



Speech by

Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

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LAKE BARRINE TEA HOUSE

Mr KNUTH (Dalrymple—LNP) (9.16 pm): Lake Barrine is a crater lake left by a volcanic eruption thousands of years ago on the Atherton Tablelands. In the early 1920s, George Curry and the local council and forestry formed a lake trust to protect Lake Barrine and surrounding land from logging. In 1923 George applied for a grant and was given a perpetual lease over one acre of land on the shore of Lake Barrine.

Bill and Leanne Curry-Bayne are third-generation Curry family members who operate the Lake Barrine Tea House. This family owned small business is situated on freehold land adjacent to the lake and surrounded by national park. Across the road they have a 10-year lease on a block where they have established a sewage plant. All greywater from the tea house and the toilets in the national park are pumped over to be treated at the sewage plant.

The Curry-Baynes are practising environmentalists and have for years forged a wonderful relationship with the national parks and wildlife. Their commitment to the preservation of the natural heritage of the lake is unchanged and unchallenged. On the block where the sewage plant is, the Curry-Baynes have planted numerous rainforest trees that are watered by treated water.

The sewage plant was built at a cost of \$100,000 15 years ago. The Curry-Bayne family spend an additional \$6,000 per year in maintenance, \$1,500 per year in electricity costs plus \$2,753 per year in land rental costs. They have now been advised that the permit fee for the plant has risen from \$500 to \$5,400 per year as a result of the Environmental Protection Regulation 2008. There are over 150,000 visitors to Lake Barrine National Park each year. Out of these visitors, more than half come for the natural beauty of the rainforest and the lake. The majority of the visitors, however, use the business's toilets, as the national park toilets consist of one men's and one ladies' toilet that are tucked away and not clearly signposted.

The Curry-Baynes maintain the plant and always meet the stringent levels required during regular testing. The majority of the water pumped to the plant is greywater. The plant is large enough to service a small town, but only the business and the national park utilise it. They believe that they are being punished for the size of the plant rather than its useful capacity, and they were never warned that the fees would be increased so dramatically.

Despite their commitment to the protection of the environment in which they live and work, they are being punished for not only doing the right thing but also providing a service to the government. The family provides and maintains the sewage plant service at no cost to the government, despite the national park toilets also being connected. They are providing the thousands of visitors who visit the area with facilities, which is the responsibility of the national park, and they are working tirelessly to protect and develop the environment by recycling the treated water onto the rainforest plants they established and nurture. In return, they get lumbered with a massive \$5,000 in just one year of excessive costs to run the plant.

I encourage the minister to acknowledge this massive increase for people who are conscientious environmentalists and who are providing a portion of the service which is the responsibility of the national parks. The minister's support and assistance to rectify this situation would be greatly appreciated.