




Speech By  
**Corrine McMillan**

**MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD**

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**NATURE CONSERVATION (SPECIAL WILDLIFE RESERVES) AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (12.55 pm): In rising to participate in the debate on the Nature Conservation (Special Wildlife Reserves) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, I want to support the provisions contained in this bill that will create a new type of private protected area for Queenslanders. The core objective of the bill is to establish a new class of voluntary, privately managed protected area that will provide national park level protections for private land containing significant ecological or cultural value.

The government recognises the significant contribution of private landholders in the protection of Queensland's expansive and rich biodiversity and this bill will allow for the protection of those values in perpetuity. Queensland's national parks are world renowned for their spectacular natural beauty as well as the diverse natural and cultural heritage they protect. Iconic national parks such as the Carnarvon and K'gari on Fraser Island come to mind. However, Queensland's rich biodiversity and outstanding conservation and cultural values are not restricted to our national parks. The International Union for Conservation of Nature, of which Australia is a member, acknowledges private protected areas as an essential component of a successful protected area network.

Members will note that the Nature Conservation Act 1992 currently contains terms that extend protection to land that is privately managed for conservation whilst allowing for sustainable land uses such as grazing to occur. These nature refuges make a significant contribution to Queensland's protected area network. I personally want to take this opportunity to acknowledge nature refuge landholders for their ongoing commitment to manage and conserve some of Queensland's most unique natural environments. For example, Pullen Pullen nature refuge in Mount Isa, Brooklyn nature refuge in Cook, Mount Zero-Taravale nature refuge in Keppel and Blue Fig Creek Nature Refuge in Mudgeeraba are all excellent examples of the commitment private landholders can make to biodiversity conservation in this great state.

This bill fills the gap between Queensland's national parks and nature refuges by providing top-shelf protection to privately managed land containing significant biodiversity and cultural values and will be managed in a way that focuses on conserving those values. The special wildlife reserve mechanism will not only allow for the appropriate protection of outstanding natural areas and cultural values on private land but will also provide an incentive for private investors to invest in Queensland's protected areas by providing a level of private land protection and investment confidence not currently available anywhere else in the nation.

As part of the committee process, individuals and organisations expressed the desire to invest in protecting areas of outstanding conservation value in Queensland. However, the current legislative framework did not provide them with a high level of investment security. This bill will create a voluntary perpetual mechanism that will provide protection to such areas from threatening processes, including

mining and forestry. Organisations that invest in conservation such as nature conservancies and philanthropic organisations will have the opportunity to create and manage conservation reserves that will have the same legal status and protection as national park.

Private investment of this type allows for an increase in Queensland's protected area estate at considerably less cost than is required for the purchase and ongoing management of national parks by the state. This potential investment would lead to improved biodiversity outcomes to the benefit of all Queenslanders and create sustainable employment in areas where this is critically needed. Special wildlife reserves will be actively managed to improve conservation outcomes and by doing so will protect and conserve important natural processes that provide communities with clean air and water.

Creating and protecting strong, resilient examples of Queensland's rich biodiversity and ecosystems will contribute to the resilience of our natural areas in the face of a changing climate, a situation that those opposite continue to refute. It is rewarding to see Queensland leading the debate about protected area policy by providing protections to provide private lands of significant biological diversity and cultural value from incompatible land uses. I congratulate the minister for this progressive policy approach and commend the bill to the House.