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Herston

Qld 4006

29 October 2013

Dear Members of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee,

Please consider this submission to the Inquiry into the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability and Another Act Amendment Bill 2013.

1. North Stradbroke Island has special significance as the second largest sand mass island in the world. It is a natural asset of very high national and international environmental and geological significance. Its natural asset value transcends any temporary economic value realised through sand extraction.
2. The hydrology of North Stradbroke Island as a mass sand island comprises a freshwater "lens", the integrity of which is dependent on the integrity of the dune landscape. That landscape is being modified by the sand extraction activity which puts the integrity of the hydrologic processes at an unacceptable risk. Further mining will exacerbate that risk.
3. The extension of the sandmining lease is contrary to the expectations of Queenslanders that the lease area will be rehabilitated at an early stage, and included in protective National Park tenure to reinforce the environmental and habitat values of North Stradbroke Island as an important component of Queensland's natural heritage. Deferring that rehabilitation and inclusion in protective tenure will reduce the community benefit to Queenslanders of this enhancement of the protected area asset. The greater extent of disturbance due to the extension of the sand mining activity will compromise the natural values of the land when it is eventually rehabilitated and included in protective tenure... a loss to all Queenslanders.
3. The limitations to review and appeal provisions reduces safeguards that should remain in place (or be further strengthened) to adequately assess and minimise risks associated with the proposed continuance of sandmining activity.
5. The continuance of the lease while the lease extension application is being dealt with increases the risk that harm is being caused by the continued extraction activity. It also increases the risk that harm being done while the application is being dealt with may not be capable of mitigation.
6. The replacement of the Environment Authority (Schedule 2A) is negligent in the extreme. The replacement Environmental Authority reduces the level of protection of the flora, fauna, landform and hydrological processes which are impacted by the sand mining activity. This is likely to lead to a greater level of environmental harm being done.

7. The amendment to the Vegetation Management Framework Amendment At of 2013 would further erode the purpose of the Vegetation Management Framework and would reduce the protection of our natural vegetation heritage on North Stradbroke Island, and further threaten the habitat and ecological processes upon which our native species depend.

8. The proponent Sibelco has not demonstrated its ability to operate within agreed terms. It is subject of ongoing legal action regarding the removal of material outside its operating licence. Until this and other allegations are fully and adequately answered, no further extension of lease should be contemplated.

9. Please reject this ill-conceived Bill and retain the current schedule for phasing out sand mining activity on North Stradbroke Island.

For any further information or clarification, please feel free to contact me via the details outlined below.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Taylor

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