

**METROPOLITAN REGION SCHEME (BEELIAR WETLANDS) BILL 2018**

*Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by **Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Environment)**, read a first time.

*Second Reading*

**HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Environment)** [6.42 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The McGowan government is committed to delivering its election commitment to discontinue the Perth Freight Link project. As part of this commitment, we committed to reserve the Beeliar wetlands for generations to come. I am pleased to introduce this bill today, which will amend the zoning of more than 34 hectares of core wetland area under the metropolitan region scheme from primary regional roads to parks and recreation. Land for Roe 8 and 9 was reserved in the metropolitan region scheme in 1963. Since that time, there has been significant public debate and discussion about the need for this road, and the environmental impact of the project. The public of Western Australia made their thoughts very clear prior to and during the election campaign that bulldozing through an environmentally significant wetland to build a major highway extension was not the freight solution they thought was best for the state. Western Australians have given us a clear mandate to not build Roe 8 and 9, and to restore the Beeliar wetlands and return them to the community to enjoy.

As any use and development of land reserved for parks and recreation must preserve the natural environment and provide recreational opportunities for the public, this bill will ensure that the Beeliar wetlands are preserved for the enjoyment of future generations. Beeliar Regional Park also has cultural significance to Aboriginal people, particularly North Lake and Bibra Lake, which have spiritual importance. By amending the MRS through this bill, we are getting on with the job and letting the public know that we take our commitment to them seriously. Amending the MRS through standard processes could take up to two years; this option cuts that time significantly, meaning the at-risk section of Beeliar wetlands, the rehabilitation of which is ongoing, will be protected sooner. Given the area outlined in the attached table is primarily the wetlands, we do not think there is any option but to change it to parks and recreation. The second stage of this process, which will take place through a standard MRS amendment process after this bill is passed, will involve planning another 81 hectares of land zoned primary regional roads, which is located to the west of North Lake Road. We will be consulting widely with the community and other stakeholders on the most appropriate future use for this land through a separate planning investigation process.

Although we have stopped the Perth Freight Link, we continue to plan for the inevitable growth in freight in Western Australia. In the short term, we are delivering on our commitment to increase the volume of freight on rail. The percentage of freight on rail has increased since coming to government and we will continue to work to increase this percentage even further. We are also working with industry to provide additional train paths for container freight. We are also facilitating the development of intermodal terminals. The intermodal network plan will provide for new and existing precincts to transfer freight efficiently from road to rail, further improving rail's competitiveness.

Further, we have a program of road upgrades to improve the efficiency and safety of existing infrastructure. This includes works on High Street and Stirling Highway. We have committed to plan for an outer harbour. We established the Westport Taskforce to deliver on this commitment. It will also complement the surrounding technology park and industrial areas to help drive trade development and industrial innovation. The state government is committed to ensuring Fremantle port continues to function well. We know this can occur without the damaging Perth Freight Link, and we know it can occur without damage to the Beeliar wetlands. This bill will further solidify our commitment to the people of Western Australia of getting the balance right.

Pursuant to standing order 126(1), I advise that this bill is not a uniform legislation bill. It does not ratify or give effect to an intergovernmental or multilateral agreement to which the government of the state is a party; nor does this bill, by reason of its subject matter, introduce a uniform scheme or uniform laws throughout the commonwealth.

I commend the bill to the house and table the explanatory memorandum.

[See paper 2996.]

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

*House adjourned at 6.45 pm*

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