




Speech By
Hon. Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Record of Proceedings, 13 May 2021

MOTION

Revocation of Protected Areas

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (4.04 pm): I move—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to revoke by regulation under section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the dedication of part of one national park and one conservation park as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz

Description of areas to be revoked

Daintree National Park	An area of 0.2532 hectares described as part of lot 1 on AP19304 (to be described as lot 2 on SP304825), as illustrated on the attached sketch.
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Warrina Conservation Park	An area of 0.9376 hectares described as part of lot 337 on plan NR7395 (to be described as lots 1 and 2 on SP318397), as illustrated on the attached sketch.
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2. That Mr Speaker and the Clerk of the Parliament forward a copy of this resolution to the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs for submission to the Governor in Council.

There is no doubt that Queensland's protected area estate is truly spectacular. The estate is managed under the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and includes both publicly owned and managed or jointly managed areas such as national parks and conservation parks. It currently occupies over 14 million hectares of public and private protected areas throughout Queensland. To further protect natural, cultural and heritage values for future generations, the government continues to build on the extensive existing network of protected areas by regularly adding to the estate. The Queensland Protected Area Strategy 2020-2030, which was released in October 2020, is a plan to, among other things, accelerate growth of the protected area system.

While the Queensland government is very committed to the dedication, preservation and protection of Queensland's protected area estate, there is also an understanding that sometimes there is a need to balance this protection while providing for opportunities that offer necessary benefits for the community, such as to allow for the upgrade or expansion of public infrastructure. For revocation proposals, appropriate compensation for the loss of protected area values caused by the proposed actions is negotiated in line with departmental policy.

The two proposals that are being debated in the House today demonstrate these principles. Each proposal has been subject to careful consideration by the state before electing to support each proposal. In each instance, with regard to the views and interests of state and local government agencies consultation has occurred with landholders and interest groups and persons, including First Nations people, to resolve land interests over the proposal areas.

The first proposal to revoke part of the Daintree National Park, which will be described as lot 2 on SP304825 and containing an area of about 2,532 square metres, is to allow for the area to be dedicated as road reserve. My department is currently undertaking tenure negotiations with the Eastern Kuku Yalanji people about the Daintree National Park. The department and First Nations people have agreed that only certain tenure actions will be finalised once an Indigenous land use agreement has been executed, and revoking this small section of the Daintree National Park is one of those commitments.

The proposed revocation is administrative in nature and will result in rectifying a boundary issue by aligning the gazetted road reserve over the physically constructed Upper Daintree Road, which has existed for many years. This action will allow for formal management of the road corridor by Douglas Shire Council and will remove a portion of constructed road out of Daintree National Park. The proposal seeks to retain the existing road alignment and would result in minimal impacts to conservation values of the national park. Suitable compensation for the loss of any inherent natural, environmental, social and cultural values associated with the area being revoked has been agreed upon with the Department of Environment and Science. Should the motion be passed and the resolution issued, my department will wait until the Indigenous land use agreement is executed before proceeding with the final step to revoke this area from the protected area estate. Honouring our commitment to First Nations people is important to the Palaszczuk government, and we strive to maintain this good working relationship into the future.

The second proposal is to revoke part of Warrina Conservation Park, which will be described as lots 1 and 2 on SP318397 and containing an area of 9,376 square metres, to allow for the area to be converted to road reserve to facilitate upgrades to the Warrina Innisfail residential aged care facility and rectify historical boundary alignment of the conservation park. Warrina Innisfail is a community based organisation that provides accommodation, care and support for frail, aged and disabled people. The revocation would improve access for construction of a two-storey building and car park, which will enable the Warrina Innisfail facility to meet the growing demand for aged care in the local community.

The area proposed for revocation from the conservation park contains limited conservation values due to historical clearing predating dedication of the conservation park. The proposal will also consolidate the boundary of the conservation park, providing management benefits for the protected area. Warrina Innisfail has advised that it does not have the capacity to meet the department's compensation requirements for the proposed revocation. As parts of the revocation area are cleared and have historically been used for car parking by staff and visitors to the facility due to limited on-site capacity, the department supports that compensation for this proposal is waived.

This revocation is of vital importance to address access concerns for the expanded centre into the future. The expansion of the facility is a joint project with Cassowary Coast Regional Council and is of critical importance to accommodate aged-care needs in the region. I commend the motion to the House.