

TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

"Protecting the quality of living on Tamborine Mountain"

29th November, 2015

Submission to Agriculture and Environment Committee

re: Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015

The Tamborine Mountain Progress Association is a not-for-profit registered Community Purpose organization which celebrated its 100th birthday this year. Established in 1915 to help manage the newly gazetted national parks here (we have the first in Queensland, 1908, Witches Falls), the organization has maintained as its core interest the environmental values of the mountain and its escarpment.

Close to two large cities, Brisbane and the Gold Coast, we regularly deal with perceived inappropriate development applications which threaten the environmental values of local residents. An estimated over 90% have arrived for a particular environment friendly lifestyle. An Act which preserves nature as its central theme is important to us.

Tamborine Mountain's National Parks are easily accessed by people in the two adjoining large cities and provide the therapeutic antidote to stressful urban living. The annual visitor numbers top 1 m. and this is the most visited day destination in South East Queensland. The mountain's high value to everyone is clearly established.

It is therefore with alarm that this organization viewed the significant changes to the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and removal as its cardinal principle "the preservation of nature" brought about by the Nature Conservation & Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2013.

This Association therefore supports the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 and in particular the following points:

- the reinstatement of "the conservation of nature" as the sole object of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 so that the preservation of the natural condition of national parks will take precedence over other objectives.

Without this amendment, uses which are not ecologically sustainable threaten the integrity of our national parks. The parks are relatively small and any fragmentation would damage wildlife corridors, habitat, canopy cover and open up areas for weed infestation.

- Reinstating the former national park (scientific), conservation park and resources reserve classes of protected area, and their associated management principles.

This is supported by the Association. In 2014 an extreme sports development application was lodged for 500 acres of land located inside the Tamborine Mountain Escarpment Protection Precinct. It was passed by Scenic Rim Regional Council in August this year.

Sitting beside a National Park, Guanaga Gorge is dead end, very steep, hilly and forbidding and is surrounded on three sides by the plateau. Dangers to wildlife arising from speeding bikes, 4WD's, noise, lights & campfires (up to 300 people), loss of habitat and the increased potential for bushfires

spell extinction for wildlife and valuable flora in the area. The Tamborine Mountain Escarpment Flora & Fauna Report (Chenoweth Environmental Planning, 2000) estimated the Tamborine Mountain escarpment represented 80% of flora and fauna found in the Gold Coast region.

In 1924, an effort to declare Guanaba Gorge a National park was made, but this was not successful. Since then there is a long history of community efforts to preserve this conservation area.

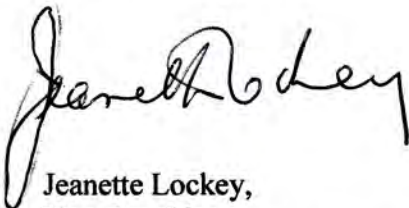
This point is strongly supported as enforcement would avoid the destruction of land rich in biodiversity such as we are desperately trying to preserve. The Association is appealing Council's decision in the Planning & Environment Court.

- amending the Nature Conservation Act 1992 to remove an exemption that allows management plans for protected areas to be amended without public consultation, if amendments relate to a change in State government policy.

This amendment is also supported by the Association. Tamborine Mountain residents have a long history of interest in the management of protected areas. Public participation in key mountain issues has shaped the unique area it is today. It retains a high environmental value today and public participation should continue.

We commend the State Government for putting forth this Bill and look forward to its passage through parliament.

Yours sincerely,



Jeanette Lockey,
Hon. President,
Tamborine Mountain Progress Association