

MEDIA RELEASE

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Lake Awoonga grows even greener with native planting

To mark World Habitat Day (6 October), Gladstone Area Water Board (GAWB) is celebrating the planting of 640 native grass seedlings at Lake Awoonga’s Coomal Bay recreation area—highlighting the critical role native vegetation plays in supporting both ecosystems and urban communities.

Throughout winter, GAWB’s horticulture team planted native grasses such as Kangaroo Grass (*Themeda triandra*), Barbed Wire Grass (*Cymbopogon refractus*), Blue Flax Lily (*Dianella brevipedunculata*) and Queensland Blue Grass (*Dicanthium sericeum*), all of which help to stabilise soil, improve water retention, and provide habitat for insects and small animals — including the iconic pretty-faced wallabies and kangaroos that live around the lake.

GAWB CEO Darren Barlow said the initiative reflects the organisation’s long-standing commitment to environmental stewardship and community wellbeing.

“Native vegetation enhances biodiversity, stabilises ecosystems, maintains water quality, and improves the Lake Awoonga visitor experience,” Mr Barlow said.

“These grasses are vital to the Coomal Bay environment—preventing erosion, supporting pollinators, and providing habitat for native fauna, including more than 220 bird species known to frequent the Lake Awoonga catchment.

“By incorporating native plants into our recreational areas, we’re protecting the landscape and enhancing the resilience and beauty of the lake for the thousands of people who visit each year,” he said.

GAWB also recently upgraded irrigation systems and hard landscaping at Coomal Bay to support the new plantings and improve the amenity of the area.

Observed annually, World Habitat Day promotes awareness of the connection between healthy environments and thriving urban communities.

“Places like Lake Awoonga help bridge the gap between urban living and nature. By creating green spaces that are ecologically sound and accessible, we’re investing in both community wellbeing and environmental resilience,” Mr Barlow said.

Gladstone Area Water Board (GAWB), as a Queensland Government Bulk Water Supply Authority, delivers safe and reliable water services which promote economic development and enhance the lifestyle of regional Queensland. GAWB owns and operates Awoonga Dam, along with a network of

pipelines, water treatment plants and other distribution infrastructure. GAWB also owns and operates Aquaculture Gladstone, a fish hatchery and interpretive display at Lookout One at Lake Awoonga.

To ensure long-term water security for customers, the 117-kilometre Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline (FGP) is under development. When delivered, the FGP will become part of the GAWB network and provide enhanced water security and reliability for the region. For more information about GAWB and the FGP, please visit www.gawb.qld.gov.au

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