



Pet deaths bring new life to forests

POOCHES and moggies can now help a rainforest to grow through a green pet burials partnership that is believed to be a first for Queensland.

The Australian Rainforest Foundation and Cairns man Rod Putna's new Green Funeral business are offering to bury people's pets beneath young rainforest trees dedicated to each pet and the pet's family.

The foundation hopes to link crucial cassowary corridors by revegetating a 4ha patch of land on a 58ha rainforest block it has bought beside national park land at Mission Beach, south of Cairns.

Pet owners will be given a GPS location, the ability to monitor the site on Google Earth and an electronic epitaph, stored on a website, complete with photographs and a life history.

"The pet will be helping the tree, and forest, to grow," Australian Rainforest Foundation general manager Roger Phillips said.

"And his or her owner will be helping to conserve energy and plough money into conservation by choosing a tree as their pet's memorial."

Mr Putna, who also has a "green funeral" scheme for people whose ashes are buried in dedicated tree's root systems on reserve land beside Cairns' Anderson St cemetery, said each pet burial saved 60-70kg of greenhouse gases from being produced through a pet cremation process.

He said vets from across the region were supporting the concept as a "practical, environmentally-reponsible solution".

Living memorial: Australian Rainforest Foundation's Roger Phillips is supporting "green funerals" for pets in which memorial trees are planted to revegetate a cassowary corridor.

Picture: MIKE WATT

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