




Speech By
Hon. Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Everyone's Environment Grants Program

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (9.47 am): Queensland is a great state with great opportunities, especially when it comes to caring for the environment. Over the past couple of days the Premier and the Treasurer have outlined the steps that the Newman government will be taking to get Queensland back on track. As the Deputy Premier just said, a significant part of this is growing the economy. To grow the economy, we must look after the environment. Our tourism and our agricultural industries are dependent on it.

The Commission of Audit report also highlighted the need for the government to work with the not-for-profit sector to ensure the maximum outcomes from taxpayers' dollars. One way that we are helping to protect our environment in partnership with the not-for-profit sector is through the Everyone's Environment grants. I am pleased to announce today that round 2 of the Everyone's Environment grants program is now open. The Newman government is proud to be able to partner with grassroots level organisations who, like us, are determined to protect our environment for the future. In round 2, \$4 million will be up for grabs, with grants to be offered from \$2,000 to \$100,000. As an indication of just how important these grants are for community groups, my Department of Environment and Heritage Protection was inundated for round 1. Over 200 applications were received for a range of activities to help our local environment.

With \$3 million shared over 74 projects in round 1, round 2 is certain to encourage submissions from right across the state. We are urging community groups that support and are interested in protecting the natural environment to get on board. The Newman government is committed to helping these groups and volunteers who are sincere in restoring some of the state's damaged ecosystems. In round 2 there has been a subtle shift, with the guidelines now including a resilience theme to acknowledge the need to deal with the impact of extreme weather events on our environment. We do not want to just fix things to how they were; we want people to consider the impacts these events have and look at ways to build the resilience of our environment to ensure the conservation of the state's unique biodiversity. Just last week I visited the unique Wongaloo wetlands around 40 kilometres south of Townsville to see firsthand how round 1 of the Everyone's Environment grants is making a real difference. With the 74 projects from round 1 beginning to take effect, I encourage members in this House to take the time and make the effort to see how this initiative is working in their own backyards and to encourage their local constituents to get involved in applying for round 2.

In round 1 projects ranged in scope from \$4,000 to \$100,000, supporting a variety of activities including tree plantings for habitat rehabilitation and restoration, water quality monitoring, controlling pests and weeds, cleaning up community areas, local creeks and waterways, and reducing run-off to improve water quality. I look forward to seeing the exciting projects that may be funded this time around. The guidelines and information about how to apply are available on the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection website and applications close on 31 May 2013.