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Tamar River woes become a major election issue

Libs pledge \$9.5m silt fix

By ALISON ANDREWS
Chief reporter

THE LIBERAL Party will spend \$9.5 million tackling the Tamar River's continuing silt problem if it wins government.

Opposition Leader Will Hodgman will announce today that the Liberals will make the Tamar's River's silt issues a major priority if successful at the March state election.

The announcement will put silt firmly back on the election agenda for the third successive campaign with the Greens already committing to similar projects.

The Liberals will set up a large dredging program over three years and a permanent Tamar and Esk rivers management



authority to manage the problem in the longer term.

Local government involvement would be reflected in an advisory group made up of

representatives from each of the bordering councils of George Town, Dorset, Northern Midlands, Meander Valley, and West Tamar as well as Launceston.

Existing catchment authority NRM North would be part of the advisory group.

Mr Hodgman will announce today that the new silt authority would be required:

- To produce a strategic catchment management plan within 18 months, which has been negotiated with the advisory group.

- To have responsibility for the environment management and health of all waterways within the catchments and work in cooperation with the Launceston Flood Authority.

It is understood that the Liberals see the issue of silt as sadly neglected over a long period of time.

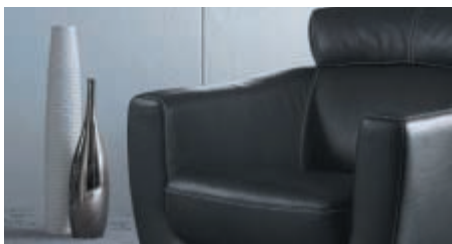
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