

Direct mortality through collision and entanglement are of concern. Collision with fences for flying and terrestrial species is a worldwide problem. Fences cause entanglement for roos, emus, cranes, bustards, cassowaries etc in Australia.

Indirect effects of fencing include;

- Non-target impacts
- Consequences of reduced movement
- Change predation
- Modified population processes
- Modified resilience in populations or ecosystems
- Reduced colonisation & dispersal

Fencing can be expensive, costing up to \$12,000/km with on-going maintenance needs.

Appropriate fence design would seek to minimise unintended consequences, ensure effectiveness, manage surrounding areas to ensure effectiveness and consider visual amenity.

Some of the questions to be considered when introducing fencing are;

- Will the conservation benefit be realised?
- What are the non-target biodiversity effects likely to be?
- Do the biodiversity benefits outweigh the biodiversity costs?
- Is the construction appropriate?
- Can it be upgraded?
- Is long-term maintenance planned for?
- Are there other solutions?
- Is access to key landscape features (fruiting trees, watering points etc) likely to be impacted?
- Should fencing be added to gain approval or should developments be designed to avoid fencing?
- One size won't fit all – different contexts will need different fences
- Does fencing enhance the other important values of an area?

In a recent review of fencing for conservation Hayward and Kerley (2009) made the following conclusions:

- The costs of fencing outweigh their benefits on average.
- Despite this fencing has a place in conservation
- Fencing for conservation is an acknowledgement that we are failing to successfully coexist with and, ultimately, conserve biodiversity.
- In the long-term fences may prove to be as much a threat to biodiversity as the threats they are meant to exclude...they should be considered a short-term solution that buys time.
(Hayward and Kerley 2009, Biological Conservation 142: 1-13)

"Perhaps we are failures at living with biodiversity but perhaps acknowledging that and putting fencing in place to minimise the impacts of our failings is simply a pragmatic response."

Consensus for Bingil Bay picnic area

Around 40 Bingil Bay residents turned up for the onsite meeting with CCRC acting Parks Manager Paul Devine and Councillor Jennifer Downs to discuss the upgrade of the picnic area.

An artists impression of the upgrade following a similar meeting in June last year was displayed at the Bingil Bay store for comment. The overwhelming response to the plan was that it was too elaborate and did not reflect the low key style envisaged by the local community. The artists impression was created in Townsville. It was questioned why it had not been offered to a local business and comment was made about the misspelling of the name which read *Bingal* Bay. There was a strong consensus that the picnic area should retain a natural setting. It was agreed that it would be good to replace the paving but keep the present ground level and perhaps incorporate into it a creative component.



The local community at Bingil Bay are proud of the natural environment of their neighbourhood and the only needs for an upgrade for the picnic area were a gas barbecue, fire pit, extra seating and a small timber shelter along with some planting of more native vegetation.

A more important issue of road safety was raised, one which has been highlighted to council by the Bingil Bay community over many years, particularly for children walking to the area and the need to cross the road to access the toilet block. There was a call for the road to be part of the overall design to slow traffic from the Bingil Bay Store through to the Bicton Hill walking track.

The money set aside for the upgrade is a post cyclone Larry grant for remedial work on the picnic facility and apparently needs to be spent by the end of May this year. With the design going back to the drawing board the grant will be lost.

Paul assured the group that money was not an issue and that it would now simply come out of Council allocated funds and Bingil Bay residents will be contacted when a new plan is drawn up.