



Speech By  
**Jonty Bush**


**MEMBER FOR COOPER**

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**MOTION**

**Revocation and Dedication of Protected Areas**

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (4.35 pm): The irony of following the member for Bonney talking about real change when, literally, the motion we are discussing now is about implementing real change! One reason I joined the Labor Party was to be part of a tribe of people who recognise the value in our environmental assets who also are in a position to make decisions that would safeguard them. Never could I have imagined when I first joined the party that I would be here in this House with an ability to put my voice towards such reform. I am continually in conversations with the locals in my electorate. Environmental concerns and protections are one of the greatest areas of interest to them. Who can blame them? Queensland boasts so many wonderful natural assets: from the Great Barrier Reef and K'gari on our coastline to the ancient Springbrook forests in our south-east hinterland.

The motion for revocation put by the minister today aims to boost the protection of another of our natural features, Glen Rock State Forest, which adjoins the World Heritage listed Main Range National Park, by combining part of the state forest with the existing Main Range National Park and dedicating most of the remainder of the state forest as the new Main Range Conservation Park. This proposal will provide more than 41,000 hectares of neighbouring protected area for our native flora and fauna and the many sites of great cultural significance in and around Glen Rock State Forest.

As opportunity would have it, I have visited Main Range National Park. For those unfamiliar with the area, the park offers some of the best bushwalking opportunities in southern Queensland for people of all fitness levels and experience. There are quite a few camping and day use areas throughout the park, so you can take a short walk or, for those a bit more intrepid, take a longer hike and take in some birdwatching and other cultural experiences.

**Mr Tantari** interjected.

**Ms BUSH:** I take that interjection. The ecology and landscape throughout Glen Rock State Forest is diverse. It stretches from the fertile flats of the Blackfellow, Shady and Black Duck creeks to the renowned high plateau of the Great Dividing Ranges and borders Main Range National Park to the south. The vegetation communities range from open woodlands and rocky escarpments to dry vine scrub and rainforest. It really is an ecological wonderland.

Like many of our wild places, Glen Rock State Forest is home to a number of vulnerable wildlife species including: the brush-tailed rock-wallaby, the powerful owl, the glossy black cockatoo and, importantly, koalas. This boost to protected areas will help to conserve those populations into the future.

Investing in our protected area estate makes sense from an environmental point of view, but environmental preservation also contributes enormously towards mental and physical resilience. It enhances our recreational opportunities and strengthens the foundation of our tourism industry. Yes, member for Hervey Bay, it is a great opportunity for some barefoot running for those who also like to partake in that, such as myself.

This upgrade would consolidate and protect over 41,000 hectares of connected natural protected area, stretching almost the length of the Scenic Rim local government area. The Department of Environment and Science's Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service has been working to resolve land impediments to allow the action to be progressed. The dedication of the area as conservation park and national park tenures will provide a high level of protection from forestry, mining and other activities that may impact upon the environmental value of this area.

The upgrade will bring the acquisition full circle and demonstrates the Palaszczuk government's commitment to balancing recreation, grazing, beekeeping and, most importantly, conservation of our natural and cultural heritage into the future. The upgrade of Glen Rock to protected area tenure was supported by other relevant state agencies. I commend the motion to the House.