



Speech by

Hon. S. ROBERTSON

MEMBER FOR STRETTON

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Landcare Awards

Hon. S. ROBERTSON (Stretton—ALP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Minister for Mines) (10.00 a.m.), by leave: Today it is my pleasure to call for nominations for the 2001 State Landcare Awards. The awards focus attention on sustainable natural resource management work being done throughout Queensland. Winners will be announced at the Queensland Landcare Conference in Goondiwindi from July 21 to 24. I will have the honour of presenting some of those awards. The event will be co-hosted by the Border Rivers Catchment Association and the Queensland Landcare and Catchment Management Council with support from Natural Resources staff.

Land care as an ethic has thrived over the past 15 years. People from all walks of life, whether they live in the city or the bush, come together with a common purpose—to do battle against threats to our environment.

Landcare Australia Ltd is a national non-profit organisation supported by corporate and government sectors to raise the awareness of Landcare and its role in achieving positive landscape change. It has the demonstrated capacity to galvanise community interest and action in terms of sustainable natural resource management. Last year alone, the organisation raised some \$15.5 million in revenue via a number of means.

The Landcare Awards, which have been held in Queensland every two years since 1991, provide the opportunity to recognise and highlight best practice land care management techniques.

This year's theme is the 'Power of One' in recognition of the enormous voluntary work done by members of the 300 land care and catchment groups across the state and to help celebrate the International Year of the Volunteer. Salinity, land degradation, water quality, erosion and nature conservation are some of the issues being tackled on the ground by this army of volunteers.

The awards also recognise that decision-making about land care issues should be in the hands of local people who have the knowledge and the experience to take responsibility for planning and implementing a sustainable future.

The judges for the state Landcare awards are also locals.

They may be farmers, environmentalists, scientists, educationalists, business people or from the media or government areas. Many are using the criteria of their daily lives to judge the nominations, which means that the projects nominated must provide a real benefit for the community.

Anyone can nominate for a Landcare award. There are 10 categories: conservation, research, local government, primary producer, media, river care, catchment, education and individual and group awards. The winners receive a \$500 cash prize, an award and a trip to Canberra to compete at the national Landcare Awards presentation in 2002. Second placegetters and finalists receive a certificate of commendation highlighting their achievements.

The nomination period has begun and extends to 25 May, with judging in June. Entry forms and guidelines for nominations can be obtained from the Landcare Conference Secretariat office in Goondiwindi or from regional coordinators.