




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Record of Proceedings, 26 November 2019

MOTION

Revocation of Protected Area

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerster—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (3.41 pm): I move—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to:
 - (a) revoke by regulation the dedication of part of a national park; and
 - (b) dedicate by regulation the revoked area of the aforementioned national park as part of an existing conservation park,under section 33 of the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, **viz**

Description of area to be revoked

Bellthorpe National Park	An area of about 45 hectares, as illustrated on the attached “Bellthorpe National Park revocation: sketch A”.
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Description of area to be dedicated

Bellthorpe Conservation Park	An area of about 45 hectares, as illustrated on the attached “Bellthorpe Conservation Park addition: sketch B”.
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2. That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts for submission to the Governor in Council.

This proposal relates to the revocation of about 45 hectares from Bellthorpe National Park, which is located seven kilometres north-west of Woodford, for addition to the Bellthorpe Conservation Park. The addition to Bellthorpe Conservation Park will provide for activities consistent with the management principles of the protected area, its natural and cultural resources and values and will ensure the continued ecologically sustainable use of the area. Importantly, this proposal will provide certainty for the Woodford Folk Festival and ensure it can continue at this site well into the future.

As many in this House will know, the world renowned Woodford Folk Festival is one of the largest cultural celebrations in Australia and is held in the Sunshine Coast hinterland near the town of Woodford on the property known as Woodfordia. Those who attend and manage the festival are socially and environmentally conscious. Much effort is put in each year to ensure a sustainable festival experience. I have had the opportunity to attend the annual festival a few times, and I would like to acknowledge the great work of Bill Hauritz and his team, who do a great job every year.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to the permanent preservation and protection of Queensland’s protected area estate—a commitment that balances natural and cultural resource conservation while providing opportunities for educational and recreational activities, ensuring any commercial use of the estate is ecologically sustainable. Protected areas in Queensland are defined under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and include both publicly owned and managed or jointly

managed protected areas such as national parks and conservation parks. Not only are they cornerstones of conservation; many of the state's protected areas offer opportunities for a diverse range of educational, recreational and ecotourism activities, provide opportunities for connection to country, and contribute to supporting and enriching Queensland's vast conservation network.

However, with such a large and dispersed protected area estate there is the occasional need to change the class of protected areas to rectify errors in how they have been described, dedicated or used; to recognise the rights and interests of traditional owners in the management of protected areas; and, on rare occasions, for commercial or private purposes. I will only support changing the class of a protected area where it can be clearly demonstrated that it is in the interests of the specific protected area; it provides for greater protected area management effectiveness; it is in the interests of traditional owners; and the proposed use is in the broader public interest.

Careful consideration has been given to this proposal, with consultation occurring with landholders, lessees and traditional owners. The proposal will not extinguish or affect native title rights or interests in relation to the land. Indeed, it goes some way towards acknowledging the cultural and spiritual significance of the land to the Jinibara people, the traditional custodians and registered native title holders of the Woodford area.

Formerly farming land, the original festival site was purchased in 1994 for the purpose of securing a permanent home for the then Maleny folk festival and has expanded over the years to include a number of adjoining freehold properties and about 45 hectares of state land. Prior to 2014, the 45 hectares of state land, although largely cleared, was managed as part of Bellthorpe State Forest. In 2014, as one of the former LNP government's raft of environmental decisions, the forest reserve was amalgamated with the adjoining Bellthorpe National Park as part of the transfer of a number of forest reserves to protected area tenure. I am advised that the erroneous dedication was part of a raft of urgent actions necessitated by the Newman government's abolition of the forest reserve tenure. The removal of legislative provisions for forest reserves would have resulted in the department no longer having a head of power to manage the land in a forest reserve or issue a permit in relation to a forest reserve, so that area was carelessly transferred to the category of 'national park'. Today, our government will remedy that mistake and ensure future certainty for the Woodford Folk Festival.

To be clear, this proposal will not reduce the extent of Queensland's protected area estate; it will simply change the class of a small part of it from national park to conservation park, enabling the authorisation and continuation of the world renowned festival. The majority of the festival site is on freehold lands managed under a lease agreement between Moreton Bay Regional Council, which owns the land, and Woodfordia Inc., the not-for-profit community-driven organisation that owns all the infrastructure and improvements on the site and runs Woodfordia.

The vision of Woodfordia Inc. for its Woodfordia festival site is more than the dream of long-term security; it is a commitment to future generations, a future of community and environment that are intertwined, and a commitment to caring for the land. This year will be the 34th annual Woodford Folk Festival and the 25th held at Woodfordia since the festival moved from Maleny—a remarkable achievement for a community-driven organisation.

The festival appeals to a diverse audience of all ages and many nationalities, attracting patrons and artists from across the globe to the small community of Woodford, bringing much needed tourism and injecting tens of millions of dollars into the local community. It is the largest gathering of artists and musicians in Australia, with more than 2,000 local, national and international artists, musicians and presenters showcasing over 400 acts to an audience of over 130,000 people. The 2018 event contributed nearly \$24 million to the Queensland economy and attracted 12,500 visitors from interstate and overseas, generating close to 226,000 visitor nights.

Underpinned by a strong commitment to the environment, the festival site is a rehabilitated forested parkland dedicated to the arts, humanities and folklore, continually improving over time with help from Woodfordia's annual The Planting event. In keeping with Woodfordia's vision of an environmentally conscious, inclusive and creative community of culture and tradition passed through generations, as expressed through story and ceremony, the Jinibara people and Woodfordia Inc. have worked together in partnership to incorporate Jinibara traditional lore and custom into the festival through ceremony. The Jinibara people and Woodfordia Inc. are working towards formalising their partnership through the development of an Indigenous land use agreement—an agreement that will recognise the Jinibara people's native title rights and interests on the land and provide Woodfordia long-term tenure security for the festival. The Department of Environment and Science is also assisting the Jinibara people and Woodfordia with the agreement-making process and in particular is working with the Jinibara people to rename Bellthorpe Conservation Park with a traditional name—a name that reflects Jinibara traditional law and customs. This motion will deliver good outcomes for local tourism, local jobs and the Sunshine Coast hinterland community. I commend the motion to the House.