

RegionsQ

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A message from the Deputy Premier Jeff Seeney

IN REGIONSQ, WE FEATURE A SNAPSHOT OF THE PLANS AND INITIATIVES WE ARE DELIVERING AS WELL AS SOME OF THE STORIES FROM PEOPLE JUST LIKE YOU - WHO LIVE AND WORK IN REGIONAL QUEENSLAND.

There's a great story to be told about regional Queensland, from its place as the economic powerhouse of the state to its vibrant and prosperous communities.

I grew up in the Central Queensland town of Monto and have championed the interests of regional Queenslanders since I began representing the regional seat of Callide in 1998.

Now as the Deputy Premier, I have the opportunity to deliver on that commitment along with many of my Cabinet colleagues from regional areas.

RegionsQ puts regions at the forefront in our efforts to deliver jobs and economic growth. It captures the community driven aspirations that more than 78 000 Queenslanders identified in *The Queensland Plan*—your 30-year vision for the state.

Over the next few months, my Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning will develop the *RegionsQ Action Plan* which will encompass feedback we have received from people that attended 16 workshops held throughout our state.

This will be released in 2015 and will coincide with the RegionsQ Showcase which is highlighted in this edition.

I trust you will enjoy the first edition of *RegionsQ*.

COVER PHOTO: NWB photo Melissa Green, 2014 Lawson and Sturt Hospital and the Araratia Garage

RegionsQ diary

NOVEMBER

1 NOV: SOUTHERN GREAT BARRIER REEF TOURISM BUSINESS AWARDS, Gladstone Entertainment and Convention Centre

3 NOV: BURKE AND WILLS RODEO, Cloncurry Equestrian Centre, Cloncurry

7-8 NOV: CUNNAMULLA FELLA FESTIVAL, Cunnamulla
www.cunnamullafellafestival.com.au

7-8 NOV: CHRISTMAS IN THE COUNTRY CRAFT SHOW, Gatton Shire Hall

7-9 NOV: TOURISM AND EVENTS QUEENSLAND REGIONAL EVENTS CONFERENCE, Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre, Mackay

7-9 NOV: AIRLIE BEACH MUSIC FESTIVAL, Airlie Beach
www.airliebeachmusicfestival.com.au

8 NOV: OLD TIME DANCE - THE WOOLSHED AT JONDARYAN,
www.jondaryanwoolshed.com.au

9 NOV: CANEGROWERS GREAT BARRIER REEF MARATHON, Port Douglas
www.greatbarrierreefmarathon.com.au

11 NOV: REMEMBRANCE DAY - ANZAC CENTENARY QUEENSLAND,
www.anzac100.initiatives.qld.gov.au

14-16 NOV: ABBEY MEDIEVAL Jousting SPECTACULAR, Caboolture
www.abbeytournament.com

15 NOV: MARY RIVER FESTIVAL, Kandanga Recreational Ground, Kandanga
www.maryriverfestival.org.au

15 NOV: EIDSVOLD AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL HERITAGE DAY, Eidsvold

15 NOV: STANTHORPE ROCKS, Ballandean
www.stanthorperocks.com.au

16 NOV: STEP BACK IN TIME - OPEN DAY, Boyne Valley Historical Cottage, Ubobo

23 NOV: GLADSTONE SEAFOOD FESTIVAL, Gladstone
www.gladstoneregion.info

28 NOV: CALLIOPE COMMUNITY CAROLS AND CHRISTMAS NIGHT MARKETS, Calliope

28-30 NOV: ELDERS COUNTRY MUSIC CAMPOUT, Discovery Centre, Ubobo

DECEMBER

14 DEC: CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT, FOGARTY PARK, Cairns

14 DEC: WARWICK CAROLS IN THE PARK,
www.warwickevents.com

26 DEC-2 FEB: DAY OUT WITH THOMAS, The Workshops Rail Museum, North Ipswich

27 DEC: ROCKY NEW YEAR FESTIVAL, Callaghan Park Racecourse, Rockhampton

RegionsQ and You



SO WHY DID YOU MOVE TO REGIONAL QUEENSLAND? MANY PEOPLE SAY THEY ARE DRAWN THERE BECAUSE OF WORK, THEIR PARTNERS OR BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES WHILE OTHERS WERE, AS THEY SAY, BORN AND BRED AND WOULDN'T LIVE ANYWHERE ELSE.

Meet David Brown. David grew up in Brisbane, went to school at Redcliffe and started work with Queensland Health in Brisbane in 1973. He then moved to Maryborough in 1985 when he was offered a promotion.

Seven years later, he returned to the big smoke for a few years before deciding he missed regional Queensland. When the chance arose to move back to Hervey Bay in 1991 he grabbed it, convinced that its lifestyle, community environment, and also the fact that he met his partner there, were great reasons to stay.

David and his wife set up and operated a small business whilst still working for Queensland Health. They and their three children enjoyed all that Hervey Bay had to offer; great schooling and further education opportunities, sporting clubs and community events, fantastic local attractions and features such as being on the doorstep to Fraser Island and the Coral Coast, the hinterland, camping and parks.

So why stay? David said it was such a great place to raise a family and the friendly community welcome they received was a great start. Now, still working with Queensland Health and helping his wife with their hairdressing business, David has become involved in school committees and community groups. A busy lifestyle, but David still finds that the relaxed atmosphere and stress-free environment certainly beats the hustle and bustle of the big cities.

If you would like to share your story email us on RegionsQ@dssip.qld.gov.au



Land revolution sweeps state

GREAT START: Greg Bennett and his son Sam are converting their Calliope leasehold property, Fig Tree, to freehold after an affordable pathway was made by the Queensland Government

LANDHOLDERS HAVE BEEN DRAMATICALLY EMPOWERED OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF MAJOR REFORMS TO LAND TENURE AND VEGETATION MANAGEMENT. THESE REFORMS HAVE SUCCESSFULLY REDUCED RED-TAPE AND UNLOCKED THE POTENTIAL OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR.

Central to the changes, has been the opportunity to streamline and simplify the way state land is managed in Queensland and address the uncertainty plaguing leasehold landowners.

The landmark *Land and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014* (LOLA) was passed to make applicable leases automatic rolling term leases, giving landholders long-term investment certainty.

Complementing these reforms has been the government's vegetation management reforms and regional planning initiatives—both have given more control to landholders.

Greg Bennett of Fig Tree, a 4856 hectare property located between Biloela and Calliope, said these changes are the most exciting reforms to happen in agriculture for a long time.

'My goal has always been to own my own place, and it has taken me until now to be able to do that,' Greg said.

'It will only cost us approximately \$110 000 to freehold now, whereas before (LOLA) it would have cost \$600 000.'

'It was just never an option before—half what you paid for the place you would have to pay to freehold it—and now it's 10 per cent of it.'

With two young kids, Sam, 14, and Genevieve, 12, following in the ranks, Greg was eager to secure his land for generations to come.

'If we don't do it now, it could be the last chance we have,' he said.

'It's a once in a multi-generational opportunity and the most exciting thing to happen in agriculture in a long time.'

Landholders can now manage vegetation on their properties without having to lodge a permit with government or pay a fee.

Under these changes, routine vegetation management activities such as fodder harvesting,

THE AVERAGE LANDHOLDER NOW SAVES \$650 IN VEGETATION PERMIT COSTS OVER FIVE YEARS – ALMOST HALF A MILLION DOLLARS ACROSS THE STATE.

weed management, thinning, and clearing (to control encroachment or operational efficiency) can be carried out without permit and in accordance with self-assessable codes.

These practical reforms are leading the charge to double Queensland's agricultural production by 2040.

Locals lead regions to better health

AS RESIDENTS OF AUSTRALIA'S MOST DECENTRALISED STATE, QUEENSLANDERS OWE THEIR GOOD HEALTH TO TARGETED AND EFFECTIVE LOCAL HEALTH SERVICES.

Since 2012, local hospital boards have been in control of hospital and health services, delivering big improvements in performance against national benchmarks.

Surgery waiting lists and hospital emergency waiting times have been slashed and long waits for dental treatments have been eliminated. Whereas just two years ago waits of up to ten years were not uncommon.

Bronwyn Christensen, a member of the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service Board, said the state government's new approach to hospital governance was proving to be both popular and effective in regional areas.

'People are appreciative that decisions aren't being made from Brisbane by people who may have never set foot in a country town,' Bronwyn said.

'We've now got decisions being made very close to where [hospital] facilities are located, and that has to be a good thing.'

Queensland's 16 Hospital and Health Service Boards currently share in more than \$11 billion

worth of funding; more than 80 per cent of the total state budget for health. In 2014-15, health received a record 6.4 per cent increase (\$942 million) in funding compared to the last financial year.

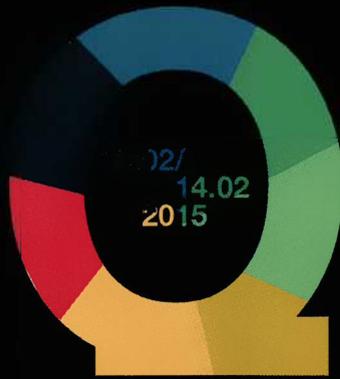
Boards have not only ended years of sustained and increased budget blow-outs in regional health administration, they have delivered savings of \$100 million in 2013-14 through more efficient processes, reduced duplication and improved performance.

Perhaps most importantly, hospital and health boards are improving services. A recent survey found three-in-four Queenslanders were satisfied with their most recent hospital contact – a five-point increase since November 2013. One-in-three patients said they were 'very satisfied'.

Bronwyn credits the Central Queensland board with improving birthing services in her own community of Theodore.

'We had several threats to the provision of our maternity services before the boards were introduced,' Ms Christensen said.

'Now the maternity services are more formalised and solidified, they will continue on for years to come.'



WIDE BAY/BUPPIETI
DARLING DOWNS SOUTH WEST
CENTRAL WEST QUEENSLAND
FITZROY & CENTRAL QUEENSLAND
MACKAY ISAAC WHITSUNDAY
NORTH QUEENSLAND
FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND

In support of the government's commitment to grow and promote regions, a two-day event, the RegionsQ Showcase, will be held in early 2015.

For information visit
dsdip.qld.gov.au/RegionsQ

RegionsQ
showcase



LOCALLY MADE: Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service Board member Bronwyn Christensen and Biloela Hospital Director of Nursing Joy Pitman are seeing health benefits flow from the creation of hospital and health boards



GETTING CONNECTED: Specialist medical officers communicate with regional patients online

Telehealth: Patients tune into specialist healthcare

QUEENSLAND HEALTH COMMENCED ITS RURAL TELEHEALTH SERVICE IN 2013 TO PROVIDE PATIENTS IN REMOTE CLINICS WITH IMPROVED ACCESS TO CITY-BASED HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS VIA VIDEO LINK.

More rural and remote Queenslanders are now receiving specialist medical services thanks to the growing uptake of telehealth across the state.

The telehealth device is battery-operated and can move freely from patient to patient.

South West Hospital and Health Service Telehealth Coordinator Jodie Turvey said the new technology was allowing specialists in other hospitals to see inpatients at their bedside for the first time.

'At Roma Hospital, patients can now communicate face-to-face with specialists in metropolitan hospitals with the new wireless telehealth service,' Jodie said.

A Telehealth Emergency Management Support Unit has been created to help deliver emergency management support and advice to rural and remote communities with an initial focus on



CENTENARY BABY: Ammie Cartwright gave birth to Lorenzo Cartwright last month



ROMA NEWBORN: Melissa Green and her son Lawson receiving a helping hand from Roma Hospital midwife Amanda Corcoran

Great expectations met with new birthing services

TODAY MORE REGIONAL MUMS ACROSS THE STATE ARE HAVING THEIR BABIES AT HOSPITALS CLOSER TO HOME.

In just two years there has been a conscious effort to put patients first and to improve health outcomes for local communities in regional and rural Queensland.

The number of maternity and birthing services has diminished over time despite evidence that these services continue to be required in rural and remote communities.

To address this, maternity and birthing services are being reopened in communities like Beaudesert and Cooktown; and training is being provided for staff to ensure the very best care is available in these facilities.

In the Scenic Rim, real results are already being seen. Ammie Cartwright's newborn son, Lorenzo, was the 100th baby born at Beaudesert Hospital since maternity and birthing services were restored to the area in March.

Local maternity and birthing units have a significant, positive impact on women and their families during pregnancy and child birth.

Pregnant women, such as Ammie, are able to be close to family and friends while receiving the skilled healthcare they need.

Ammie said it was wonderful to have her baby delivered at Beaudesert Hospital last month.

'It is a great hospital for our area and the staff are fantastic...and on top of that, it was so much better to be able to have Lorenzo born closer to home,' she said.

Health Minister Lawrence Springborg said the successful reintroduction of birthing services at Beaudesert had provided a template to deliver the government's aim of reintroducing maternity services to other rural towns like Cooktown and Weipa.

'Restarting Beaudesert's Birthing Unit is one of our true success stories,' Lawrence said.

By supporting maternity and birthing at the local level, pressure is being reduced on the larger health facilities where much-needed care is provided to high risk patients.

In the state's north, Cooktown women will be able to give birth at their local hospital from next year, an opportunity they have not had for more than a decade.

Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service Chief Executive Dr Jill Newland said the \$3.8 million Queensland Government funding would mean that prospective mothers would not have to travel hours away from home to have their babies.

Dr Newland said the returned service would enable around 60 women to give birth at the new Cooktown Cluster Midwifery Group Practice annually.

'The Cooktown Cluster Midwifery Group Practice will allow expectant mothers in Cooktown, Wujal Wujal, Hopevale and Laura to have the same familiar group of midwives looking after them before, during and following the birth of their child,' she said.

'Pregnancy and giving birth can be an anxious time, especially for new mums.

'There is nothing more comforting than having someone you know looking after you right through your pregnancy and birth and this funding will deliver just that.'

In Roma, newly graduated midwife Amanda Corcoran is relishing the continuity of care maternity model being offered at Roma Hospital.

'Many women in the Maranoa community are not aware of our maternity services and what this particular continuity model of care offers - I'm hoping to change that,' Amanda said.

'If women elect to have caseload midwifery care, their midwife will provide them with individualised care at each antenatal appointment, be on call for their labour and birth and support them as much as they need for six weeks after their baby is born.

'I love continuity of care as it really gives local women and their babies the support they need.'

seven evaluation sites: Moura, Kowanyama, Normanton, Alpha, Bedourie, Roma and Eidsvold.

The results of this investment are already being realised.

Non-admitted telehealth occasions of service have increased by 39 per cent across the state from July 2013 to June 2014, and by 32 per cent across the evaluation sites when compared to the previous year (July to March).

'Importantly, this technology is allowing for greater continuity of care if a patient is seeing a visiting specialist,' Jodie said.

'Our sub-acute clients have developed a rapport with visiting geriatrician Dr Lisa Kelly, who is based at the Princess Alexandra Hospital but visits once a month.

'Dr Kelly speaks to her patients via this telehealth device every week, which enables her to keep on top of her patients' progress.'

Queensland Health's long-term vision is to embed telehealth as an everyday service.

TELEHEALTH SERVICES BY THE NUMBERS:

- 361 service events where residents benefited from telehealth consultations in 2013-14
- 47 telehealth consultations delivered in July this year - up 52 per cent
- 7 frequently accessed services include general medicine, cardiology, orthopaedics, psychiatry, oncology, paediatrics and midwifery

Stores much more than a source of food

HEALTHY EATING IS BEING ENCOURAGED BY QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT STORES IN SIX ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE STATE.

The Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (DATSIMA) retail stores play a key role in promoting nutrition and healthy eating advice among residents, by offering healthy cooking demonstrations, recipe books and cooking programs with service providers, such as Apunipima and the Jimmy Little Foundation.

Customers are encouraged to choose healthier food and drink options by making these prices more attractive than less healthy choices.

To assist with the healthy breakfast and morning tea program, the DATSIMA retail stores also donate two cartons of fresh fruit to schools within the communities on a weekly basis.

The stores operate in the communities of Palm Island, Woorabinda, Doomadgee, Pormpuraaw, Kowanyama and Lockhart River in North Queensland.

RegionsQ and A

Q. WHAT DROUGHT ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE TO LANDHOLDERS?

Four drought assistance packages are currently available to landholders.

Federal Government's Drought Concessional Loans Scheme: provides concessional interest only loans of up to \$1 million for a term of five years. The loan can be used to restructure debt or for recovery activities with a current interest rate of four per cent.

Federal Government's Farm Household Allowance Package: provides fortnightly income support equivalent to the Newstart allowance or Youth Allowance to eligible farmers and their partners.

Queensland Government's Drought Relief Assistance Scheme: provides freight subsidies on the transport of fodder and water and rebates on water infrastructure to a maximum of \$30 000.

Queensland Government's Sustainability Loans: administered by Queensland Rural Adjustment Authority, it provides concessional loans of up to \$650 000 for a term of up to 20 years to assist primary producers undertake drought preparedness activities and improve productivity.

Bush hospitals on the mend

IF QUEENSLAND WERE A COUNTRY, IT WOULD RANK AS THE 25th LARGEST IN THE WORLD — IT IS BIGGER THAN SOUTH AFRICA AND NEARLY SEVEN TIMES LARGER THAN THE BRITISH ISLES.

Providing health care to our more regional, rural and remote residents is a big job in this state of 1.7 million square kilometres, but the Queensland Government is transforming hospitals through \$150 million for major remediation work and maintenance.

In 2012, \$51.6 million was allocated for urgent repair work at regional hospitals like Mount Isa, where a ward had been closed due to severe concrete cancer which had destroyed half the building's foundations.

Funding of \$9.5 million was allocated in 2014–15 as part of the package to repair health facilities at Atherton, Ayr, Bileola, Charleville, Charters Towers, Emerald, Kingaroy, Longreach, Marbeeba, Roma, Sarina and Thursday Island.

A separate Backlog Maintenance Remediation Program to permanently repair damage or build replacement health facilities will extend over four years and began with an \$81.8 million allocation in the 2014–15 State budget.

South West Hospital and Health Service Chief Operations Officer Meryl Brumpton said this program had delivered essential upgrades to the Roma Hospital.

'At Roma Hospital, we had never had a compliant disability ramp at the hospital entrance, making life difficult for some of our residents,' Meryl said.

'We now have one constructed through funding from the backlog maintenance program, which makes access to the hospital more inclusive.'

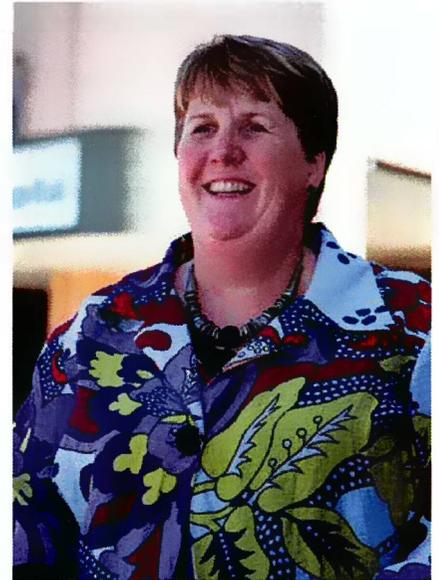
At Moura, Alpha and Chinchilla funds through 'Better Health for the Bush' are being directed towards rural services including managing and supporting chronic disease, while at Charleville the initial focus is on enhancing and

sustaining surgical services and purchasing medical equipment.

'For Charleville this blueprint has reduced the hospital's surgical waiting list by moving some patients to Roma for treatment,' Meryl said.

'We've also been able to put on two telehealth coordinators at Charleville and St George hospitals and we have created two positions for junior medical officers.

'This is part of the 'Grow your own' strategy which aims to make our medical model more sustainable. By showing junior staffers a professional working rural hospital model, we hope to be able to better retain and attract doctors into the future.'



HOSPITALS IMPROVED: South West Hospital and Health Service Chief Operations Officer Meryl Brumpton says regional hospitals are rejuvenated

Help at hand in dry times

WHILE WE CANNOT MAKE IT RAIN, THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING THOSE COMMUNITIES WHO ARE DOING IT EXTRA TOUGH AS DROUGHT CONTINUES ITS CRUEL GRIP ON MUCH OF THE STATE.

About 75 per cent of the state is drought declared and there is a range of assistance schemes available to support struggling producers.

Since 2013, the state government, through the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme and the Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate scheme, has provided assistance of more than \$30 million to more than 6000 applicants.

This scheme has helped graziers manage their livestock during drought and has provided recovery support.

The Queensland Government is also focused on supporting people — those who are on the land and struggling with the uncontrollable climatic conditions.

Queensland Health has invested \$300 000 for the delivery of 60 mental health support workshops across the state.

The mental health workshops have been targeted at the rural sector and have been important in building capacity to support the emotional and social wellbeing of impacted community members. It has also focused on increasing community resilience during these tough times.

The workshops aim to provide participants with strategies on how to respond during and after traumatic events, identify ways to assist people who have been affected by a potentially traumatic event and assist people who may be at risk.

For more information visit www.health.qld.gov.au/mentalhealth/news/drought.asp

Townsville then and now



TOWNSVILLE IS LOCATED ABOUT HALFWAY BETWEEN THE TIP OF CAPE YORK AND BRISBANE. IT IS THE GATEWAY TO THE WEST AND JUST EIGHT KILOMETRES OFFSHORE, IS MAGNETIC ISLAND.

At the heart of the city stands Castle Hill, a heritage-listed isolated pink granite monolith that sits 286 metres above sea level.

Traditional owners, the Bindal and Wulgurukaba peoples, are the first known people to have lived in the Townsville area.

Captain James Cook mentioned the region in 1770.

The new city of Townsville was formed in 2008, when the city councils of Townsville and Thuringowa were amalgamated.

Today the city is a major service centre and a main centre for government administration outside Brisbane. Regional health services are provided by the Townsville Hospital.

There are a number of research institutions such as James Cook University which services 15 000 students, the Australian Institute of Marine Science, and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. The Australian Defence Force community of approximately 15 000 personnel also influences the local economy.

As part of this year's state budget, the Townsville region will benefit from \$41.2 million towards the Townsville Hospital Expansion and \$10.4 million to complete the Townsville Medium Secure Rehabilitation Unit.

Medical research is also receiving a boost with \$14.3 million provided towards the establishment of the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine at James Cook University.

Just last month, a Priority Development Area for the Townsville City Waterfront was declared by the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, paving the way for the transformation of 97.2 hectares of Townsville's outer CBD.

Boardwalks, a pedestrian footbridge, parkland, entertainment and dining strips are just some of the suggestions that are being considered to revitalise waterfront land around Ross Creek in Townsville.

School crossing stalwart keeping our kids safe

COME RAIN OR SHINE, WIND OR STORM, NOTHING HAS STOPPED SHARON BYRNE FROM SUPERVISING THE SCHOOL CROSSING AT KILLARNEY STATE SCHOOL ON THE SOUTHERN DOWNS.

Sharon joined the school crossing supervisor scheme during the year of its inception and hasn't looked back.

'Originally I took the job as a way to get a bit of extra money to pay for my kids' after school activities, but now it's become a way of life,' Sharon said.

'I love being outside and being out of the house.'

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Department of Transport and Main Roads' introduction of the school crossing supervisor road safety initiative.

After 30 years spent ensuring the safety of Killarney State School students, there's one key message Sharon is hoping to instil in every single one of them.

'Always use the crossing, whether it's supervised or not, people look out for kids more around crossings.'

She also notes that pedestrian crossings locations are chosen for a reason, so motorists have a clear view and can stop in time when necessary.

'And kids need to stay on the footpath and off the road. It might be a nice open space, but there's no need to tempt fate.'



Stock photo

THANKS FOR KINDLY ALLOWING TRAFFIC TO MERGE

JOIN THE DRIVE TO SAVE LIVES

Great state. Great opportunity.
And a plan for the future.



We're not taking any chances



Help us protect the Great Barrier Reef through the Abbot Point Port and Wetlands Project.

The Queensland Government has announced a detailed strategy to create a world-class port facility and enhance and protect nearby wetlands.

The Reef is important to all Queenslanders which is why instead of placing dredged material in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, the State Government will use it on land.

We also recognise the value of nearby wetlands to the local community and will work with you to preserve and enhance their ecological health.

To get involved in the Abbot Point Port and Wetlands Strategy visit: dsdip.qld.gov.au/wetlands

Great state. Great opportunity.
And a plan for the future.



Authorised by the Queensland Government, George Street, Brisbane.

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