14 March, 2011

GOVERNMENT BUYS DREDGE FOR NSW COASTAL WORKS

Fishermen and boating enthusiasts have received a boost with the NSW Government purchasing a dredge to maintain coastal waterways and keep them open to for safe navigation.

Minister for Lands, Tony Kelly, said Birdon Pty Ltd won the tender ahead of three other short-listed bids.

“The Port Macquarie company came out on top of an evaluation process that examined technical and cost-benefit elements,” the Minister said.

“It’s expected to take six months to construct and deliver the $1.6 million transportable cutter suction dredge.

“This dredge alone costs more than the entire dredging budget of $1.5 million being promised by the Opposition.

“The Opposition has not done its homework on what is required to maintain our waterways.

“The NSW Government has now allocated more than $6.7 million towards dredging and equipment over the past five years.”

Mr Kelly said once the new dredge is delivered, dredging will start immediately.

“The dredge will undertake the operations regularly conducted in past years to maintain navigation of the Swansea Channel,” the Minister said.

“It will also be available for dredging at other locations along the coast.

“The dredge will ensure there is a capacity for government to complete such works and it will compliment the private sector capacity currently undertaking work on a contract basis.”

Member for Swansea, Robert Coombs, said the additional dredging capacity would be welcomed by coastal communities.

“The Swansea channel is a vital waterway for the community and regular maintenance dredging is critical to the viability and sustainability of the lake,” Mr Coombs said.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Area</th>
<th>NSW Funds</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minor Ports &amp; River Entrances</td>
<td>$1,899,000</td>
<td>$1,899,000 (100% NSW)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waterways</td>
<td>$802,500</td>
<td>$1,605,000 (NSW + Council - 50/50)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tweed River Entrance Sand Bypass</td>
<td>$1,450,000</td>
<td>$2,900,000 (NSW + Qld)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Illawarra</td>
<td>$1,007,500</td>
<td>$2,015,000 (NSW + Councils)</td>
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