



The Hon Dr Anthony Lynham MP  
Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy

Your ref A527595  
Our refs MO/20/6830, CTS 02988/20

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- 4 MAR 2020

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
Cnr George and Alice Streets  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 5 February 2020, concerning petition No. 3263-19 received by the House on 4 February 2020, regarding the declaration of a water emergency and stopping bottled water extraction on Tamborine Mountain.

In response to the petition and community concerns around water security in Tamborine Mountain and nearby Springbrook, I wish to advise that I will publish a moratorium notice to stop new bore development or changes to existing bores for certain purposes on 6 March 2020. This means that from 6 March 2020, no new commercial water extraction will go ahead in these areas while we build our knowledge of the current and future water situation on the mountain and in Springbrook. The moratorium includes exemptions to ensure there remain contingency options for household water supplies through construction of stock and domestic bores, small scale agriculture and by supporting construction of bores for town water supplies (if needed).

The Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy (the department) will monitor growth in bores over this time so that any escalation in development can inform refinements to the Moratorium Notice.

Although the recent rain has alleviated the immediate pressures on refilling rainwater tanks and minimising local water truck traffic, we need to better understand the current and future water needs of the areas. Shortly following the publication of the moratorium notice the chief executive of the department will also publish a notice requiring all commercial water extractors to collect and report on water use volumes. This will help to gain a better picture of the quantities of groundwater extracted and the purpose. The department will work with water users to simplify reporting requirements, so that water use data is collected to build our understanding of how the aquifer functions, without being unnecessarily burdensome.

In partnership with the Scenic Rim Regional Council, the department is also supporting the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) to conduct research into the aquifer beneath Tamborine Mountain and separately at Springbrook. The department will help to strengthen and support the QUT research to help build a better understanding of trends in development pressures over the last decade in the areas. In addition to this, the department will work with the Australian Beverages Council in developing a best practice industry code to provide greater transparency on water use practices of the commercial water bottling industry.

The information collected by the department and QUT will inform a risk assessment for the Tamborine Mountain and Springbrook areas to be included as part of the Minister's reports on the effectiveness of the Gold Coast and Logan water plans. These reports are due in May 2021. While the groundwater resources of Tamborine Mountain and Springbrook are not part of these plans, the *Water Act 2000* requires that any emerging risks for unmanaged water resources be examined. This report will be a transparent account of the situation and suggest a way forward.

As soon as possible after the publication of the Moratorium Notice, the department will meet with local irrigators, commercial water users, bore drillers and the communities to help clarify the new requirements and ensure any data provided is meaningful and fit for purpose. This will be an opportunity to work together to improve the long-term water security in Tamborine Mountain and Springbrook.

I provide you with this response for tabling in accordance with Standing Order 125(3). Any enquiries regarding this response can be referred to Mr Simon Zanatta, Chief of Staff, on telephone 3719 7360.

Yours sincerely



**Dr Anthony Lynham MP**  
Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy