



MEDIA RELEASE

Date: Thursday 20 January 2011

For immediate release

WETLANDS RED TAPE TO ENTANGLE LANDOWNERS

Yet more red tape from the Bligh Labor Government is set to entangle North Queensland landowners, with the Draft State Planning Policy for wetland areas in Great Barrier Reef catchment areas proposing more restrictions on what people can do on their own property.

LNP Shadow Minister for North Queensland and Hinchinbrook MP, Andrew Cripps, said he had warned North Queensland landowners when the Temporary State Planning Policy was released in May 2010 that the Bligh Labor Government was up to its old tricks again.

“The draft policy released in December last year is almost the same as the temporary policy released in May last year. DERM is now inviting feedback from landowners and stakeholder groups to make a submission before the 28 February 2011” said Mr Cripps.

“Landowners in North Queensland whose properties are affected by the Bligh Labor Government’s new mapping outlining coastal wetland areas, have recently received undated letters from DERM advising them of the cut off date for submissions” he said.

“The Bligh Labor Government released the Draft policy on the 10th December 2010, but landowners didn’t receive these undated letters until January 2011. It’s a questionable practice to commence this consultation process over the holiday period” said Mr Cripps.

“Landowners accessing maps on DERM’s website identifying the new protected wetland areas on their properties have found them to be unhelpful and lacking in detail. This will make developing an individual submission to DERM much harder for landowners” he said.

“There is also no supporting documentation advising landowners of what information DERM used to create these maps. DERM needs to do better than undated late letters, inadequate maps on its website and unexplained map methodologies on this matter” said Mr Cripps.

“These new regulations will restrict landowners from undertaking a range of basic and necessary activities associated with farming, particularly relating to earth works. Drainage works in particular need to be undertaken in a timely fashion in North Queensland” he said.

Mr Cripps said the Draft State Planning Policy for wetlands would impact on landowners in coastal areas from the Daintree River in the north, to the Wide Bay area in the south.

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