

# **MYALL RIVER PASTORAL COMPANY**

Land Management Case Study -  
Marine Estate Management  
Strategy



Local Land  
Services



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## OVERVIEW

In April 2019, we submitted a proposal to Hunter Local Land Services (LLS) under the “Land Management Incentives Program”. At the time we were in the final stages of planning to build a new off-grid robotic dairy on our farm. The basis of the robotic dairy is that of a voluntary milking system - paddocks are split into three sections to be used in the day, evenings and nights and cows choose to traffic between these sections through the dairy up to three times a day.







## PLANNING

The existing herringbone dairy, located on the western end of our property, would continue to run and complement this new dairy which would be built on the eastern side. Historically the east side of the farm was used for dry cows and steers. Therefore, extensive work was needed to be done to prepare the paddocks and lanes for the transformation to a dairy site with milking cows. The eastern boundary of the farm is the Myall River. With a larger herd to be located at this end of the farm, the need to maintain the health of the waterways was recognised and we planned to fence this boundary to avoid livestock gaining access to the river. In addition, there are lower-lying wetland areas and existing sections of native vegetation that required the same containment to optimise the water quality of the river and encourage regeneration of vegetation.

Within the fencing project, it was identified that existing paddocks needed to be separated into smaller units to allow for an improved intensive grazing rotation and sustainable pasture renewal. All fences were planned to be electric, powered by solar energisers.

The proposed changes to the configuration of the area led to the need for designated laneways with off-stream watering points for the livestock. Water troughs would need to be placed throughout the property, plumbed from an existing dam.

## COSTS

The costings for this project totalled over \$320,000, including the goods along with the labour and machinery required. We approached LLS for a grant of \$100,000 and were delighted to have this approved in June 2019, thanks to funding from the NSW Government's Marine Estate Management Strategy. We purchased all materials soon after the approval was granted and planned for staff/machinery to undertake the projects.

## CONSTRUCTION

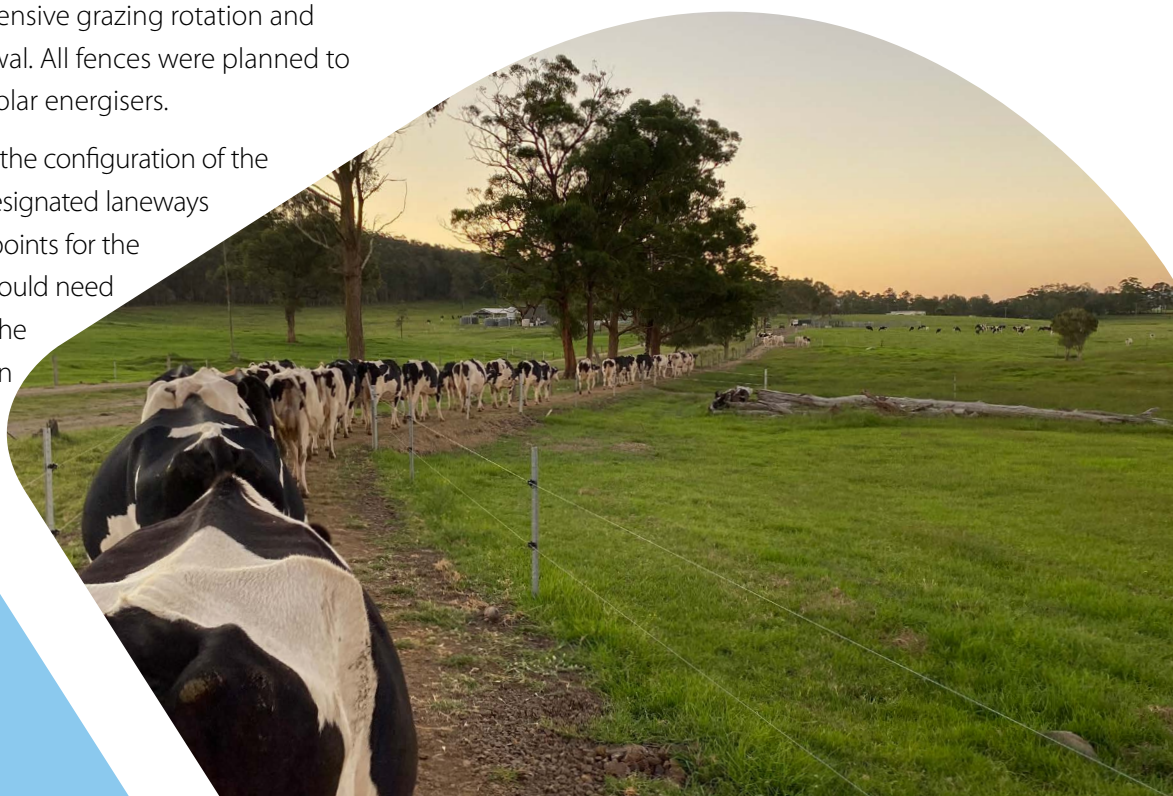
In parallel to the construction of the new dairy building, we proceeded to sub-divide the existing paddocks with the electric fence materials and solar energisers and fence off the internal wetland areas. We also prepared the new cow traffic laneways with placement of the water troughs at the identified positions. This was completed by January 2020. The final fence line along the river bank is now under staged construction and should be finished in the next month or two.

## ACCESS

We have noticed the excellent voluntary movement of our cattle along the new lanes, encouraged by the regular water accessibility from the new paddocks.

## FENCES

The fences are robust and, with the addition of the solar energisers, have not sustained any damage from the cattle. Paddocks are able to be further divided into daily grazing strips with the use of temporary electric fences to optimise the pasture use







## INCENTIVES, FUNDING AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Hunter Local Land Services is currently seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) from landholders for assistance to improve river, native vegetation and pasture health in priority areas of the Lower Hunter, Upper Hunter and Mid Coast districts.

Our main priorities include:

1. Protection and restoration of riverbanks in priority areas
2. Significant threatened native vegetation restoration and enhancement for priority vegetation or in priority areas
3. Threatened species recovery for priority species
4. Grazing or on-farm practices that improve pasture cover, perennial species and nutrient/fertiliser management in priority areas.

Funding is available for eligible landholders, community groups and Aboriginal land managers (such as LALCs) to implement on ground projects to develop natural resource management projects on, private properties. To receive support and determine if your project is eligible for incentive funding we invite individuals or groups to submit Expressions of Interest.

You can read more and submit an Expression of Interest via our website: <https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/regions/hunter/grants-funding-scholarships>

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Contact: Hunter Local Land Services**

**1300 795 299**

[www.lls.nsw.gov.au/hunter](http://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/hunter)



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## REHABILITATION

There is a lot of regrowth in the wetlands following rainfalls in late January onwards, and we see large populations of birds inhabiting the area - black swans appear to be the latest to move in.

## THANKS

We pass on our thanks to the Hunter Local Land Services for helping us to achieve this project through the NSW Government's Marine Estate Management Strategy. The option to gain financial assistance encouraged us to extend our initial plans and this result has benefited both us and the environment. This has made the pasture areas of our new dairy a sustainable venture and complements the overall basis of the dairy being off-grid and solar powered.

*Kay and John Smith*

