MEDIA RELEASE

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Boosting Biosecurity and Land Condition across the Southern Gulf Region

Agriculture is one of the economic pillars of the Southern Gulf region – supporting local jobs, communities, and the economy. Sustaining this vital industry depends on maintaining healthy land condition, which is increasingly under threat from invasive pest animals and weeds.

To address these challenges, Southern Gulf NRM is delivering the *Invasive Biosecurity Outcomes for the Southern Gulf Region* project under the Queensland Government's *Natural Resource Management Expansion Program.* The project takes a whole-of-catchment approach to pest and weed management, focusing on efforts upstream in the Flinders Catchment, where pest and weeds can have significant downstream impacts on land condition and water quality.

The Mayor of Flinders Shire Council, Kate Peddle said *"The Flinders Shire Council welcomes the announcement of the NRM Expansion Project – Invasive Biosecurity Outcomes for the Southern Gulf Region as a significant investment in the health of our natural landscape. The project's focus on improving land condition through a catchment-based approach - commencing at the headwaters of the Flinders River and working downstream - represents best practice in coordinated invasive species management. Initiatives like this help to safeguard the long-term productivity and natural values that our community depends on."*

The project will work with 32 land managers to deliver on-ground actions across 48,000 hectares of priority landscapes. Funding will be directed to high-impact watercourses, particularly those that require significant investment due to difficult terrain and sensitive environments.

The effectiveness of these actions will be rigorously monitored and evaluated, ensuring that outcomes are measurable and shared with the wider community.

Cr. Barry Hughes, Chair of the North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils and Mayor of Etheridge Shire Council welcomed the funding. *"The impact of invasive species across North West Queensland is of particular concern to our local communities, not only impacting agricultural production, but also the unique social and environmental values that define our region. This project provides vital support towards the on-going protection of our natural assets, and we look forward to working collaboratively with Southern Gulf NRM in its delivery over the next three years."*

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Southern Gulf NRM is the Natural Resource Management organisation for the Southern Gulf region of north west Queensland. We work with the community to deliver projects that improve and protect our region's natural resources and to maintain the prosperity of industries that rely on these. The Southern Gulf water catchment region includes all the land whose creeks and rivers run into the southern Gulf of Carpentaria. This encompasses an area of 215,000km square^2.