

Media Statement

18 December 2015

Ports North Environment Award winners announced

Exceptional strategic thinking and sophisticated data presentation defined the entries to this year's Ports North/Business Liaison Association Environment Awards.

"Ports North is very proud to be part of these awards and we congratulate the winners and wish them well in their future endeavours," Ports North Chairman Russell Beer said.

"Every year since 2002, we have sponsored the environment awards, which are a joint initiative of Education Queensland, North Queensland secondary schools and the BLA."

"They are part of Ports North's suite of initiatives to maintain a healthy coastal environment – from sponsoring vital research such as seagrass studies and sedimentation analysis, to supporting turtle rehabilitation and eradicating marine pests," Mr Beer said.

The awards are open to all senior science school students in the Far North Queensland region. The theme is Protecting Our Environment, and requires students to carry out a field study of an estuarine or fresh water system at their local creek or river under the guidance of their teacher. They must include quality data, use their research to draw conclusions in a local and regional context, and present the information to the standard scientific reporting format.

Ports North Environment Manager Adam Fletcher said the overall quality of the reports was outstanding.

"It is always a difficult process making the final call on a winner and all entries were indeed a testament to the quality of the students and their educators," Mr Fletcher said.

This year's winning presentation was from Leah Scroggie of Cairns State High School who delivered a report on "Managing the Natural Environment: Freshwater Creek."

The 16-year-old Year 11 geography student will be the recipient of a \$1250 bursary.

"Leah's entry was a stand-out in the way she produced her analysis and reviewed strategies to address her findings," Mr Fletcher said. "She took it to a new level."

Six reports were accepted for the BLA Environmental Awards for 2015, with analysis carried out as far south as Babinda.

"The students must all be congratulated for the considerable work they put into these entries, and for their understanding of water catchment issues," Mr Fletcher said.

The BLA Environment Awards are part of a commitment by Ports North to foster a greater awareness of issues affecting the local and regional coastal environment.

“We want to promote and encourage career opportunities for these students in the environmental and science industries,” Mr Fletcher said. “There can never be a time when we stop looking for new ways to protect and improve our natural world.”

The 2015 winners will receive their awards at the BLA Awards Night on the 3rd of December. They are:

1st Place - Leah Scroggie - Cairns State High School - Yr11 Geography - Study of Freshwater Creek - \$1,250 Bursary

Runner up - Courtney Spokes – Babinda P-12 State School – Yr11 Chemistry – Analysis of water quality at Babinda Creek - \$750 Bursary

Encouragement Award - Sophie Alderton - Redlynch State High School - Yr11 Chemistry – Analysis of three sites at Freshwater Creek - \$500 Bursary

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