



11th March 2011

Press release: Great news for North Queensland's Environment

On behalf of the large consortium of research providers and end users based in and working in North Queensland, the Reef and Rainforest Research Centre (RRRC) announced they had secured the tender and today signed the Agreement with the Australian Government to be the Administrator for the new Great Barrier Reef & Torres Strait Hub (GBRTS Hub) incorporating rainforest research under the National Environment Research Program (NERP).

"This is terrific news for the region. Now more than ever environmental research is paramount to the future of our natural assets. This also means a boost for the Cairns economy as well.

"We are very pleased that the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population & Communities, the Hon. Tony Burke, recognised the importance of maintaining the management of the research hub locally and also incorporating rainforest research into the GBRTS Hub.

"It makes sense to combine the two World Heritage listed areas of the Great Barrier Reef and the Wet Tropics Rainforests under the one research hub and to the Minister's credit he recognised that importance when he visited and spoke with industry late last year.

"This is fantastic news for everyone living and working in the region, including major industries such as the tourism industry," said Sheriden Morris, Managing Director of the RRRC.

"We are delighted with the Minister's recognition of the importance of managing this research hub locally, and the importance of coordinating effort and investment across multiple agencies and interested parties. This will ensure the collaborative research environment the RRRC has fostered will continue into the future."

The Cairns- and Townsville-based RRRC managed and delivered the Australian Government's \$40 million MTSRF on behalf of a large consortium of research providers and end users, including James Cook University, the Australian Institute of Marine Science, CSIRO, the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, especially the Association of Marine Park Tourism Operators (AMPTO), the Queensland Tourism Industry, the Torres Strait Regional Authority, the Wet Tropics Management Authority, and many others.

Sheriden thanked the local community, including the business & tourism community for their support for the RRRC during this process. "In particular, we would like to sincerely thank Minister Tony Burke, who has worked tirelessly to ensure that our region continues to receive federal funding and attention," said Sheriden Morris.

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For more information about RRRC, please visit the website at www.rrrc.org.au