

Question on Notice
No. 1535
Asked on Tuesday 28 October 2008

QUESTION:

MS DARLING asked the Minister for Sustainability, Climate Change and Innovation (Mr McNamara) –

Will he advise what processes the Government has planned to ensure users of the Moreton Bay Marine Park are informed of the provisions of the new Moreton Bay Marine Park Zoning Plan, due to come into effect on 1 March 2009.

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Sandgate for what is an important question for the many thousands of us who use and enjoy Moreton Bay Marine Park.

Throughout the extensive consultation conducted during the zoning review process, the community clearly articulated just how important it is to ensure these zoning changes are widely and effectively communicated to the public.

The new zoning plan for Moreton Bay includes a number of significant and important changes for marine park users. In addition to a major expansion in the network of “no take” marine national park zones, there is also a range of new *go slow areas* for boaties, *no anchoring areas* and other new measures.

We recognise that these are important changes and that the new zoning plan is significantly different to the one that has been in place over the last decade. That is why we have delayed commencement of the new zoning plan to 1 March 2009 to allow sufficient time to communicate the changes to the public and provide all the information they need about the new arrangements.

We are making a significant investment into a community-wide education and communication program which will be rolled out over the coming months to make sure that all marine park users are aware of these changes before they come into effect early next year.

To raise awareness of the marine park and its new zoning arrangements we are investing in television, radio and press advertising across south-east Queensland. We are also sending information about the new plan directly to more than 10,000 individuals, businesses and community groups who have been involved in the review process, and distributing maps and other materials via bait and tackle shops and boating and fishing clubs throughout the region.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is preparing a range of maps and user guides to specifically help recreational users. These products will provide detailed information about each “no take” zone and its boundaries to make sure they are easy for all users to understand.

To guide users while they're out on the water, a range of markers and buoys will be installed to show many of the new zones, and signage is being erected at all major public boat ramps adjoining the marine park.

The EPA will also be providing the new zoning to major GPS manufacturers and charting companies to incorporate into their navigational products, which are commonly used by recreational and commercial users alike.

Additionally, over the next four months marine park rangers will be on the water talking directly with the community, answering their questions and advising them on the coming changes.

Through this co-ordinated and extensive program, I am confident that all marine park users will have access to the information they need, to comply with the new zoning plan for Moreton Bay Marine Park when it comes into effect in 2009.