

# Technology helps Mitchell grazier plot a course to greater property management

**A**nthony 'Bim' Struss, Havelock, swears by computer mapping as an essential tool for property management.

Mr Struss attended property computer mapping workshops in 2011 and 2012 to help him develop his mapping skills and increase the accuracy of existing maps for the 14,000 hectare cattle property north of Mitchell that he manages with his wife Susan.

"We use the technology for better operational management every day," Mr Struss said.

"AgForward has taught me how to use GPS with a mapping program, take the information from the GPS and put it into a map with the features we need including water points, paddocks and vegetation," Mr Struss said.

***"There is no question we will use the technology with ongoing works and upgrades in the future."***

The Mitchell grazier believes maps are a great tool because landholders can have accurate information all in one spot. Mapping has even helped him plan infrastructure in a cost-effective and environmentally conscious way.

"We can look at a map and work out which fencing projects are

going to be the most difficult economically or the best environmentally," Mr Struss said.

"We can also calculate the size of all our paddocks, and this then helps calculating stocking rates."

Mr Struss says the technology helps them achieve the most economical and sustainable distribution of water across the property.

"[Mapping] helps with planning water points. Mapping helps us ensure the best spread of water, utilising present water storage, dams and bores," he said.

"And as a land manager I get a great deal of satisfaction from a decision made with accurate information."

After using mapping regularly on property, Mr Struss discovered it helped improve farm management.

"With the mapping knowledge we gained through AgForward we now have much better operational management," Mr Struss said.

"In a meeting with the bank manager, I can pull out one of our maps and show them exactly where our funds are going and why.

"When we make an application to our banker for infrastructural improvements we can map and cost the project accurately. When we put watering points in, we can show



*Bim and Susan Struss*

why we are spending money and where it is going. It is economically advantageous."

Mr Struss said it also makes it easier to explain things to contractors and other workers on their property.

"When we need the roads graded we can sit down with the map and show the driver exactly where to go.

"There is no question we will use the technology in the future with ongoing works and upgrades. With paddock names, fences, areas, waters, roads, infrastructure and vegetation completed, our next goal is to accurately map a layer for power poles throughout the property."

Mr Struss says AgForward has been integral to helping people improve property management today. The AgForward staff are very professional and obliging and great to work with.

