



Annual General Meeting Minutes

Saturday 29 November 2025

Chair - Fiona Barron

Meeting declared open: 10am (via videoconf)

Welcome and acknowledgement of country

Apologies: Mayor Toppin, Cr Brown, Cr Bosnic, Erica Hughes, Travis Sydes

Guests: Cr Amy Braes, Sonia Leonard

Members for Quorum = 9. **Attending:** Fiona Barron, Karen Pedersen, Trevor Meldrum, Eric Rosendale, Allan Holmes, Hugh Wallace, Ellen Weber (GSNRM), John Brisbin (+JAMARR). **Quorum achieved.**

Minutes of 2024 AGM

Presented and reviewed by meeting. Moved for acceptance: Trevor / Second: Karen / Accepted.

Treasurer's Report and Audited Statements

Tabled by Karen and reviewed by meeting. Business relating to transfer of acquitted funding and Public Benefit payment deferred to General Meeting.

Auditor provided unqualified report for the FY2025 Mitchell River finances.

Moved for acceptance: Karen / Second: Ellen / Accepted.

Chair's Report

Fiona presented a comprehensive review of the year's activities and commentary on the wider factors affecting our catchment, including review of the Mitchell River Water Plan, proposals for large-scale irrigated agriculture, mining developments, and the ongoing impacts of feral fish and weeds.

Congratulations to the Abattoir Swamp Management Committee who successfully delivered a 4 year Report on progress at the wetland to Council at the Mitchell River Forum in October.

Special thanks were offered to the people and organisations that have supported Mitchell River through the year, including Gulf Savannah NRM, Cape York NRM, CAFNEC, Mareeba Shire Council, BioSecurity Queensland.

The Chair's written report was tabled to the meeting and accepted.

Election of the Committee

Ellen Weber, Chair of Gulf Savannah NRM, served as Returning Officer. She thanked the outgoing Committee for their contributions and ongoing commitment to the organisation and the catchment.

Nominations for all positions had been received. In addition, nominations for each position were invited from the floor. The election process delivered the following results:

- **Chair:** Fiona Barron
- **Treasurer:** Karen Pedersen
- **Secretary:** John Brisbin
- **Director:** Trevor Meldrum
- **Director:** Hugh Wallace-Smith

The Returning Officer was thanked for her service and the meeting returned to the Chair.

Appointment of auditor

Graeme Turner Agencies was resolved as Auditor for FY26. Moved: Karen / Second: Trevor / Carried

AGM close: 10:45

General Meeting

Distribution of project funds

The meeting returned to Allan's discussion of the remaining funds balance in the Arriga Plains project. This project originated under Allan's leadership and was successfully concluded in 2022. The remaining balance has been held for potential use on a final round of sampling (water levels and salinity). However, due to significant changes in the ownership and management of property across the Arriga Plains, it is less likely that this data will be utilised.

Accordingly, Allan moved that the remaining balance (\$6,988.23) should be transferred to general revenue and the Project code closed. Moved: Allan / Second: Karen / Carried.

Unresolved \$40K

The meeting discussed the situation arising from an unresolved payment of \$40,000 that Mitchell River received in 2020 from the SPER (State Penalties Enforcement Registry). The main action arising is that Karen, Allan, and others (as appropriate) will seek clarification via Member for Cook, David Kempton. Cr Braes offered to assist in an upcoming meeting with Kempton.

The objective will be to gain formal approval to retain the funds. Ellen advised that ideas for how to use the funds should be communicated to the government as part of the clarification process. Karen likes the idea of getting money out to the catchment, and suggested a separate discussion would be useful. Hugh noted that the funds could be useful for raising the profile of the Mitchell River group and for recruiting more participation.

The meeting supported efforts to clarify and confirm the status of these funds.

Year to Date financials

July - Oct financials were presented to the group for acceptance. Moved: Karen / Second: Allan / Accepted

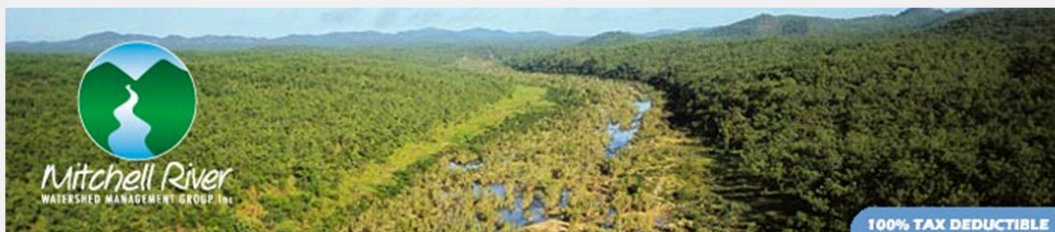
Introductions

Sonia Leonard introduced herself as a Julatten resident, referral from Louise Hateley, and recently returned to the region after a decade overseas. She is a fluvial geomorphologist and is keen to be involved in the group.

Meeting closed at 11:30.



Driving off into the sunrise of 2026!



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Chairs Report: MRWVG AGM 29 November 2025

First and foremost we wish to acknowledge the many Traditional Owners across the Mitchell River Catchment- their elders past present and emerging. We value their knowledge and connection to and caring for Country.

Like to acknowledge our many stakeholders, members and supporters. Thank you to the many people who make up the Mitchell community- farmers, graziers, industry, townsfolk and all the many 'services' and admin personnel that keep the essential but sometimes mundane aspects of life functioning.

2025:

Its been another very full year with limited finance to implement much needed projects but an abundance of dedication and skills of many- particularly my fellow Executive.

- **John as Secretary** - for keeping things ticking over, for pulling the strings to keep issues and opportunities to the fore and for managing communications- directly with people and various on-line approaches.
John has also been a representative on QWALC and just a few weeks ago , relinquished this role after ?? years so he has time in his life for himself and family - when he is not driving down to Kowanyama to work with the , Council, Rangers and teams down there.
- **Karen-as Treasurer** – for another amazing year of keeping tabs on the precious dollars in our accounts and chasing up invoices to make sure we don't awry and meet all the required processes, checks and balances as an Incorporated Group.
When she is not helping to run their farm as well as the exemplary eco-tourism venture for the many visitors and guests an important part of their enterprise and amazing opportunity for visitors
- **Trevor-as an Ordinary Member** - who is anything but ordinary. His enthusiasm to help look after Country with many hours of work through the important Cape York Weeds and Ferals- managing weeds and trying not to get stuck in the mud too often or dealing with the many ferals (usually the 4-legged ones) that impact the landscape.
Trevor is also a representative on the Queensland Biodiversity Council and a Director with Queensland Conservation Council.

Mitchell Forum: A highlight was the well attended and very informative Forum held at Mt Molloy on 11th of October this year. This forum demonstrated many of the partners and activities occurring across the catchment that are gathering critical information, helping to save species, managing the landscape and supporting farmers and community.

Not only did we get to see and learn lots of interesting information but also had the opportunity to network with a fabulous group of people.

Then of course we have many other important partners and stakeholders involved across other projects and activities.

- Thank you to Gulf Savannah for their support, funding on projects, and work in the catchment.
- Thank you to CAFNEC who do so much to advocate for a healthy environment across the landscape.

Thanks Swampies- Not least of our projects are the “Swampies,” the critical and enthusiastic Group of volunteers who are looking after Abattoir Swamp - particularly repairing fencing and damage after flooding to this important habitat and popular visitor site.

Mareeba Shire Council - Amazon FrogBit – MSC work to manage this horror “escapee” environmental weed infesting the waterways. And work on many other weeds and issues, where possible, with support from MRWMG.

Future projects, issues and opportunities to help shape the way the landscape is managed-

- **Feral Freshwater Fish** – an upcoming program with DPI- keep an eye out for more details.

Sadly, feral fish are a huge environmental risk and we all know the history of tilapia and its impacts

- Mitchell Water Plan

First round of consultation gathering information & ideas closed 30/9/2025- currently developing a Draft Plan and then in 2026 there will be further consultation on that Draft. Final Plan to be developed and implemented in 2027. This is something we all need to keep an eye on -particularly with the interest in new mines for critical minerals- we see the impacts and scars of previous ventures across the Mitchell landscape.

QG description includes “...*emerging industry in the area is the production of critical minerals, such as of copper, tungsten, antimony and zinc. Current and potential future expansions of mining these and other rare earth minerals require water.*”

- FNQ Regional Plan

QG description includes “...*develop new regional plans that cover every corner of the state in conjunction with infrastructure plans that protect the lifestyle of our communities and appropriately cater for growth, and to reset the planning partnership with local governments.*”

This Plan includes Mareeba, Tableland and Etheridge Shires so it includes large part of the Mitchell. A draft plan has been developed-and consultation undertaken-

Consultation is open until 11:59pm Monday 5 January 2026. Opportunity to find out more information and/or make a submission

- Palmer River Scheme AKA Lakeland Irrigation Area

This one hasn't gone away, \$10 m spent on a business case and other development work based on the premise of ,(QG description) includes “... *identifying the Palmer River at the headwaters of the Mitchell River catchment as the most favourable site. The Palmer River, a tributary of the Mitchell River, flows west into the Gulf of Carpentaria and avoids the prospect of a major dam, on a river flowing to the Great Barrier Reef lagoon.*

What- the Gulf isn't important ??!!, yet again the importance and value of this critical environment is diminished. One can only wonder what benefit could that \$10m might have already been able to bring to the catchment's environment and community if spent on management of some of the current critical needs across the Mitchell - weeds? Roads? services?

So there we are - lots happening as always and because the Mitchell catchment sits across many differing boundaries of management and classification and drains to the magnificent but relatively overlooked- Gulf of Carpentaria with its valuable habitat and important seafood industries. It frames 'home' for many people and creatures. We have several local Govt, environmental (bioregions), NRM regions, many communities and industries, these many boundaries provide a multitude of challenges and opportunities.

There will always be a need to be coordinated as a community and advocating across these issues to ensure the health of the people and the landscape and all that live in it-flora and fauna. Lets work to ensure that the MRWMG remains an important vehicle to help drive this coordination and advocacy for a healthy and sustainable future for all.

Thank you to everyone for supporting the MRWMG and also allowing me the opportunity to be part of the Group, let's keep it going and keep up the great work and shared effort. Thank you, we will see you more in 2026.