




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Nanango Electorate, Rail Trails

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (2.39 pm): Today I would like to highlight the role and importance of rail trails in my electorate of Nanango, in particular the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail and the Kingaroy to Kilkivan Rail Trail that my electorate shares with that of the Deputy Premier of Queensland, the member for Callide. Rail trails are shared use paths created from former railway corridors. They have become a magnet for hikers, cyclists and horse riders. They are great for tourism, small business and economic growth. They are a great place to exercise.

Our government knows that turning former rail corridors into recreation areas is a huge part of the success in growing the tourism pillar for regional Queensland. In our latest budget, our government set aside \$3.5 million to be allocated over the next four years for a new Recreational Rail Trails Grants Program, which will be open to councils to help them maintain and upgrade sections of rail trails. This is a fantastic announcement that I know councils in my electorate are very excited about.

I would also like to highlight and congratulate Deputy Premier, Jeff Seeney, for last week announcing just outside of Kingaroy that \$2 million has been granted to the South Burnett Regional Council for the 60-kilometre long Kilcoy to Kilkivan Rail Trail. This is a major announcement for the South Burnett and one that I truly welcome. It is an extremely positive and exciting announcement for tourism for our great area.

I am now pushing for further funding from the Deputy Premier for the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail, set in the Somerset region of the Nanango electorate. I have spoken to the Deputy Premier—and it is unfortunate that he has just stepped out of the House—about this length of rail trail and the need for the Somerset section of the Brisbane Valley Rail Trail. This rail trail is Queensland's largest converted rail trail, with approximately 70 kilometres currently open between Wanora and Toogoolawah and another 44 kilometres between Moore and Yarraman. About 30,000 people a year use this part of the trail. Unfortunately, the section between Toogoolawah and Moore remains closed, mainly due to the major damage that was experienced during the 2011-13 floods.

Extra funding for this rail trail would be a huge boost to the Somerset region and one that I know would be warmly welcomed by the rail trails and the many supporters and ambassadors of these great tourism paths for all Queenslanders and all of our international visitors who come often to the beautiful Nanango electorate, but we need them to come more often. This extra funding would really go a long way.