




Speech By  
**Hon. Meaghan Scanlon**

**MEMBER FOR GAVEN**

Record of Proceedings, 10 November 2022

**MOTION**

**Revocation and Dedication of Protected Areas and State Forest Areas (Cognate Debate)**

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (11.17 am): I move the following motions—

1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to:
  - (a) revoke by regulation under section 30 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the setting apart and declaration of part of one State forest;
  - (b) dedicate by regulation under section 29 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the revoked area of the aforementioned State forest as an addition to an existing national park;
  - (c) revoke by regulation under section 32 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the dedication of part of two national parks,as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz

**Description of areas to be revoked**

Oakview State Forest	An area of about 92.13 hectares described as part of lot 220 on FTY1774 (to be described as lots 216 and 217 on AP23760), to be dedicated as additions to Oakview National Park, as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Mount Etna Caves National Park	An area of 0.1187 hectares described as part of lot 117 on NPW821 (to be described as lots 5 to 7 on SP325486), as illustrated on the attached sketch.
Tuchekoi National Park	An area of 1.223 hectares described as part of lot 1 on AP19201 (to be described as lot 3 on SP325683), as illustrated on the attached sketch.

**Description of area to be dedicated**

Oakview National Park	An area of about 92.13 hectares described as part of lot 220 on FTY1774 (to be described as lots 216 and 217 on AP23760), to be dedicated as additions to Oakview National Park, 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.

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1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to:
    - (a) revoke by regulation under section 33 of the Nature Conservation Act 1992 the dedication of part of a national park, to change the class of the protected area,as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz

#### **Description of area to be revoked**

Conondale National Park      An area of about 41 hectares described as part of proposed lots 2 and 7 on AP23628 (to be described as lots 3, 5 and 6 on AP23765), to be dedicated as additions to Conondale Resources Reserve, as illustrated on the attached sketch.

#### **Description of area to be dedicated**

Conondale Resources Reserve      An area of about 41 hectares described as part of proposed lots 2 and 7 on AP23628 (to be described as lots 3, 5 and 6 on AP23765) to be dedicated as additions to Conondale Resources Reserve, as illustrated on the attached sketch

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.

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1. That this House requests the Governor in Council to revoke by regulation under section 26 of the Forestry Act 1959 the setting apart and declaration as State Forest of the areas as set out in the Proposal tabled by me in the House today, viz

#### **Description of areas to be revoked**

Beerburum East State Forest      Area described as part of lot 1 on AP23631 (to be described as lots 102 and 103 and part of lot 100 on SP328637) and containing an area of about 10.055 hectares as illustrated on the attached sketch.

Beerburum West State Forest      Area described as part of lot 589 on FTY1876 (to be described as parts of lots 101 and 102 on SP329108) and containing an area of about 19.5918 hectares as illustrated on the attached sketch.

Watalgan State Forest      Area described as part of lot 898 on FTY1919 (to be described as lots 1 to 3 on SP327961) and containing an area of 18.2619 hectares as illustrated on the attached sketch.

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.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to protecting our unique natural environments here in Queensland. We know that our national parks and protected areas draw millions of visitors each year and contribute substantially to local economies. They are the home of threatened species and diverse ecosystems. That is exactly why we have committed \$262 million towards expanding this estate, the largest ever investment in our state's history. We have also recently announced Ardgour Station, Mount Gibson and Oakey Scrub nature refuges, adding over 42,000 hectares to Queensland's private protected area network. Today's motion addresses a number of changes to national park and state forest tenure.

One of today's proposals, to upgrade sections of Oakview State Forest, will see an additional 92.13 hectares upgraded to national park. This will provide increased protection to the area's vine forest and endangered semi-evergreen vine thicket and threatened species habitat. This dedication recognises the significant conservation value of these parcels of the state forest.

Notwithstanding this dedication, there is also an understanding that sometimes there is a need to balance conservation with broader outcomes, such as essential public infrastructure that provides benefit for our community. For each proposal to revoke part of the protected area estate, careful consideration is given to ensure potential negative impacts to the estate are minimal and that compensation is satisfied by the proponent in accordance with departmental policy. When compensation is provided to the department for revocation proposals, it is invested back into the estate to improve management or for expansion to enhance the preservation and protection of Queensland's natural and cultural assets for the future. This adds on the over \$368 million that the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service allocates towards management funding.

Two of the proposals being debated in the House today relate to the Beerburum to Nambour Rail Upgrade project stage 1. This will affect the Beerburum East and Beerburum West state forests, totalling just under 30 hectares. The project will deliver a track duplication between Beerburum and Landsborough, significantly improving the line's capacity and reliability, saving commuters travel time and allowing for increased passenger and freight services to the growing Sunshine Coast region.

In addition to the duplication of the track, the works will upgrade the Landsborough station car park—currently limited in capacity—with 300 parking spaces and will expand the Nambour park-and-ride. I know that the members for Nicklin and Caloundra are excited about what this improved public transport will bring to their communities—

**Mr Powell** interjected.

**Ms SCANLON:**—and the member for Glass House. The revocation is not considered to present significant impacts upon the conservation values of the forestry estate, as most of the land within the revocation footprint is cleared or ecologically disturbed, and much of the revocation area is surrounded by plantation forestry areas or land tenures that allow for land uses that present limited ecological connectivity.

Another proposal relates to the proposed dam that would impact part of Watalgan State Forest and, as such, 18 hectares will need to be revoked. Tom and Robert Gorton first proposed the dam project and the associated revocation of the state forest over 20 years ago and in principle ministerial approval was initially provided in 2002 for the dam project. Since 2002, the proposal has seen several revisions and was approved in principle by the former minister for national parks, sport and racing in 2014 and by the former minister for the environment and heritage protection and the minister for national parks and the Great Barrier Reef in 2015.

The dam will provide much needed water security for the Gorton's business, Sunny Bluff Produce, which currently consists of fruit tree orchards. Currently, Sunny Bluff Produce have six full-time employees and 150 employees at peak harvest. Construction of the dam will allow for an additional 12 full-time staff, and up to 250 casuals during the harvest seasons. Construction of the dam would entail some loss of regulated vegetation and habitat and an appropriate environmental offset package is to be tailored to suit the project—if it were to be approved.

In order to ensure impacts to fish and associated waterway barriers are minimised, the proponent has commissioned a fisheries biologist to ensure appropriate mitigation measures are incorporated into the design. Specific species management plans will be developed, as well as an environmental management plan, to ensure environmentally responsible construction methods. The landholder will seek to acquire appropriate development approvals following the revocation process.

Next, there is a proposal to revoke parts of the Mount Etna Caves National Park to rectify an existing road encroachment and to formalise its public use and maintenance by Livingstone Shire Council. This revocation is only for a small area—less than one hectare—and during consultation, no objections were received. As part of the closure, council is assisting with the closure of a suitable vegetated portion of road reserve for dedication as part of the national park, resulting in net conservation gain to the estate.

On this side of the House we love the work of community groups, which is why we are announcing a proposal to revoke just over one hectare from a national park and convert it to a freehold tenure to allow the Men's Shed Pomona to continue using the site. I acknowledge the member for Noosa for her advocacy for this group. I am hopeful this solution provides long-term security for the Men's Shed.

Finally, I turn to the revocation for parts of Conondale National Park. The threat of climate change is real, and the Palaszczuk government is committed to reducing emissions and providing clean and affordable energy that stays in public hands. This plan outlines a pathway for Queensland to reach an 80 per cent renewables target by 2035 and it will reduce energy emissions by up to 90 per cent by 2035. To put this in scale, this is the biggest emitting sector in the state so this is a significant environmental outcome. Not only will it drastically benefit our environment, but this plan will also support 100,000 new jobs.

One of the initial steps in achieving this is to investigate the feasibility of constructing two large-scale pumped hydro scheme projects—the first proposal being the Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro project, our own battery of the north, and the second being the Borumba Dam pumped hydro project south of Gympie. In order for engineers to conduct onsite investigations at the Borumba site, some of the areas of national park will need to be revoked. The proposal is to change the class of about 41 hectares of Conondale National Park and dedicate it as part of the Conondale Resources Reserve. This is a necessary step for the Department of Environment and Science to then assess and authorise the proposed geotechnical activities associated with the project. The geotechnical works are temporary, and they are not expected to cause permanent or irreversible impacts to the protected area estate. The intention is that these areas would be rededicated as national park when the investigation is complete and these areas are rehabilitated.

I make it clear that this revocation does not grant an authority for these works to commence. Environmental and cultural heritage assessments and, if relevant, environmental management plans would be required as part of the application to the Department of Environment and Science for approval of an authority. Any actions to mitigate impacts would need to be addressed prior to the works being undertaken. I am excited to see our energy and jobs plan transform the state. I commend the motion to the House.