

From: [Gail](#)
To: [Health and Community Services Committee](#)
Subject: Submission: amendments to the National Parks Act
Date: Friday, 13 September 2013 1:25:06 PM

Good afternoon.

I would like to present this submission regarding proposed adjustments to the National Parks Act.

Australians have long acted to conserve these unique places for the future, and this effective, responsible custodianship must take precedence over any activity or adjustment to protection mechanisms made with a view to short-term gain or by inadequately considered whim of government.

My particular interest concerns commercial recreational activity in the National Parks of South East Queensland, especially within the Sunshine Coast region where I live and in particular, the Pumicestone Passage.

I support limited access to our natural assets. Considered, well managed, sensitive, responsible access can enhance education, appreciation, awareness and therefore custodianship by those who are likely to use the areas. Each person with access therefore becomes a steward of nature.

Throughout legislative process, Government must address, above all other considerations, the security and protection of our unique natural ecosystems and wildlife.

Here on the Pumicestone Passage, responsible recreational use has assisted effective custodianship for generations. However, with huge population growth in the region and the attendant increased demand for recreation – especially by motorised water craft - the ecology of not only conservation areas recognised world wide, but that of Moreton Bay Marine Park and the Bribie Island National Park are at risk.

As I see the issue, any adjustment to the Acts should be firstly evaluated in relationship to the question: 'how will the natural asset be conserved and enhanced through these changes?'.

As mentioned above, my concern is regarding 'opening up' the National Parks without first ensuring carefully considered, designed and resourced management plans are in place with restrictions appropriate to the guaranteed conservation of nature's asset. Any approval process considered for recreational activity within the National Parks, especially for commercial purposes should be prefaced by one significant clause: 'Demonstrate how will this proposed activity will enhance the ecological values of the National Park?'.

Across the world, sensitive access is allowed to amazing, unique places. With effective stewardship, this access sustains the ecology both physically and economically. Before the Acts are changed, adequate mechanisms must be in place to ensure Australia, its pristine places, wonderful views, vegetation and wildlife become 'world's best practice' examples for other countries watching with some envy from a distance.

The Queensland government has significant, crucial responsibilities. I strongly caution against changes happening to legislation presently that will have ramifications far into the future. I want our National Parks to still generate awe for our grandchildren's grandchildren.

Locally, the Wildlife Preservation Society and the Sunshine Coast Environment Council have courageously supported our unique vegetation, wildlife and National Parks across time. I also concur with their views.

Thank you for considering my submission.

Gail Podberscek

Mob: