




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

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NATURE CONSERVATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION (INDIGENOUS JOINT MANAGEMENT—MORETON ISLAND) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (11.39 am): I proudly rise to support the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation (Indigenous Joint Management—Moreton Island) Amendment Bill. Equal opportunity, a fair go for all, working collaboratively with First Nations people and acting to protect our environment are core values of mine and this government and what drive us each and every day. I am proud to be part of a progressive Palaszczuk Labor government that has such a strong and consistent record of progressive social reform since being elected.

It was our government that implemented tough new tree-clearing laws after the previous government oversaw unsustainable levels—almost 400,000 hectares—of clearing. We are well on the way to delivering on our promise to meet the renewable energy target of 50 per cent by 2030, with 39 large-scale projects across the state. We have regulations to protect the Great Barrier Reef. We introduced special wildlife reserves and increased funding to expand and protect our national parks. It was our government that banned sand mining on Minjerrabah despite the vehement opposition of those opposite, who continued to support mining there.

We established Queensland's first ever Human Rights Bill to enshrine in law fundamental human rights. We established a Path to Treaty with Queensland's First Nations people in consultation with the Palaszczuk Labor government's three First Nations MPs, the members for Algeester, Bundamba and Cook, whom we are proud to have as part of our team and with whom we consult and work closely. While MPs in this House and some parties pretend to stand up and work for First Nations people and traditional owners, this government actually does. We will always stand up for what is right.

This bill is part of the Palaszczuk Labor government's continuing commitment to work with First Nations people to facilitate greater and practical self-determination and provide opportunities for the economic, social and cultural aspirations of cultural custodians to be achieved over their traditional country. I would like to take the opportunity in this debate to acknowledge all of the Quandamooka people who have advocated tirelessly for this reform, in particular one of my constituents, Uncle Bob Anderson, who is in the gallery. It is always fantastic to have you here, Uncle Bob. Thank you for a lifetime of activism.

This bill will establish joint management arrangements between the Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service to protect Mulgumpin for generations to come. In November 2019 the Federal Court of Australia recognised the Quandamooka people's native title rights on Mulgumpin. As part of that consent determination the Palaszczuk Labor government and QYAC agreed to work towards the joint management of protected areas on Mulgumpin similar to existing joint management arrangements with QYAC on Minjerrabah.

Joint management is a model of protected area management that provides for management of the land to occur jointly between the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service within the Department of Environment and Science and Indigenous landholders. Joint management works. This can be seen on

Minjerribah, where we see Quandamooka practices, knowledge and expertise in land and sea management effectively in place. Joint management contributes to reconciliation and increasing community awareness of the significant connection First Nations people have to their country, especially the important role they have in the management of country.

The importance of the legislation we are debating today cannot be underestimated. It is another crucial step forward in recognising over 1,000 generations of Quandamooka custodianship on Mulgumpin. This will benefit all Queenslanders by ensuring that the high conservation and cultural values of Mulgumpin will become an intrinsic part of visiting the island and will allow First Nations people's knowledge to be incorporated into joint management activities to enhance the natural and cultural values of the area for the benefit of all Queenslanders and Indigenous owners. We know this will enhance visitor experiences.

It is important to acknowledge that Mulgumpin is of considerable environmental and cultural significance and an important recreational area for many visitors each year. At 37 kilometres long and 10 kilometres wide, it is one of the largest sand islands in the world. Around 98 per cent of Mulgumpin is dedicated protected area, either as national park or conservation parks. The island has a small resident population of between 200 and 300 people and is an important recreation area, receiving more than 170,000 visitors each year.

The Quandamooka people include the Ngugi clan on Mulgumpin and the Goenpul and Noonuccal clans on Minjerribah. Mulgumpin has a rich and significant cultural history. The Quandamooka people have a strong spiritual connection to the island with over 60,000 years of association. According to the existing Moreton Bay Management Plan, Mulgumpin contains the most undisturbed and diverse range of archaeological evidence of the relationship that First Nations people have with a coastal wallum environment in South-East Queensland. The changes we are making will bring significant economic benefits to the local community through the creation of jobs and visitor experiences and the enhanced conservation and protection of national park and recreation areas. This will stem from increased cultural tourism and education on the island which is a very positive thing, particularly after the COVID-19 global pandemic which has impacted on many lives, closed borders and fundamentally changed the tourism industry.

Mulgumpin offers an amazing national park sand island experience that is right on our doorstep, including recreational activities such as camping and walking. That is why it is more important than ever that we all work together to ensure these benefits can be realised and that more people get to experience the natural wonder that sits in our own backyard. Queensland is the only place in the world where you can experience firsthand the world's oldest continuing living culture through First Nations people's Aboriginal history and culture on Mulgumpin.

I oppose the amendments put forward by the opposition. They would put extra impositions on QYAC that would contradict the ILUA. I see a gap between rhetoric and reality on the other side. It is easy to say that you support something, but when you impose things that are unreasonable you wonder about the contradictions and double standards being put forward. There is quite a history of conflict. The member for Oodgeroo has constantly undermined and attacked QYAC as the representative body of First Nations people on Minjerribah. That has been very unfortunate. I say that these amendments should be voted down. They are not reasonable. They are not supported by this government, they are not supported by QYAC and they are not fair. That is what this bill is about.

I am very pleased and very proud to be part of a progressive government that values our relationship with First Nation traditional owners, and this bill is another manifestation of us acting on those values. I am very proud to be part of a government that does that, and I look forward to the passing of this bill which will another historic day for Quandamooka people under this government.