



13 October 2021

MEDIA RELEASE Atherton

### **Atherton water project wins public works award**

Atherton's water quality improvement plan has been recognised as one of the best public works projects in the state at the prestigious Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia Queensland (IPWEAQ) awards announced in Cairns last night.

Tablelands Regional Council received a highly commended award for the project in the \$2 million to \$5 million category.

IPWEAQ CEO Leigh Cunningham said the annual excellence awards recognised the success of infrastructure and engineering projects and the people who deliver them across the state.

"The Atherton Water Quality Improvement Plan is more than public works project, it is a long-term investment that will serve the community for generations," Ms Cunningham said.

"This project highlights how public works engineering is improving our communities and growing our economies through every aspect of our lives, from transportation and water supply to road safety and recycling, to recreation at football stadiums, parks and walking trails.

"Infrastructure projects such as these will contribute an estimated \$32 billion a year to the Queensland economy every year for the next five years.

"With the state's continuing growth and the lead-up to the 2032 Olympics, Queensland's public works engineering sector will be taking a leading role over the coming decade."

The Atherton water quality improvement plan was developed in response to acute drinking water quality concerns raised in 2018 that meant some areas were on continuous boil water notices. The project achieved its major milestone in March 2020 with sustained cessation of boil water notices after 786 continuous days.

This was achieved by operational changes to the water supply scheme to reduce water quality risks until an infrastructure-based solution could be implemented.

A \$3.4 million capital investment from the Queensland Government's Works for Queensland fund allowed a change from relying on high-risk surface water supplies to groundwater supplies. This required major changes in the mode of operation of the water supply scheme and integrating infrastructure elements through concurrent packages to reduce the project time frame.

About 450 public works engineering professionals delivered a million-dollar boost to the Far North Queensland economy through the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia Queensland conference in Cairns on 12 to 14 October.

The Atherton project is one of 30 projects recognised for public works excellence at the IPWEAQ awards.

For more information visit [ipweaq.com](http://ipweaq.com)

**ENDS**

**Media contact:** Carmel Carrick, IPWEAQ Media and Communications Manager 0414 596 105