

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1794

asked on Tuesday, 25 November 2008

MS VAN LITSENBURG ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES AND WATER AND MINISTER ASSISTING THE PREMIER IN NORTH QUEENSLAND (MR WALLACE)—

QUESTION:

Will he detail the new funding for Queensland Water and Land Carers and the impact this funding will have on protecting and enhancing Queensland's natural resources?

ANSWER:

On 9 September 2008, I approved funding of \$300 000 each year for the next three years, for Queensland Water and Landcarers Inc (QWaLC).

As you may be aware, QWaLC was established in 2004 and is the peak body for natural resource management (NRM) volunteers. QWaLC's roles include representation, advocacy, promotion, networking, and insurance administration for NRM volunteers. QWaLC's board includes representatives from each of Queensland's NRM regions and its membership consists of over 300 volunteer NRM groups with approximately 20 000 individuals.

Each year, the Queensland Government provides \$300 000 to QWaLC to provide assistance to the volunteer groups. These groups promote and conserve the State's natural resources. They undertake activities such as controlling weeds, eradicating feral animals and undertaking work to conserve creek and river banks.

Over the past few years, the groups have been hampered by drought, however they have done a fantastic job and the Queensland Government appreciates their efforts. The estimated value of volunteer time provided by Queensland's registered volunteer NRM groups is \$10million per year.

Accordingly, it is clear that the Queensland Government's contribution to volunteer NRM groups through insurance funding and support for QWaLC administration costs is very cost-effective, when one considers the benefits provided by volunteers to the State.