refuge landholders.

We call on you to significantly increase nature refuges funding to improve management and monitoring of existing nature refuges and to encourage more landholders to enter the program.

<b>Barry &amp; Tammy Hughes</b>	North Head Nature Refuge Forsyth, Qld.
<b>Ewamian Aboriginal Corporation</b>	Talaroo Nature Refuge Mount Surprise, Qld
<b>Ian &amp; Christine McMasters</b>	Mt Mellum Nature Refuge Beerwah, Qld
<b>Marilyn Shrapnel</b>	Gerygone Gully Nature Refuge Mooloolah, Qld
<b>Cheryl Bean</b>	Gil'la Nature Refuge Traveston, Qld
<b>Rick Humphries</b>	Possum Lane Nature Refuge Stanthorpe, Qld
<b>Fiorella Paola Cassoni</b>	Bimblebox Nature Refuge Alpha, Qld
<b>Trish Kelly</b>	Dilladerri Nature Refuge Balmoral Ridge, Qld  Wilga Park Nature Refuge Texas, Qld  Whilaloo Nature Refuge Texas, Qld
<b>Andrew Pegler</b>	The 1959 Nature Refuge Yaraka, Qld
<b>Jayn Hobba</b>	Tumbledown Nature Refuge Stanthorpe, Qld
<b>Carol Booth, Tim Low &amp; Terry Reis</b>	Egernia Nature Refuge Stanthorpe, Qld
<b>Alastair McDonald- McDonald Holdings</b>	Mount Windsor Nature Refuge

	Barcoo, Qld
	Rutland Plains Nature Refuge Carpentaria, Qld
	Ballara Nature Refuge Cloncurry, Qld
<b>Gary Plant</b>	Kurrajong Place Nature Refuge Stanthorpe, Qld
<b>Stephen &amp; Lilith Martin</b>	Garanyali Nature Refuge Maleny, Qld
<b>Sigrid Heise-Pavlov</b>	The Iggies Nature Refuge Atherton Tablelands, Qld
<b>Robert &amp; Anna Zigterman</b>	Dirran Creek Nature Refuge Atherton Tablelands, Qld
<b>David &amp; Brenda Parsons</b>	Nyalar Mirungan-ah Nature Refuge Maryvale, Qld
<b>Wal &amp; Heather Mayr</b>	Blue Fig Creek Nature Refuge Gold Coast Hinterland, Qld
<b>Rob &amp; Lyn French</b>	Gilberton Nature Refuge Einasleigh QLD 4871
<b>Richard Proudfoot</b>	Rainforest Ridge Nature Refuge Sunshine Coast Hinterland, Qld
<b>John &amp; Barbara Murton</b>	Resolute Nature Refuge Nanango, QLD
<b>Carly and Mark Sugars</b>	Mt Molangul Nature Refuge Dalga, Qld
<b>Elaine Bradley &amp; Steve Burgess</b>	Wurraglen Nature Refuge Dagun, Qld
<b>Joshua and Ryan Hull</b>	Hillview Nature Refuge Stanthorpe, Qld
<b>Barbara Maslen</b>	Wild Wings & Swampy Things Nature Refuge Daintree, Qld

**Dawn Couchman & Patrick Ledwith**

Haven Nature Refuge  
Cooran, Qld

**South Endeavour Trust**

Kings Plains-Alkoomie Nature Refuge  
Cooktown, Qld  
South Endeavour Nature Refuge  
Cooktown, Qld

Caloola Nature Refuge  
Cooktown, Qld

Lemuroid Leap Nature Refuge  
Atherton Tablelands, Qld

Dirrans End Nature Refuge  
Atherton Tablelands, Qld

Cloudland Nature Refuge  
Atherton Tablelands, Qld

Cassowary Crossing Nature Refuge  
Atherton Tablelands, Qld

Misty Mountain Nature Refuge  
Atherton Tablelands, Qld

Freemans Forest Nature Refuge  
Atherton Tablelands, Qld

**Rainforest Rescue**

Baralba Corridor Nature Refuge  
Cow Bay, Qld

Rainforest Rescue Nature Refuge  
Daintree, Qld

Kulki Anga Nature Refuge  
Cape Tribulation, Qld

Milky Pine Nature Refuge  
Daintree, Qld

**Queensland Trust for Nature**

Avoid Island Nature Refuge  
Avoid Island, Qld

Ant Plant East Nature Refuge  
Tully, Qld

**Bush Heritage Australia**

Cassowary Connection Nature Refuge  
Mission Beach, Qld

Carnarvon Station Nature Refuge  
Mount Moffat, Qld

Cravens Peak Nature Refuge  
Toko, Qld

Currumbin Valley Nature Refuge  
Coolangatta, Qld

Edgbaston Nature Refuge  
Aramac, Qld

Ethabuka Nature Refuge  
Bedourie, Qld

Goonderoo Nature Refuge  
Springsure, Qld

Pullen Pullen Nature Refuge  
Diamantina Lakes, Qld

Reedy Creek Nature Refuge  
Agnes Water, Qld

Yourka Nature Refuge  
Ravenshoe, Qld

**Joe Schick & Anne-Marie Dineen**

Oakview Wildlife Nature Refuge  
Kilkivan, Qld

**Nicole Jackson & Phillip Gordge**

The Sanctuary Nature Refuge  
Eukey, Qld

**Anna Fearnley**

Carabeen Nature Refuge  
Killarney, Qld

**Garlone Moulin & Jamie Gordon**

Mount Pleasant Nature Refuge  
Collinsville, Qld

**Aurelia and Ovidiu Noran**

Dahmongah Nature Refuge  
Mount Mee, Qld

**Meryl Simpson**

Feathertail Nature Refuge  
Brookfield, Qld

**Noel Dovecot**

Dovecot Nature Refuge  
Mount Morgan, Qld

**Tim Bee**

Horseshoe Bay Nature Refuge  
Magnetic Island, Qld

**Elizabeth & Benjamin Reeves**

Hypsi Forest Nature Refuge  
Tarzali, Qld

**Mt Quincan Crater Retreat**

Mount Quincan Nature Refuge  
Yungaburra, Qld

**Lisa Torrens**

Harper Creek Guala Nature Refuge  
Connondale, Qld

**Numala CTS**

Numala Community Nature Refuge  
Tamborine Mountain, Qld

**Australian Wildlife Conservancy**

Bowra Wildlife Sanctuary Nature Refuge  
Cunnamulla, Qld

Brooklyn Nature Refuge  
Mount Carbine, Qld

Mount Zero-Taravale Nature Refuge  
Paluma, Qld

Piccaninny Plains Nature Refuge  
Archer River, Qld

**Keith & Nancy Dolbel**

Ballara Park Nature Refuge  
Chinchilla, Qld

