



7 July 2017

Research Director
Agriculture and Environment Committee
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Sir/Madam,

LGAQ Response to Nature Conservation Act (Special Wildlife Reserves) and other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the draft *Nature Conservation (Special Wildlife Reserve) Bill 2017*, amendments to the *Environmental Offsets Act 2014* and other associated documents. Private protected areas make an important contribution to Queensland's protected area system, particularly for the provision of landscape-scale linkages with public protected areas. Many local governments in Queensland play an important role in managing and securing protected areas. Local government not only choose to enter into protected area agreements such as conservation covenants and nature refuges on their own land, but also encourage the uptake on privately owned land.

It is vital the State maintains its role in providing strategic direction and coordination to enhance the management of protected areas in Queensland. For local government to assist in establishing protected area mechanisms, the State needs to play a supporting role where timely advice is provided; applications for private protected areas are well managed and streamlined; and extension services are provided to private landholders who enter into conservation agreements. It is therefore imperative that the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection are adequately resourced for this purpose.

The LGAQ supports the establishment of Special Wildlife Reserves (SWR) as another protective area mechanism for use by private landholders and local governments that protects land from incompatible land uses over and above the level of protection offered under the existing Nature Refuge program. There may be situations where local governments would benefit from the declaration of a SWR to afford greater levels of protection. However, the LGAQ notes that this is not a 'one-size-fits-all' approach and will be considered by local governments on a case by case basis.

Please don't hesitate to contact Ms Kristy Gooding, Senior Advisor – Natural Assets and NRM on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] should you wish to discuss any aspect of these comments.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Greg Hallam', is written over a circular stamp or watermark.

GREG HALLAM PSM
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER