



Speech by

Hon. D. WELLS

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Hansard 12 March 2003

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Environmental Conservation Programs

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Environment) (9.59 a.m.): The state government has finalised grant allocations for two programs that help community groups continue their good work. Some \$450 000 has been allocated to two significant programs: one for environmental conservation projects and the other for cultural heritage projects.

Almost \$300,000 has been allocated to 24 environmental organisations across the state. Recipients have included the Queensland Conservation Council, the Wilderness Society, the Wildlife Preservation Society, the National Parks Association of Queensland and a range of regional environment and conservation groups. These grants assist regional communities in achieving environmental outcomes by raising awareness within local communities.

Since this scheme began in 1990, funding through the Environmental Protection Agency has tripled to the current level. The Environmental Protection Agency has also commenced funding allocations under the Queensland Community Cultural Heritage Incentive Program. The state government's initial offer of \$140,000 under the 2003 grants program has allocated funding to 21 heritage projects throughout Queensland.

The Heritage Grants Program provides funding for community based heritage projects by helping local government agencies to identify their cultural heritage assets so that they can be protected in council planning schemes. The program also assists indigenous communities for cultural heritage research, oral history recording and documentation of the important relationships between people and places.

In response to the strong regional demand for additional heritage incentive funding, the state government intends making a second round of offers worth \$110,000 to bring the total allocation this year to \$250,000. Of the 21 projects to be funded in the first round, 17 are outside the south-east Queensland region. This reflects the government's ongoing commitment to regional and rural communities and builds on last year's successful Year of the Outback celebrations.