

MEDIA RELEASE



December 22, 2008

"Working together – healthy landscapes, viable communities"

Governor opens new QMDC Roma office

Demand from landholders and community members in the Maranoa-Balonne led to Queensland has led to Governor, Ms Penelope Wensley, AO making her first official trip to Roma on Friday, December 19.

Her Excellency was in the regional centre to open the new Queensland Murray-Darling Committee (QMDC) facility, which will house not only 13 staff but also support Landcare co-ordinators across the catchment and provide up-to-date resources for the entire community.

QMDC chief executive officer Geoff Penton said the new facility embodied the Queensland Governor's interest in natural resource management and landcare matters.

"Our new Maranoa Balonne Landcare and Catchment Centre includes a resource library for students, teachers, landholders and environmentally conscious people from throughout the catchment as they pursue their studies or simply aim to expand their knowledge," Mr Penton said.

"The Queensland Murray-Darling Committee was established in 1992 to support community members throughout the region manage their natural resources sustainably.

"At the moment, this work includes invaluable partnerships with six local governments, more than 800 landholders, nine Landcare groups, eight Traditional Owner groups, more than 20 schools and a number of research and industry groups to effect wide-scale sustainable natural resource management across the four million hectares of the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin."

In her remarks to the crowd of more than 70 people gathered for the opening, Her Excellency the Governor of Queensland Ms Penelope Wensley, AO, said the Landcare movement offered a consistently successful approach to large-scale land use change in Australia.

"I do take a very keen interest in many important environmental and sustainability projects being undertaken across our vast and diverse state," she said.

Her Excellency said Australia was at the vanguard of making the 'think globally, act locally' slogan a reality and a part of that was due to the Landcare movement.

And while some community-based organisations might have trouble maintaining or recruiting new members, Her Excellency said Landcare was a striking exception.

"This (new) centre is a resource for the wider community ... and this is the support of partners and the community that the Landcare movement was conceived to develop," she said.

Mr Penton said such was the demand for its services, QMDC had outgrown its Roma facility and had taken the opportunity to expand its office to provide the community with more access to the vital resources provided by the organisation.

"Specific natural resources targeted by QMDC include land and soils, water, riverine, floodplains and wetlands, weeds and pest animal management, and vegetation and biodiversity," he said.

"QMDC also offers education and training programs to help increase the knowledge of regional communities to manage their natural resources sustainably and this includes providing field days, education forums and workshops to community members through resources provided by the Queensland and Australian governments."

Mr Penton said there was an ever increasing awareness of the importance of natural resource issues in the community consciousness.

“Her Excellency has a particular interest in the environment and sustainable development and these are certainly shared by the wider community of the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin,” he said.

Photographs:

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(from left)

QMDC CEO Geoff Penton, Federal Member for Maranoa Bruce Scott, Queensland Governor, Ms Penelope Wensley, AO, QMDC chair Peter Blundell, QMDC vice chair Denis Sommerfeld “Dunaird” Tara, Roma Regional Council deputy mayor Tom Hartley and QMDC Catchment Team Coordinator Cameron O’Neil celebrate the opening of the new Maranoa Balonne Landcare and Catchment Centre in Roma on December 19.

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Queensland Governor, Ms Penelope Wensley, AO cuts the ribbon to officially open the Queensland Murray-Darling Committee’s new Maranoa Balonne Landcare and Catchment Centre in Roma on December 19.

Media contacts

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