

Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority Bill 2026

Submission No: 034

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Publication: Making the submission and your name public

As a local of 57 years, my family and i have grown up fishing, swimming, kayaking, sailing, canoeing, and consuming seafood caught from the Noosa waterways. In 2023 we saw a push from a local well funded green group (600 members) to have 90% our river declared a conservation park. On the surface it looked benign, but it was a real push to rest control of our river to an unelected minority group with the help elected and executive members of the noosa council. We know this group has been working to have the Noosa waterways excluded from the Sunshine Coast Waterways Authority, surprisingly with what looks like the help of our local member. The only motive I can think of for excluding Noosa from the SCWA is that they fear losing influence or control. LNP government made an election promise to includes Noosa in the SCWA, and i saw that promise delivering an important safe guard against minority influence over our waterways.

But key to delivering effective management and reducing minority influence will be 1. board make up, 2. ongoing public consultation, 3. accountability on delivering measurable results, and 4. Maximum terms eg 3 years for board directors, then fresh blood

Board selection needs to include members with that; 1. understand ongoing human aquatic activities are a critical part of our communities health and relaxation eg experience of recreational fishing and power boating. 2. Understand the needs of the business and tourism sector. 3. Have a record of delivering critical infrastructure, like boat ramps etc. 4. Water quality and sustainability that can work with councils to ensure soil and land based pollutants entering waterways are minimised. 5. Strategic waterways planning and management.

Public consultation is real, not a tick a box game, ongoing and proactive talking with key user groups like the Noosa Boating Fishing Alliance.

Accountability, this cannot be just a series of planning exercises, but must deliver demonstrable outcomes.

Terms limits will ensure fresh ideas and limit bad outcomes from entrenched individuals.

I believe its important for the Queensland LNP to fulfil its election commitment and include Noosa in the SCWA, and to deliver a proactive productive authority that will keep these waterways open to human use, sustainable and professionally managed with proper infrastructure upgrades.