




Speech By
Shane King

MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

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MOTION

Revocation of Protected Areas

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (4.15 pm): I rise to speak in support of this revocation motion. As the chair of the Transport and Public Works Committee, I will largely keep my remarks to the revocations that allow for regional road upgrades and better road safety.

Gillies Range Road, known locally as the Gillies Highway, winds from Gordonvale up to the Atherton Tablelands. It is a scenic tourist route that connects Cairns and the coast with destinations on the Tablelands and further west and north. It is a road I know well from a previous life where I spent a great deal of time inspecting high-voltage substations near Ravenshoe and Mareeba and travelled this and Kuranda Road regularly. This road is a vital communication link for numerous local rural properties. It links several local roads and is an important local transport route.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads is responsible for the management of this state controlled road network, including Gillies Range Road. Part of this responsibility includes ensuring that adequate road reserves are secured to accommodate this network. Gillies Range Road has poor sight distances, steep cross fall and traffic hazards in numerous locations. As such, the revocation of 43.6 hectares from Gadgarra Forest Reserve, which includes 2.4 hectares of state controlled road that was erroneously dedicated as a forest reserve, is a good idea. This revocation will realign Gillies Range Road for road safety improvements, including rehabilitation works, ongoing maintenance and drainage purposes, and is certain to be of enormous benefit to the community and motorists.

The 16.7-hectare Gillies Highway Forest Reserve that includes 9.2 hectares of state controlled road was also erroneously dedicated as forest reserve. The realignment and construction of the Gillies Range Road entirely within the current road reserve would be very expensive and no doubt could be environmentally destructive. This potential for environmental harm is due to the constrained horizontal geometry associated with the topography of the Gillies Range, which would require significant embankment excavation and stabilisation for work within the current road reserve.

Finally, the revocation of parts of the Little Mulgrave Forest Reserve will also allow for the realignment of Gillies Range Road to facilitate more safety improvements which will also allow rehabilitation works and ongoing maintenance of the road reserve. These revocation proposals will result in significant benefits to the community by aligning Gillies Range Road with the already constructed road pavement. It will improve its safety and remove the need for vegetated land to be cleared to maintain the road.

All parties have agreed to these revocations following extensive consultation with state and local government agencies. Of course, financial compensation will be provided for the loss of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service's managed lands. I commend the motion to the House.