

Top summit helps wallaby's plight

CONGRATULATIONS to Cairns Regional Council for the expert speakers at the recent wallaby summit, held at The Tanks.

Efforts were made to identify appropriate ways of managing the agile wallaby populations at the northern beaches, Barron River Delta and White Rock areas.

Speakers discussed research clearly and plainly, presented case studies and there was local veterinary and volunteer involvement.

A canegrower revealed wallabies' significant financial impact on cane and other crops on the Barron River floodplain.

We learnt how wallabies cope in an increasingly urban environment of degraded and fragmented habitat.

And the roles – all too often unclear and at times conflict-

ing – of governments, planners, developers and the general community.

Sadly, a significant number of “wildlife corridors” run between the coast and highway, effectively isolating wallaby and other wildlife populations on “islands”.

Urgently needed is a workable and unambiguous management plan for a balance between rapid ongoing suburban and semi-rural land development and realistic protection of wallaby habitat.

There is no easy solution, but such a management plan is long overdue.

Hopefully, the wallaby summit will go a long way to resolving some of these issues and the momentum generated will inspire the council to act decisively and positively.



Under pressure: Wallabies at the northern beaches are cut off on “islands” between the highway and the coast and have to cope with increasing urban development. A recent summit may prompt the council into action.