



Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles
MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA

Record of Proceedings, 14 June 2017

MOTION: REVOCATION OF PROTECTED AREAS

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (7.59 pm): I move—

- (1) That this House requests the Governor in Council, in accordance with section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992, revoke by regulation the dedication of parts of the protected area estate as set out in the proposals tabled by me in the House today viz—

Description of areas to be revoked

Curtain Fig National Park	An area of 0.3678 hectares described as lot 5 on SP280087, as illustrated on the attached "Curtain Fig National Park: sketch A".
Great Sandy National Park	An area of 0.9281 hectares described as lot 2 on SP265488, as illustrated on the attached "Great Sandy National Park: sketch B".
Jardine River National Park	An area of about 37.8105 hectares described as lot 100 on AP23103, lots 6 to 10 on SP269695 and lot 4 on SP292288, as illustrated on the attached "Jardine River National Park: sketch C".
Millstream Falls National Park	An area of 3.08 hectares described as lot 2 on SP282409, as illustrated on the attached "Millstream Falls National Park: sketch D".
Wooroonooran National Park	An area of about 0.3633 hectares described as lots 2 to 4 on SP261140, as illustrated on the attached "Wooroonooran National Park: sketch E".
Eumundi Conservation Park	An area of 1.6214 hectares described as lots 1 to 3 on SP278635, as illustrated on the attached "Eumundi Conservation Park: sketch F".
Heathlands Resources Reserve	An area of about 34,370.37 hectares described as lots 9 and 10 on AP22756, lot 11 on AP22758, lot 7 on AP23098, lot 8 on AP23100, lot 6 on AP23101, lots 1 to 6 on AP23102, lot 7 on AP23104, lots 1 to 3 on AP23105 and lots 1 and 2 on AP23107, as illustrated on the attached "Heathlands Resources Reserve: sketch G".
Jardine River Resources Reserve	An area of about 6,760.6 hectares described as lot 1 and 2 on AP23106, as illustrated on the attached "Jardine River Resources Reserve: sketch H".

- (2) That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef for submission to the Governor in Council.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to a strong and expansive national park estate that represents and protects Queensland's unique flora and fauna. Our protected area estate is very important to our conservation efforts. The decision to revoke land is taken only as a last resort when no other reasonable alternative is available.

With such a large and dispersed protected area estate, occasionally there is a need to revoke small areas to correct boundary inconsistencies or historic incursions. On other occasions, revocations allow for the return of land to traditional owners to resolve tenure and to protect those most special parts from development. When we hand back land, we are righting the wrongs of the past. It is the ultimate acknowledgement of country.

I acknowledge the traditional owners at the start of every speech I make—and I know that most of the other ministers do—and I try to make the acknowledgement as meaningful as I can to connect it to the topic at hand. As I am the environment minister, very often I talk about environmental sustainability. I note the impacts of white settlement on this place in just a couple of centuries, while traditional owners managed the land sustainably for tens of thousands of years.

Of course, things are better in the cape, where so much of the natural areas are still pristine. When I attended the Shelburne hand-back last year, I saw firsthand the joy of the Wuthathi elders who had refused to give in, who wanted their future generations to have ownership of their lands, to manage them and connect with them. I mention conservationist Don Henry. He was there that day on the cape and he is here in the House tonight. He has been a mentor for me in the conservation movement and he played a vital role in the Shelburne hand-back and the entire tenure reform program. Once again, traditional owners will take custodianship of these areas that were enjoyed and respected by their ancestors so they too can use, preserve and pass on their lands, culture and knowledge to the next generation.

Many of the revocations being debated in this motion demonstrate this principle. The proposed revocation of part of the Jardine River Resources Reserve would see 6,750 hectares of land returned to the traditional owners, which would be granted to them as Aboriginal freehold land. Handing back this land would mean that the traditional owners can use their land for environmental and economic purposes and to reconnect with country. This hand-back also ensures that future generations will have ownership of this land.

A further revocation of 4.2 hectares is proposed from the Jardine River National Park to be granted as Aboriginal freehold land in accordance with the Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program. This hand-back will enable traditional owners to enter into arrangements for telecommunications infrastructure and services at the site.

A further area of over 33,681 hectares is also proposed to be revoked from Heathlands Resources Reserve, which would be granted as Aboriginal freehold land. This would allow the traditional owners to pursue economic activities in the Captain Billy's Landing and Cockatoo Creek areas and re-establish cultural ties to the land.

The proposed revocation for Curtain Fig National Park will allow for the alignment of the Dowling Road reserve with the actual constructed road. By opening the existing road and closing the area reserved for a road, Curtain Fig National Park will gain about 8.4 hectares of land. We also propose to revoke part of the Great Sandy National Park to ratify the alignment of the Papertree Track road reserve with the constructed track, about 36 kilometres east of Maryborough. This revocation would result in a gain of 0.27 hectares of land to the protected estate and provide significant benefits to people living in Noosa North Shore.

Similarly, the proposed revocation for Millstream Falls National Park is to correct an inconsistency that dates back to World War II. The Millstream Falls National Park day use area was constructed in 1943 to support the armed forces facilities, which were located there at that time. The facilities, including the road pavement and infrastructure, were located in the national park rather than over the dedicated road reserve. We are now seeking to correct that historical error. By opening the existing constructed road and closing the dedicated unconstructed road reserve, the national park will gain four hectares of land.

The proposed revocation for Wooroonooran National Park—and I encourage all subsequent speakers to repeat that many times throughout their speech—is for a very small piece of land to ensure that the transport department can align the Gillies Range Road reserve, install drains and make it safer for motorists. Its current alignment is hazardous. It has blind corners, a steep crossfall and there are no feasible cost-effective alternatives to revocation.

Similarly, we propose to revoke parts of Eumundi Conservation Park to allow the transport department to upgrade and improve the North Arm-Yandina Creek Road reserve 18 kilometres north-west of Noosa Heads. The existing gravel section has hazards in numerous areas and needs to be bitumen sealed and have drains installed. There are no feasible alternatives to revocation owing to land constraints.

Whenever revocations like this occur, compensation is payable to the management of the protected area estate. The compensation arrangements reflect the importance of our national parks and protected areas with revocations made only where necessary and when no alternatives exist. In these instances, the transport department will pay the market value of the land to compensate the state for the loss of values associated with the areas being revoked. I urge all members to support the motion before the House.