

Question on Notice
No. 855
Asked on 6 June 2007

QUESTION:

MS JARRATT asked the Minister for Environment and Multiculturalism (Ms Nelson-Carr)—

Will she provide details of any initiatives aimed at upgrading facilities and amenities on the island National Parks of the Whitsunday Electorate?

ANSWER:

I am pleased to announce that planning is well advanced on over \$2M of capital improvements at the iconic National Park destinations among the Whitsunday Islands. Over the next two years, major redevelopment works will occur at: the rock art site in Nara Inlet; Whitehaven Beach's camping and day use areas; and the lookout and walking tracks on Tongue Point, known for providing the world famous views along Whitehaven Beach and Hill Inlet.

Construction works will commence before the end of the year to replace and expand the viewing platforms at both Nara Inlet and Tongue Point. The new facilities will provide improved viewing opportunities and interpretive signs whilst catering for future increases in visitor numbers.

On Whitehaven Beach, the most popular destination in the Whitsundays, over \$1 million will be invested in installing two environmentally-friendly and water-wise toilet facilities. The day use and camping areas will be expanded and upgraded and new interpretive signs installed.

This capital investment, coupled with the new \$1.3 million Maritime Great Walk in the Whitsundays, recognises the growing tourism industry and forms part of the Government's commitment to protecting the Great Barrier Reef. These investments also deliver on the commitments outlined in the *Whitsunday and Mackay Islands Visitor Management Strategy*.

In addition to this capital investment, I am also pleased to announce an additional 27 staff will be recruited this year to further enhance the Government's capacity to manage the Great Barrier Reef. These positions form part of a cooperative initiative under the day-to-day management program with the Commonwealth Government and nine of these will be placed in the Whitsundays District.

These initiatives form a significant component of the additional \$12 million the Government has committed to enhancing the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service's management capacity across the Great Barrier Reef for the next four years.