



Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef,  
Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts

Our Ref: CTS 16195/19  
Your Ref: A454804

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11 JUL 2019

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 14 June 2019 regarding Parliamentary Petition Nos. 3119-19 and 3149-19 concerning the Halifax Bay Huts.

The Department of Environment and Science (the department) has been working with key stakeholders to attempt to resolve the issue of unauthorised Halifax Bay structures since 2010, when the State land on which a number of the structures in the area have been constructed was transferred into the national park.

In more recent developments, the department carried out a site inspection of each of the fishing structures on Halifax Bay Wetlands National Park in June 2018. From this inspection, it was confirmed that there are six fishing structures located within the National Park and this information was used to commence a process of engagement and discussion with the owners.

On 18 March 2019, the department sent a letter to each person believed to be the owner of each structure. The letter invited any submissions as to why they should not be issued with a written direction to remove the unauthorised structures located in the National Park. The letter also advised that the department proposed to meet with the structure owners to discuss the matter. Written submissions were received from each owner.

The department met with the hut owners for a full day on 30 April 2019 in Ingham to discuss each of their concerns. On 16 May 2019, the department provided letters of response to address the matters raised in their submissions and discussed at the meeting. On 14 June 2019, the department wrote to each owner advising that after considering the submissions it was appropriate to issue a written direction to remove all structures located on the National Park, and attached a formal direction notice to the letter. The department is continuing to liaise with the owners about removal of the structures from the National Park.

The scenic coastline south of Ingham, and the waterways of Palm, Orient and Cattle Creeks that traverse Halifax Bay Wetlands National Park, State land and Council Recreation Reserve all provide unique and special fishing and recreation opportunities. For some time these values have been recognised through the inclusion of these areas as declared Fish Habitat Areas under the *Fisheries Act 1994*, and in the special recognition provided under the *Nature Conservation (Protected Areas Management) Regulation 2017*, which allows fishing from within Halifax Bay Wetlands National Park. The Halifax Bay Wetlands National Park was dedicated to protect the important wetland communities in this area, and the ongoing use of private infrastructure is an inconsistent use of the existing and proposed area of the National Park.

I cannot support the continued presence of unlawful private infrastructure on the National Park. Furthermore, I cannot support the ongoing presence of privately owned fishing structures on the areas of unallocated State land with high conservation values that have been identified for addition to the National Park.

Infrastructure located on Council Recreation Reserve land at Halifax Bay falls within the responsibility of the Hinchinbrook Shire Council. Any decisions regarding the use of this land is a matter for the Council's consideration.

The use of the Halifax Bay Wetlands National Park for camping and fishing for Ingham locals and the wider community will continue where this does not include privately owned fishing structures. The department is currently investigating opportunities to develop and maintain public fishing and camping facilities in this area for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

I trust that this information has been of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely



Leeanne Enoch MP

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