



November 29th, 2019

MEDIA RELEASE

Last calls funding refusal *of-fence-ive*

Decades of cooperation and environmental achievements have been put at risk due to changes within the Queensland Parks & Wildlife Service (QPWS) and the decision to not fund construction of a fence at the world-famous Wongaloo Regional Park.

The Wetlands and Grasslands Foundation is trustee of the park and, according to Honorary Executive Director of the Foundation, Mark Stoneman AM, QPWS is trying to pass the majority of costs associated with this work to the volunteer not-for-profit organisation.

“Wongaloo is an absolute jewel in Queensland’s environmental crown but it appears that QPWS is either unwilling or unable to fund a small project in order to ensure the park’s ongoing success,” Member for Burdekin, Dale Last, said.

“This park is vital to a host of native species, like broilgas for example, and it would be a sad day if changes within QPWS threaten the success of the park and those species.”

“What we have here is a case of a group of volunteers being taken for granted while a government department, for some reason, plays hard ball.”

Although the initial issue was funding for a fence, Mr Last said it appeared that the funding issue was a symptom of the problem, rather than the problem itself.

“There is a well established need for a fence to be built and QPWS seem to have gone back on an earlier commitment and now want the Wetlands and Grasslands Foundation to pay half of the cost,” Mr Last said.

“We’re not talking about a huge amount of money in government terms, just \$5,000, but for a volunteer, not-for-profit group that is not the sort of money they have available at short notice.”

“Do we really want to let decades of work go to waste over \$5,000? That’s the question that QPWS needs to answer and if that means I have to bang on the Minister’s door then that is exactly what I’ll do.”

“If this government can spend \$100,000 on a smart phone app to help overweight dogs, surely they can put \$5,000 towards a project with a proven environmental track record.”

ENDS - Media Contact: David Cooper – (07) 4767 0500 or 0427 834 844