

MEDIA RELEASE

Borrooloola's giant game of "Pick up sticks".

Ex Cyclone Gillian has blown past Borrooloola, a town of a thousand or more people located in the South West Gulf of the Roper Gulf Regional Council. No **major** flooding or damage this time but Borrooloola has suffered three floods already this year.

The Municipal works crew known locally as "The Muns Crew" is the frontline of preparation for and clean up of these regular events. They clean up and secure items likely to cause problems in high winds or rising flood waters, put up safety and road warning signs, unblock drains and clear debris from roads and bridges.

Three times this wet season the crew has removed tonnes of flood debris particularly from the bridge over the Macarthur River. This involves heavy hand clearing done with chainsaws and rakes as access is very limited and machine damage cannot be risked on the bridge.

Roper Gulf Regional Council, Council Services Manager at Borrooloola, Bob Pahl praised his crew of five workers,

"The recent floods have deposited tonnes of rubbish on the footpath and road bridge. Everything from twigs and leaves to whole trees and logs get jammed into the handrails and across the road and it all has to be untangled and removed. It is wet, risky and very uncomfortable work with irritable snakes being just one of the many issues. The boys are out working when others are sheltering ...and largely without complaint. They just get out and do it because it has to be done so the community can function.

The last clean up took nearly thirty hours from when the Police gave us the go ahead and as well as our flood recovery role we still have to do the garbage rounds and other jobs which keep the communities safe and healthy," Mr Pahl added.

"Recovery clean up is an important role for our Muns Crew. This goes largely unnoticed in the community but allows essential services and movement to occur. The community can be proud of the crews' important work."

He also thanked a group of Garawa residents, some quite young, who came out to help with the clean ups.

"Without the community and other agencies pitching in it would take much longer to open the bridge and to get traffic flowing."

The 200 metre wide Macarthur River Bridge opened in June 2011 and links not only the Garawa Camp and its several hundred residents but the whole of the South West Gulf



Region including Robinson River and many small communities. It is a vital link with the town, major highways and health and other services.

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