The Reef Guardian Council stewardship program recognises the good environmental work councils and communities are achieving to help the Great Barrier Reef. Each year the council reviews its activities and produces this report to highlight the positive outcomes and its commitment to a better future for the Great Barrier Reef.

Waterways Management

Council is working with landholders, water board and government agencies to remove and maintain the waterways clear of weeds. Activities have included:

- Removing approximately 1000 tonnes of floating weed from Lilliesmere Lagoon with assistance from Lower Burdekin Water.
- Release of weevils to control salvinia.
- Aerial spraying at a number of systems which are inaccessible by boat or foot.
- Boat and edge spraying.

Recycling Education Sessions

Officers took advantage of a number of opportunities to promote the education and recycling message throughout the year.

- Recycling and composting awareness sessions were held at 6 kindergartens within the shire.
- Reduce, reuse and recycle presentations at 5 schools within the shire.
- Community awareness of waste management was raised through a number of media releases and clean up days.

Environment and Health Project Officer interacting with children during a composting session.

Water weeds officer using a weed harvester to remove aquatic weed in Lilliesmere Lagoon.
Marine Debris Clean-up and Education

Council along with Tangaroa Blue and NQ Dry Tropics hosted a beach clean-up at Alva: 444kg of rubbish was collected including 1080 litres of recyclable items.

Council hosted a GBRMPA Marine Debris Source Reduction workshop which was attended by Council staff, industry stakeholders and local environment groups. The data from the clean-up was reviewed and some short term and long term projects were brainstormed.

Pest Animal Programs

Council launched a new Pest Management Plan in 2016, developed with the assistance of local industries, environmental groups and non-government organisations to protect, maintain and improve the Burdekin in the area of pest plant and animal management.

Council has developed a coordinated approach to feral pig control, timing activities in line with neighbouring Councils.

Thanks to external funding additional trapping, baiting and shooting programs have been undertaken throughout the Shire with positive outcomes for landholders.

Staff Awareness of Environmental Protection Issues

Training was conducted for Council Staff working in the areas of road construction and maintenance, parks and gardens as well as water and wastewater.

The training provided information on environmental controls that are to be considered and implemented when undertaking any activities that have an effect, or may have an effect on water quality and on flora and fauna. Topics covered included weed management, storage and spill control of fuels and hazardous substances, waste management, erosion and sediment control as well as efficient resource and energy usage.