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**TACKLING THE BIG ISSUES FOR RURAL AND REGIONAL LANDHOLDERS
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

The impact of reef regulations on farming communities will be a hot topic of debate at the upcoming Property Rights Australia (PRA) conference at Gympie next week.

PRA is an advocacy group focused on the biggest issue facing rural and regional landholders - the ongoing erosion of private property rights – and are presenting an impressive line-up of speakers at their Gympie conference on the 9 and 10 June.

A range of prominent speakers will address the conference including biologist, Dr Jennifer Marohasy, who has been outspoken on the issues of poor reef science and the conflicting messages coming from independent scientists studying the reef and institutions funded by government.

Dr Marohasy will be joined by Victorian Farmers Federation Taskforce member, Katherine Myers, who will discuss the complex issues with plans to build renewable energy projects and transmission lines in rural and regional communities in Victoria.

Conference attendees will also hear from Planning and Environment Lawyer, Lestar Manning, discussing the ongoing threats to water security arising from competition for water while Central Queensland Grazer, Craig Bailey, will discuss his experiences on the ground with the controversial Reef Regulations.

According to PRA Interim Chair, Jim Wilmott, the conference is designed to tackle the big issues facing rural and regional landholders, whether they be farmers, graziers, or owners of a small piece of rural land.

“Reef Regulations for farmers at the southern end of the Great Barrier Reef have come into play in the last couple of years and many farmers are just starting to understand what their northern counterparts having been grappling with for longer” said Mr Wilmott “So we felt it was important to tackle this issue at our conference this year.”

“PRA believes the erosion of private property rights is the single biggest issue facing the rural community” said Mr Wilmott “It creates uncertainty, stifles investment, job creation and threatens incomes and service delivery.”

“More importantly, the uncertainty surrounding the erosion of property rights causes immense stress in our rural and regional areas and can contribute to the decline in mental health amongst our rural and regional communities,” said Mr Wilmott.

“To be able to have guest speakers from the legal sector, research sector and energy sector at one conference is quite a coup in our view.”

The Ashley McKay Memorial Bursary will be discussed by Penny Johnson, CEO of the Australian Horizons Foundation.

The conference will also feature a Question and Answer session with a number of guest speakers on the impact of Renewables Projects in rural and regional areas featuring Katy McCallum of the Kilkivan action group and Shea Rule of the ‘Say NO to the lines’ action group.

“Whether you own a suburban home or a broadacre farm, PRA believes property owners are entitled to the basic rights of exclusive access, use and the opportunity to profit,” said Mr Wilmott.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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