

-- MEDIA RELEASE --

Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens hosts unique Land Art Project

A unique work of land art is being launched in Mackay this week. *Watershed: The Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens Land Art Project* is the creation of Wollongong artists Lucas Ihlein and Kim Williams, in collaboration with a host of local farmers and community organisations.

The project involves the planting of a dual crop of sugarcane and sunflowers on the Meadowlands at the Botanic Gardens. The artists hope to raise awareness about the importance of soil health in agriculture, bringing farmers into dialogue with the wider community through events and workshops.

Mayor Greg Williamson said the project would help educate the community about sustainable farming practices: "Council understands the importance of the local agricultural community," he said. "Mackay is the sugar capital of Australia and it is vital to our economy. Council also supports the Greater Whitsunday Farmers Market held every Wednesday at Bluewater Quay, which showcases the region's amazing produce. This project will bring awareness to the benefits of growing sugar cane, and other produce, sustainably with minimal use of synthetic chemicals by using interspecies cropping."

Key collaborators in the project include Mackay & District Australian South Sea Islander Association (MADASSIA), Yuwibara Aboriginal Corporation, Central Queensland Soil Health Systems, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA), Artspace Mackay, and Reef Catchments.

On Saturday 24th February from 8am-10am, the public is invited to join the artists to celebrate the commencement of the project. Participants can take part in the planting of a crop of legumes, which will help to build nitrogen in the soil.

Carparking is on Crowley's Road, off Alexandra St. Refreshments will be provided.

For more information contact the artists on 0423 745 736 (Lucas) or 0405 700 142 (Kim)

info@watershedmackay.land

www.watershedmackay.land



The artists mark out site of "The Beacon" with pink line marking paint (photo: Flow Motion Media)