




Speech By
Joan Pease

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

Record of Proceedings, 31 August 2022

NATURE CONSERVATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (6.26 pm): I rise to speak to the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I would like to point out that I will not be speaking in support of the amendment foreshadowed by the member for Bonney. It is pretty surprising that as an opposition they are actually able to come up with an amendment given that their shadow cabinet does not seem to meet.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on two bases: first of all, relevance and, second, I find the comments of the speaker personally offensive and I ask her to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Thank you. I will take some advice.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: With regards to the second part of the point of order that was raised, there were no personal statements mentioning you as a member, so you cannot take personal offence at that. With regards to the first part of the point of order that you raised, the member is discussing the amendment put by the member for Bonney and the process of arriving at that amendment, so the matter is relevant.

Ms PEASE: I rise to a point of order. I would like for the member for Nanango to withdraw the comments that she made as she sat down after raising her point of order. I ask her to withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are asking that the member withdraw comments that you found personally offensive? I will just take some advice on that.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease their conversations across the chamber.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members will cease their conversations across the chamber. As the Deputy Speaker, I will rule on your point of order. The member has taken personal offence at statements you made. I would ask that you withdraw those.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. I call the member for Lytton.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would ask that the withdrawal be unconditional.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I call the member for Lytton.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms PEASE: Mr Deputy Speaker, the member continues to show disregard to the chair after you have directed—

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Everton. That was uncalled for and inappropriate. Member for Lytton, I will manage the chamber. I would ask you to continue your contribution.

Ms PEASE: The purpose of this bill is to provide the Queensland Beekeepers' Association a 20-year extension to allow beekeeping on national parks to continue in areas where beekeeping had an existing use prior to the transfer of the state forest land to national park. Member for Buderim, do you understand what I am talking about now? Thank you.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair, member for Lytton.

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Buderim will cease his interjections.

Ms PEASE: Further, the bill will make amendments to enhance compliance capacity in Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Buderim!

Ms PEASE: Do I need to ask for him to withdraw? Calling out to say to me—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, your comments will come through the chair.

Ms PEASE: This will relocate certain regulatory provisions from subordinate legislation to the Nature Conservation Act following advice from Queensland Parliamentary Counsel and reflect changes to intergovernmental arrangements between the Commonwealth and the state in relation to the Wet Tropics and Queensland World Heritage areas.

I know how much we all enjoy local honey. I am spoilt for choice in my community with local honey produced, including offerings from QYAC. Its Minjerrabah honey has the taste of the magnificent Quandamooka country to entertain our tastebuds. Beekeeping has introduced non-native European honey bees into our national parks and this is inconsistent with the management principles of national parks, which we are proud of and we want to protect. Although there is insufficient evidence of the European honey bees' impact on protected areas, they still compete with native honey bees for native flora and floral resources which go on to pollinate, as do European honey bees, our agricultural sector, and we recognise and value the importance of this. As such, beekeeping in national parks is inconsistent with the cardinal principles of preserving the natural condition of these lands to the greatest possible extent.

An existing transition provision which temporarily allows beekeeping to be authorised on specific national parks is scheduled to cease on 31 December 2024. It is predominantly a legacy issue associated with the 1999 South East Queensland Regional Forests Agreement and was intended to be phased out by 2024 as suitable sites for relocation outside of national parks were found. However, this has proven challenging. The beekeeping industry provides crop pollination services and produces honey and other honey bee related products. Loss of access to national park sites in 2024 would have had a detrimental impact on the supply of these products, and the Palaszczuk government recognises that.

The reliance of public lands for beekeeping correlates to around \$51 billion worth of contribution to Queensland honey production annually. The proposed amendments will provide a 20-year extension until 31 December 2044 while work continues to find alternate sites, support adoption of industry best practice and identify initiatives that may assist the industry to relocate off park over the next 20 years. Subject to meeting certain criteria, the minister may recommend that national park apiary sites be prescribed in regulation which will allow people to continue applying for apiary permits in these areas for terms of up to five years. In addition to existing apiary areas, new sites will be able to be prescribed in regulation if beekeeping was being carried out on the land before it was dedicated as a national park.

An interagency group including representatives from the Department of Environment and Science, the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Department of Resources and the Department of Transport and Main Roads has been established to investigate opportunities that may exist on other land tenures to relocate beekeeping out of national parks. The Department of Environment and Science is also working with the industry to develop a standard landholder agreement

template. This will be for beekeeper operators on lands where there is no existing permitting framework. The act has existing mechanisms that would allow the department to respond if there were any threats to the natural or cultural resources of protected areas.

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service officers do amazing work in my electorate and all over Queensland. They operate in the Manly area out of the Manly harbour. They also operate out of Fort Lytton National Park. I remind everyone again that if they have not visited Fort Lytton National Park they really should do so. There are lots of great activities that are all managed by Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service officers, so it is a really great service. These hardworking, dedicated professionals put in so much time and effort managing our national parks and taking care of them, preserving them for our children, our children's children and their children, and we need to make sure that they are protected. Protecting these hardworking professionals is so important and recent investigations of incidents on Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service managed areas indicated flaws in the existing legislative offences which meant that enforcement action could not be taken in circumstances where a person falsely represented themselves as a ranger and a person obstructed a QPWS officer in the performance of the officer's duty.

Members need to keep in mind, as I have said, that in my electorate there is Fort Lytton National Park, Moreton Island, Minjerribah and Mulgumpin. These officers operate there and there are families and young kids and we do not want people going around impersonating Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service officers. There are existing offences for people impersonating a conservation officer and an authorised officer under the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 and an inspector under the Marine Parks Act. However, currently there are no offences for impersonating a forest officer under the Forestry Act 1959 or a ranger where they are not specifically appointed as a conservation officer, an authorised officer or as an inspector despite interacting with the public and advising them on a wide range of matters as part of their day-to-day roles.

To overcome this oversight in terms of the current deficiencies in this legislative framework regarding this matter, the bill will insert new offences regarding the impersonation of a forest officer and a ranger. Further amendments will address an issue where, unlike the Forestry Act, existing obstruction offences in the NC Act, the RAM Act and the MP Act only apply if an officer is obstructed when exercising power under these acts. The bill will amend the existing obstruction offences to clarify that the offences will also apply to obstructing officers in the performance of a function under the relevant act.

Changes to intergovernmental arrangements are proposed to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 to reflect the national cabinet changes to intergovernmental arrangements between the state and Commonwealth. These changes follow a review of the former Council of Australian Governments councils and ministerial forums by Mr Peter Conran AM. To enable these and other changes, the process for making consequential amendments to the Wet Tropics Management Plan 1998 will be streamlined and an outdated version of the management scheme intergovernmental agreement for the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area will be removed from schedule 1 to the act. I commend the bill to the House.