



Speech By  
**Hon. Andrew Powell**


**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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Record of Proceedings, 3 April 2014

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Sewage Treatment Plants**

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (9.52 am): I would like to bring to the attention of the House a new and innovative approach being implemented by my department to manage discharges from sewage treatment plants. This approach provides alternative options to sewage treatment operators to meet their water discharge requirements under the Environmental Protection Act 1994 while delivering improved water quality outcomes and better catchment health. With this new flexibility, funds can be directed towards catchment protection measures that deliver better water quality outcomes at the least cost. This is another example of how the Newman government continues to deliver better planning for Queenslanders by working with industry, community and government. It is another example of us cutting the cost of living for Queenslanders through working in partnership with those bodies.

A recently commenced pilot project funded by Queensland Urban Utilities to prevent sediment and nutrients entering the Logan River is helping to manage additional nitrogen discharges from the Beaudesert sewage treatment plant, resulting from local population growth. Queensland Urban Utilities has invested almost \$1 million to repair around 500 metres of eroded riparian corridors located close to the sewage treatment plant. The works include structural bank stabilisation and riparian planting. It is estimated that this will prevent approximately five tonnes of nitrogen and 11,200 tonnes of sediment entering the Logan River each and every year. That is the equivalent of 17 Olympic sized swimming pools of material saved from entering the river.

The nitrogen savings made through the riparian works will be used to counterbalance any potential increase in nitrogen discharges from the sewage treatment plant that may occur during wet weather events. The works will also help improve waterway health and assist landholders with ongoing riverbank erosion. These nitrogen savings will allow the Beaudesert treatment plant to continue safely at its current capacity in the short term without undertaking expensive upgrades, which were estimated to cost \$8 million. This means that the savings of \$7 million can be invested elsewhere in the sewerage network. The pilot study will run from this year through to 2019 including detailed monitoring and assessment.

Unlike those opposite, who increased Queenslanders' water bills through their poor planning and through the debt associated with the water infrastructure, as mentioned by the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer earlier today, we are cutting costs for our water utilities through innovation and through partnerships. This is a win for the environment, a win for our water utilities and a win for all Queenslanders.