

## Case study 3

### Eradicating Prickly Acacia the DCQ way

John and Helen Ogg of Ayrshire Downs, Winton, are typical Mitchell Grass Downs graziers. They slaved for 20 years to control Prickly Acacia on their land, but the mass germination of the 2010 wet season really kicked them in the guts.



The problem had a long gestation...

- 1926 - Qld Govt urged graziers to plant Prickly Acacia for shade and fodder
- 1957 - Prickly Acacia declared a noxious weed
- 1980 - Government continues to promote it as a fodder plant
- 1996 - 6.6 million hectares of infestation in Queensland (Qld Govt)
- 2015 - 22 million hectares of infestation in Queensland (Qld Govt)
- lost pasture (100% in dense infestations)
- reduced land productivity
- reduced property values
- threatens 25 rare animal species through loss of habitat
- threatens 2 endangered plant communities
- increased annual spending on control (up to \$100,000 per property)
- \$50 million in annual costs to cattle industry
- traditional methods losing the battle
- 95% of Mitchell Grass Downs will be infested by 2030

John and Helen were devastated, overwhelmed and despondent. They felt lost and had no idea what to do next. But then the game changed... dramatically... with the revolutionary new methods developed by local community-based group, Desert Channels Queensland:

- perfecting satellite assisted mapping and analysis
- using unmanned aerial vehicle for pinpoint herbicide application
- government approval for residual herbicide in restricted areas
- foliar application of herbicide
- reducing treatment costs to one-twelfth
- matching methods to infestations
- forming grazier cooperatives for long-term action

In less than 3 years, and in the midst of crippling drought, the results of Desert Channels Queensland's work is nothing short of astonishing; it's been constrained only by funding:

- 32 grazier partnerships
- 50 million Prickly Acacia trees killed
- 800% increase in efficiency
- 600% increase in grass coverage
- 500% increase in grass biomass
- 300% increase in grass species
- 92% reduction in costs
- 142,000 hectares of native habitat restoration
- 600 kilometres of streamline vegetation protected
- \$1 million spent in local businesses
- local employment created



Prickly Acacia can be beaten; the grazier/DCQ partnership is proving it.

The Oggs no longer feel it's a lost cause; they're now talking about winning.

Desert Channels Queensland has the strategic plan, revolutionary tools, enviable track record, grazier partnerships, community support, skills, expertise and personnel to eradicate Prickly Acacia by 2026, we just need the funding support.

Government helped create the problem; it's up to them to help solve it before it's insurmountable.