

## Building the Future: Paving the way for the next generation on 'Cunnyana', Dunkeld Qld

### Making the First Move

Adam and Tiffany Black bought 'Cunnyana' in February 2021. Hailing from Nebo, Northeast Queensland, the move to Southwest Queensland was long but rewarding. With their two young kids alongside them, Adam and Tiffany began their new adventure on 'Cunnyana', Dunkeld, 125km south of Mitchell and 130km north of St George.

'Cunnyana' spans 12,300ha and ranges from Brigalow and Belah grassy plains to Poplar Box and Mulga flats. Running goats, cattle and a small flock of sheep, the variety in the land types offered huge potential for a successful grazing business for the young family. Despite the great potential Adam and Tiffany saw for the property, there was a lot of work to be done to better their business and start their legacy. Adam and Tiffany have taken on 'Cunnyana' as a lifetime commitment, already thinking of succession planning for their two young kids.



*The Black family on 'Cunnyana'*

### Challenges

Lack of groundcover and poor water infiltration were some of the main issues that needed to be addressed to recover the landscape and restore 'Cunnyana' to its full potential. The dingoes on 'Cunnyana' were a significant issue for livestock, so Adam and Tiffany introduced Maremmas to protect stock.



*Part of the new goat fences in use*

With the success of an increasing goat herd on the property, Adam and Tiffany sought to upgrade their fences which would allow them to better control grazing pressure and implement pasture rest and recovery into their management. Similarly, the use of portable hot wire fences would allow for better-controlled movement of cattle to ensure that their paddocks weren't being overgrazed. This also required the addition of more water points which would encourage the spread of livestock across the whole paddock, allowing the whole property to be more evenly grazed.

Rehydration was another main focus for the property due to the intense and damaging water runoff. Spreader banks were mapped out and constructed to slow the flow of water and distribute it evenly across the land to improve water retention. With the help from water rehydration contractor Liam Landsberg, Adam and Tiffany got to work planning and developing earth spreader banks.

## NATURAL RESOURCES RECOVERY PROGRAM

### Approach

Adam and Tiffany discovered Southern Queensland (SQ) Landscapes through Facebook advertisements and field days. Once they submitted their Expression of Interest for assistance toward their goals for 'Cunnyana,' it was soon determined that the Queensland Government's Natural Resources Recovery Program was a great fit for the work that needed to be done on the property. SQ Landscapes' support allowed for the Black family's aspirations for 'Cunnyana' to get underway. "[This funding] *will let us do it all in one go and get in extra labour,*" Adam said.

### Results & Outcomes

In addition to the current fencing and rehydration work, Adam and Tiffany have some long-term plans in motion to complement their current works. The plan for the next 2 years is to complete a full exclusion fence around the boundary of the property to control the impacts and losses from kangaroos and dingoes, as well as other pest animals. With reduced kangaroo populations, the new rotational grazing setup will allow for total paddock rest periods. These outcomes will be measured by SQ Landscapes using Land Condition Assessments to determine the health of the land, groundcover, underlying issues, and vegetation abundance. Future follow-up monitoring will outline the changes in these conditions after the completion of the full project, allowing time for physical and measurable changes to occur.



*Another new goat fence on 'Cunnyana'*

There are various results that Adam and Tiffany are hoping to achieve from their project work with SQ Landscapes. By improving groundcover, 'Cunnyana's' productivity and profitability will increase. Improved stock weight gain can also lead to an increase in pregnancy percentages, which is an outcome that Adam and Tiffany are hoping to achieve.

Adam and Tiffany's plans for 'Cunnyana' also expand well beyond the physical property upgrades. Having only relatively recently purchased the property, a 5-year plan for debt reduction is at the front of mind for the young family. By investing in structural and operational improvements, Adam and Tiffany are working to increase revenue and support a healthy landscape. Although succession planning can be challenging, it's something they have started to consider as they recognize the importance of being prepared. Enhancing the property now will set up the next generation for long-term success.

### Reflection

Although the family have said they "*are always changing the plan,*" SQ Landscapes is flexible in their partnerships with landholders to enable desired outcomes to be achieved. "[SQ Landscapes has] *been very helpful. They do all the paperwork allowing us to get on with the project*" Adam says. Although still in the early stages of their project, it's fantastic to see the investment of time, resources, and capital they have dedicated to 'Cunnyana.'

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