




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2024

MOTION

Revocation and Dedication of Protected Areas

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (12.14 pm): I rise to contribute to today's motion in relation to the revocation and dedication of protected areas. The areas affected within the Nanango electorate are the Jimna State Forest, the Squirrel Creek State Forest, the Elgin Vale State Forest and the Yabba State Forest. I am also going to touch on the Clermont area, but I know that my great mate and colleague the member for Glass House also very much wanted to talk about the impact on the native hardwood in his electorate. Let's hope he gets time to do that.

It is important to understand that there are two sides to every story, particularly when it comes to the Labor Party and national parks. While it might sound great to be creating new areas of national park, what Labor do not mention is that these revocations will seriously impact individual primary producers within the Nanango electorate. That is because included within some of these areas being revoked are long-held grazing leases. In particular, I wish to highlight the affected primary producers who will lose their stock grazing permits within Squirrel Creek State Forest in the Somerset region.

In January this year I met with a concerned group of graziers who are affected by this change. These are generations of grazing families who have held their stock grazing permits for more than 50 years. They have looked after the land. They have managed the land. They rely on these permits for the viability of their primary production business. They have invested hundreds of thousands of dollars in infrastructure such as fences and dams on their leasehold land over many years.

Most importantly, they have cared for the land, the native animals and the flora and fauna on that land. They have managed fire. They have managed feral pests like pigs and wild dogs. They have managed weeds and biosecurity. In fact, they have done such a good job over this time—the land is in such good condition and it is so pristine—that the Labor government now want to turn it into a national park. It is thanks to the landholders in the Somerset region who have done that hard work. That is why we cannot trust this Labor government to manage that land, to manage the flora and fauna, to manage the weeds. We know their record as the worst neighbours in the state when it comes to national parks.

Those landholders have never received reimbursement from the state government for the work they have done managing their leasehold land within the state forest. In fact, they pay to retain that lease each and every year. I have written to the environment minister. They have written back but not given the answer the landholders want. I have also asked two questions on notice. In my second question on notice I asked whether consideration has been given to allowing stock grazing activities to continue as per programs that are underway in the Nairana and Mazeppa national parks in the Clermont area. The suggestion, of course, was knocked back—go figure. I table an article from Beef Central about the success of the stock grazing in those two parks in the Clermont area.

Tabled paper: Article from *Beef Central*, dated 26 February 2024, titled 'How strategic grazing kept fires at bay on three QLD National Parks' [1537](#).

It was actually written by a person who formerly worked for the department who is advocating for grazing in those national parks because they know that if you graze you are looking after the wildfire risk, you are looking after the pests, and you are looking after the native flora and fauna. They know that. The experts say that. What are the Labor government doing? They are closing their ears and not listening. There is no surprise there. Ten years later, they are doing absolutely the same.

We know that the suggestion was knocked back by the minister, even though it appears there has been success in reintroducing grazing programs into national parks. On behalf of the primary producers in my electorate who are affected by this swipe of the pen, I urge the state government to continue managing the fire, the feral pests and the biosecurity threats in the Squirrel Creek National Park to the standard that graziers have done for all of those decades. I can guarantee members of this House that if the Labor government is to continue to sit on the government benches here in Queensland that will never happen. That is why we have to show Labor the door in '24.