



Media Release:

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Fitzroy Basin waterways obtain B grade for the third consecutive year

The Fitzroy Partnership for River Health (Fitzroy Partnership) today released its 2015-16 report card on the state of waterways across the Fitzroy Basin.

The report featured results for ecosystem health, agriculture and drinking water suitability in Rockhampton Regional Council and Central Highlands Regional Council areas.

Fitzroy Partnership Executive Officer Nathan Johnston was pleased to announce that a B grade was achieved for the third consecutive year for ecosystem health.

“This year the overall score for the Fitzroy Basin was 71, which is the same as the 2014-15 report card,” he said.

“The Lower Isaac was the best performing catchment for the year and the Callide improved marginally, largely due to better toxicant results and retained its C grade. For the first time in six years of reporting, no catchments received D grades for toxicants,” he said.

The 2015-16 report card is the latest of six, providing a greater ability to understand long-term trends and patterns emerging across the Fitzroy Basin.

One notable long-term trend emerging is the influence of weather and climate conditions, with wetter years typically resulting in lower ecosystem health scores. In 2015-16, rainfall was the lowest that has been experienced in six years of reporting.

The Report Card for 2015-16 also assessed treated water for drinking water suitability in Rockhampton Regional Council and Central Highlands Regional Council, with A grades achieved for all townships.

“The results confirm health guidelines were never exceeded and only minor exceedances of aesthetic guidelines were recorded during the 2015-16 period.” Nathan explained.

“This is typical of most water supplies in Australia with aesthetic guidelines relating to the acceptability of water to the consumer, for example appearance, taste and odour, rather than its impact on health.”

The agricultural industry is the largest land use in the Fitzroy Basin and also a major consumer of the Basin’s water assets.

“For the third year in a row, A and B grades have been awarded across the Basin for stock and cropping water use.” Nathan said.

The report card release comes on the back of recent news of the Fitzroy Partnership being showcased in the *Shared Water, Shared Responsibility, Shared Approach: Water in the Mining Sector*



publication prepared by the International Council on Mining and Metals and International Finance Corporation.

Paul Birch, Chief Executive Officer of member organisation, Fitzroy Basin Association Inc. (FBA) says the feature article recognises Fitzroy Partnership as an authoritative industry leader in waterway health management.

“The publication highlights that our local collaborative water stewardship approach is world class,” he said.

“This recognition is testament of what can be achieved at a regional scale when partners make a long-term commitment to a vision, which in this case is providing a more complete picture of waterway health in the Fitzroy Basin.”

Central Queenslanders can access the latest information on the three reporting products from the website www.riverhealth.org.au –Agricultural Use Reporting, Aquatic Ecosystem Health of local rivers and the estuary; and Drinking Water for Rockhampton and Central Highlands.

The Fitzroy Partnership for River Health, formed in 2012, includes organisations from government, agriculture, resources, industry, research and community and continues its aim of providing a more complete picture of river health in the Fitzroy Basin.

Fitzroy Partnership for River Health –

Major Partners: Fitzroy Basin Association (host organisation), Queensland Government, BMA, Peabody Energy, Anglo American, Rio Tinto and Glencore.

Partners: Rockhampton Regional Council, Ensham Resources, Santos, Wesfarmers, Central Highlands Regional Council, Cotton Australia, CQG Consulting, CQUniversity, New Hope Coal, Gladstone Area Water Board, Jellinbah Resources, Origin Energy and Queensland Resources Council.

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