

## **Information Paper - Proposal to reserve unallocated water on North Stradbroke Island (Minjerribah) under the *Water Regulation 2016* for the purpose of helping the Quandamooka people achieve their social, economic, and cultural aspirations.**

The Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and the Minister for Water, the Honourable Glenn Butcher MP, proposes to reserve unallocated water on North Stradbroke Island (Minjerribah) for the purpose of planning for the sustainable management, use and allocation of water that recognises the interests of the Aboriginal Peoples, the Quandamooka People, on Minjerribah and their connection to the water resources.

Unallocated water on Minjerribah will be reserved under the *Water Regulation 2016* as no water plan applies to the water resources.

### **End of Sand Mining on Minjerribah**

With the end of sand mining on Minjerribah in 2019, water licences relating to mining operations have progressively expired or are expiring.

Up to 61,190ML is potentially available for the reserve which represents the total consistent annual maximum volume provided to sand mining. This volume of water has previously been determined as sustainable.

The proposed reserve volume of up to 61,190ML will not increase unless a further process, like a water planning process, is undertaken at a future time.

### **Type of water to be reserved as unallocated water**

The water to be reserved is:

- underground water from the North Stradbroke Island underground water area on plan AP10067; and
- water in a watercourse, lake or spring on North Stradbroke Island (Minjerribah).

### **Purpose of proposed reserve of unallocated water**

The Minister proposes to establish a reserve of unallocated water up to 61,190ML for the purpose of planning for the sustainable management, use and allocation of water that recognises the interests of the Aboriginal peoples, the Quandamooka people, on Minjerribah and their connection to the water resources.

Quandamooka Yoolooburrabee Aboriginal Corporation (QYAC) which is the Registered Native Title Body Corporate for the Quandamooka people's native title under the *Native Title Act 1993* has advised the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (the Department) that the interests of the Quandamooka People are to:

- obtain social or economic benefit from the water resource; and
- conserve and protect water-related cultural, spiritual, and environment values of the water resource.

To reflect these interests, it is proposed that two separate reserves of unallocated water be established as follows:

- **Unallocated Water Reserve Part A**: Up to **30,595 megalitres** for the social or economic benefit of the Quandamooka People on Minjerribah; and
- **Unallocated Water Reserve Part B**: Up to **30,595 megalitres** to conserve and protect the water-related cultural, spiritual, and environment values of the Quandamooka People on Minjerribah.

The purpose for *Unallocated Water Reserve Part B* will ensure protection of the unique cultural and environmental values of the Quandamooka People on Minjerribah including protection of the habitats of various threatened species.

The purpose for *Unallocated Water Reserve Part A* will enable QYAC to use water entitlements granted, after water is released from the reserve, for commercial or economic activities and/or social benefits such as land rehabilitation.

Unallocated water in these reserves will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the *Water Act 2000*.

Any water entitlements granted to QYAC under a release process from Unallocated Water Reserve Part A will be subject to the dealing provisions and any rules developed to sustainably manage water under the *Water Act 2000*.

#### **Impact on existing water entitlements and authorised use**

The proposed unallocated water reserves will have no impact on existing water entitlements and authorised use under the *Water Act 2000*, including licenses associated with drinking water supply, commercial operations, or temporary water permits.

#### **Public Consultation**

The Minister has decided that public consultation is required on the proposal to reserve unallocated on North Stradbroke Island (Minjerribah) for the Quandamooka People under section 15 of the *Water Regulation 2016*.

Feedback, including via submission, on this proposal is invited until 20 October 2023. Please see details to provide feedback and submissions on the accompanying [Notice of Proposal to Reserve Unallocated Water on North Stradbroke Island \(Minjerribah\)](#).

Feedback and submissions received during the public consultation period will be carefully reviewed and considered in the final decision-making process. Your input and contribution to this important initiative is valued and appreciated.

#### **Ongoing Engagement and Collaboration**

The department will offer opportunities for all stakeholders to engage throughout this process to ensure the successful development and management of the reserves.