

JOINT STATEMENT TO LAUNCESTON SEWAGE RALLY

Tuesday, 20 August 2013



Congratulations to all who have organised and attended today's event highlighting the desperate situation regarding the Tamar River's health. Unfortunately we cannot attend ourselves as State Parliament is sitting in Hobart today. However we appreciate this opportunity to provide a statement expressing our support for your call for action.

The Tamar River is the sleeping giant of the new Tamar Valley economy.

If we are serious about fixing the Tamar we need to be serious about identifying the problem. No more short-term band-aids.

In the Greens' opinion the existing sewage and stormwater combined system is unable to deliver an acceptable service.

The Tamar River has become a sewer servicing not only Launceston but towns all the way to the Western Tiers. The major contaminate is from ineffective sewerage systems, which leak in or overflow into the river during storm events with the worst polluter being Launceston.

The most practical and logical solution is to have a separate sewerage and stormwater system.

The Greens propose a Feasibility and Options investigation into the most practical and sustainable separate sewerage and stormwater systems to refine and specifically cost how to separate our combined system.

We expect this investigation will cost around \$250, 000 and the process must include public consultation. It should be a jointly funded project with contributions from both State and Federal governments.

The Greens are today announcing that we will prioritise sourcing and committing appropriate state funding for this initiative. We will ensure this is a state election issue.

The Greens expect that significant federal and state funding will need to be provided to Taswater to assist in the construction of the system and our federal Green counterparts will also be looking for ways to assist in accessing this funding.

We understand the construction cost could be in excess of \$200 million; this is not a reason not to build such a scheme – it just means we have to do it properly.

Under our proposal we envisage the existing system would be handed to the Council as a stormwater system.

Launceston could go from having the worst sewerage system to the best. This will not solve all the problems of siltation and contamination of the estuary, but it will resolve the most pressing issue.

On behalf of the State Greens,

Tim Morris MP, Greens Water spokesperson, and Kim Booth MP, Greens Member for Bass