

# HERBERT RIVER IMPROVEMENT TRUST

## *SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES*

THURSDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2011  
AT 10.00 A.M.



- A. ATTENDANCE – Present were Cr. G.P. Gianotti (Acting Chairperson), Cr. P.D. Lynch (Member), Mr. R.W. Clark (Trust Secretary), Mr. M. Nash (Herbert River Catchment Coordinating Committee), and Mr. L. Di Bella (Terrain NRM).
- B. APOLOGY – An apology was received from Mr. W.H. Pickering.
- C. PURPOSE – To participate in a teleconference with Cassowary Coast Regional Council River Trusts, Cairns Regional Council River Trust, Tablelands Regional Council, and Terrain NRM.

The teleconference heard an overview from Mr. Errol Colman (DERM) on financial assistance arrangements available to River Trusts under NDRRA guidelines for restoration of Trust assets, and the possibility of financial assistance under recently announced Australian and State Government \$20M financial assistance for farm clearing assistance designed to keep displaced farm workers employed, as well as cleaning up farms and watercourses choked with fallen vegetation which if left may cause flood damage to infrastructure.

Errol Colman also advised of the former "Timber Clearing in Streams" Project after Cyclone Larry and stated that that type of project may fall under the recently announced financial assistance.

He advised that under new guidelines, permits will not be required to remove dead or fallen vegetation by landowners, only if living vegetation is proposed to be removed.

The Trust expressed its view that we see the Environment Recovery Sub-Group as having the appropriate coordinating role for such work in the Herbert. The Trust believes that individual landholders should not be able to receive financial assistance and engage contractors to clear dead or fallen vegetation from streams without it being coordinated by the sub-group in which the HRIT will play a major role.

The approach may be different in the Cassowary Coast Regional Council area in view of banana farmers employing workforces that may need alternative employment.

Discussion also took place on the possibility of trying to attract "Caring for our Country" and "Reef Rescue" funding to compliment NDRRA and new works being carried out in streams and on riverbanks which will leverage greater benefit for these works.

Terrain Coordinator, Lawrence Di Bella expressed the view that we should push for non-competitive funding and ensure that each area received an allocation to contribute to such works.

The Trust suggested that Errol Colman should attend the Infrastructure and Environment Recovery Sub-Group meetings in Ingham on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2011 and undertook to request Tim Smith from DERM to allow this to happen.

The meeting also discussed the opportunity to again push for the Integrated Stream Management Process formulated by Terrain and the River Trusts early in 2010, to try and secure additional Government funding to repair new damage to riverbanks which currently attracts minimal funding from the State Government.

D. CONCLUSION – The meeting concluded at 12.00 noon.

(Sgd) Cr. G.P. Gianotti,  
ACTING TRUST CHAIRPERSON.