

SWAN AND CANNING RIVERS MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Second Reading

Resumed from 19 October.

MRS L.M. O'MALLEY (Bicton) [4.57 pm]: The electorate of Bicton is blessed to be bordered to the north and north-west by Derbarl Yerrigan, or the Swan River. It is my absolute pleasure and great privilege to speak on matters related to this significant waterway whenever the opportunity arises. Today, that opportunity is by way of the legislation currently before us, being the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill 2022, which will amend the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006. In making my contribution, I will speak from the perspective of both the local member for Bicton and a family small business owner. This duality of roles provides me with a unique perspective in this house on this bill.

The Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill 2022 will introduce regulatory reforms under the government's Streamline WA initiative. Streamline WA is seeking to improve regulation and regulatory practices to make it easier to do business in Western Australia. When preparing to speak today, I found it useful to look back at the Streamline WA initiative and will share the following with members. Streamline WA is a whole-of-government initiative to make it easier to do business in WA by improving regulation and regulatory practice. It is designed to make it easier to do business in Western Australia through better regulation, and was launched on 6 December 2018 to deliver better services and outcomes for Western Australians. This is done by providing more effective regulation to support innovation, investment and the protection of our community and environment, while reducing regulation that is ineffective and can increase the costs and difficulties of doing business. By improving the way that we develop and apply regulation in our state, Streamline WA ensures that Western Australians can be confident that risks are well managed, regulatory requirements are clear and easy to understand, decision-making addresses risks and focuses on outcomes and is timely and transparent, and regulation is applied consistently. Streamline WA helps to reduce overlap and duplication and adopts a customer-focused approach to service delivery. By making regulation more effective, Streamline WA encourages investment through the greater confidence gained by the knowledge that its timeliness, transparency and consistency of approach will facilitate businesses to get on with the business of creating more jobs in Western Australia.

Streamline WA also aims to strengthen cross-sector collaboration and features an online one-stop government shop centralised at wa.gov.au that provides clear guidance and a reduced reporting burden, builds common understanding, and strengthens case management support. It provides statements of expectation and performance measurements. It also introduces legislative amendments to simplify decision-making and improve efficiency across four statutes for mining, tourism and other developments, including this bill before us. Importantly, this bill will streamline practices but not change the rigorous assessment the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions applies to licence agreements and permit applications to ensure environmental protection of the Swan and Canning Rivers under the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act.

I, like everyone who lives in the electorate of Bicton, feel very strongly that the protection of the river must be the top priority, and I know that it absolutely is the case for the McGowan Labor government and our Minister for Environment. I also know how much my constituency values and enjoys the many opportunities provided by our local waterways, both on water and along foreshore areas. Access, enhancement and protection share equal importance to the people I represent in this Parliament. I am very pleased to see that this bill reflects these views in equal measure. The bill will support local tourism and hospitality businesses and associated jobs, while ensuring that the special values of the Swan and Canning Rivers remain protected.

Our local waterways and foreshores are special places that support diverse activity, bringing intrinsic value to those who access and enjoy its natural places and built form. From east to west along the riverside boundary of Bicton exists a mixture of open spaces of environmental significance, passive and active recreation, as well as hospitality and tourism businesses. I would like to acknowledge their contributions to the vibrancy and health of our community and environment. They include Alfred Cove's bird sanctuary zone, Troy Park's sporting clubs, Point Walter, Blackwall Reach, Bicton Quarantine Park, Bicton Baths, the historic Bicton water polo club, East Fremantle Yacht Club, 8 Knots Tavern, the Swan Yacht Club, Zephyr Cafe, the Dôme Café and the Left Bank, amongst many others. Then there are the organisations and friends groups that care for these places, like the Swan Estuary Reserve Action Group, Friends of Melville Bird Sanctuary, Bicton Environmental Action Group and Friends of Attadale Foreshore.

I would also like to acknowledge the monumental underwater work of the Nature Conservancy in recreating Australia's most threatened marine ecosystem—native shellfish reefs in local waters. Those who know me well, and those who hear me speak often in this place, know how passionately I feel about the local environment in Bicton and beyond, and how very excited I get about shellfish reefs. For those uninitiated in the benefits of shellfish reefs and the restoration work of the Nature Conservancy, let me just say that each individual mussel has the ability to filter one litre of water an hour. The work the Nature Conservancy is undertaking with the support of this government

means that, so far, four reefs are either to be constructed or under construction in local waters within 10 years, I believe; that sounds like a long time, but we all know that goes very quickly. The reefs and mussels contained within those reefs have the ability to turn over pretty much the whole body of water, from where we come into the harbour in Fremantle and East Fremantle up to about the Narrows Bridge. It could turn over that entire body of water. They have an incredible ability to filter and provide greater clarity through their work. I am always terribly excited about that; it is just that we simply cannot see it. I recently had the opportunity to get out on the water and look at the construction of the reefs. Unfortunately, members will never see us cutting a ribbon in front of those reefs, notwithstanding the incredibly important work they do.

The shellfish reefs that we have in local waters and beyond bring a wealth of benefits for people and nature. This includes improving local fish populations, as reefs act as fish nurseries; better water clarity due to the filtration power of shellfish; increased shoreline protection; extra feeding habitat for threatened migratory shorebirds; and an overall increase in biodiversity. Additional benefits include increased opportunities for economic development and tourism.

Members may be interested, as I was, in the following information about eco and nature-based tourism in Western Australia that I sourced from the Department of Treasury's website. I note that the following was published in 2018, but I think the key points remain valid for me to share here today. It states —

Over the last seven years, participation in eco and nature-based tourism activities across Australia has grown steadily at 4 per cent per annum. In 2014, 37.7 million visitors, including 68 per cent of all international tourists, participated in a nature-based tourism activity. On average, visitors that come to Australia for a nature-based experience spend more, and stay longer, than those holidaying for another purpose.

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Western Australia has over 100 terrestrial national parks and 13 marine parks. These parks comprise some of the richest and most threatened reservoirs of plant and animal life on earth, with the South West recognised as one the world's original 25 biodiversity hotspots.

Aboriginal tourism activities and experiences in Western Australia are a sought after point of differentiation in competitive domestic and global tourism markets, and geotourism is emerging as an important growth sector, particularly in expanding Asian markets.

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Despite rising demand, and Western Australia's spectacular natural environment and rich cultural heritage, recent data indicates that growth in the eco and nature-based tourism sector has stalled.

In 2010, the *Review of Nature Based Tourism* identified 349 established nature-based tourism businesses in Western Australia, noting substantial growth in the sector since 1994, when there were only 50 operating businesses.

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Growth in the eco and nature-based tourism sector may be affected by a range of factors including exchange rates, public access routes and infrastructure in regional and remote areas, access to capital, aviation policy, availability of short term accommodation and hospitality skills shortages.

And more recently, of course, there was the global pandemic —

While these factors are important considerations for government, this project focused on the regulatory frameworks that have a material impact on businesses in this sector.

If well designed and streamlined, the regulation of activities provided by eco and nature-based tourism businesses will allow for growth and innovation in this sector to proceed while still retaining the necessary protections that ensure Western Australia remains a clean, safe and attractive tourist destination.

The people of my electorate are passionate about protecting our natural environment, and they also have a strong appreciation of the need for legislation that supports small businesses and acknowledges the integral part that the small business sector plays as part of a thriving and diverse economy. Some parts of the electorate of Bicton are home to around 41 per cent of residents who derive their income as small business owners. We know how important it is to ensure that regulations and processes around the business of doing business be as streamlined as possible. That is why the bill's streamlining effects are crucial, with the two key effects being that, firstly, it removes the duplicative process of granting combined licences and permits for commercial operators in the Swan Canning Riverpark. This duplication will be addressed by amending section 32 to clarify that licence agreements will be granted only if they relate to approved development—that is, a licence will no longer be needed to authorise acts and activities, provided that the act or activity is being conducted under the authority of a permit. The amended section 32 will clarify that licence agreements are contractual in nature and permits, which are granted under the Swan and

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Canning Rivers Management Regulations 2007, are regulatory. It will also clarify that licence agreements authorise non-exclusive occupancy and use of the river reserve by the licence holder.

Secondly, the bill will amend section 13 to remove the requirement for the Minister for Environment to conduct further consultation on changes to the Swan–Canning development control area and the Swan Canning Riverpark if the change relates to and follows an amendment to the metropolitan region scheme that has already been approved under the Planning and Development Act 2005 and has been subject to public consultation or if the amendment to the MRS is made by an act.

The amendment bill will recognise the validity of existing combined licences and permits, which will be transitioned as permits, and conditions that were applied to licences will be made conditions of the permits. As such, the changes for tourism operators should be seamless.

Other amendments will introduce a new regulation-making head power in section 136. This will enable the chief executive officer of the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, when granting permits, to include a condition that requires permit-holders to take out and maintain insurance. This is currently a standard licence condition but cannot be applied to permits.

The bill will also amend sections 38 and 133 to remove the requirement for delegation instruments to be published in the *Government Gazette*. This is another amendment to streamline processes and address workload issues.

Consultation on the amendment bill was undertaken earlier this year, with briefings provided to relevant local government and state government agencies. Consultation letters were also sent to the holders of combined licences and permits and other licence holders. The Swan River Trust was briefed on the amendment bill on 28 October 2021 and 23 August 2022 and supported its progression.

In summary, the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill 2022 introduces important regulatory reforms that will support tourism businesses operating on the Swan and Canning Rivers. It will do this in such a way that the value of the Swan and Canning Rivers is not placed at risk. The resulting regulatory reform will enable DBCA to focus regulatory effort on protecting the outstanding value of the Swan and Canning Rivers, which is very important to the people of Perth and Western Australia, particularly the people of my electorate of Bicton.

I thank the Minister for Environment for bringing the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Bill 2022 to Parliament, and I commend the bill to the house.

DR K. STRATTON (Nedlands) [5.13 pm]: I, too, rise to speak in support of the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Bill. A stretch of the Swan River, the Derbarl Yerrigan Bilya, that makes its way through Crawley, Nedlands and Dalkeith forms one of the boundaries of my electorate of Nedlands. I have been privileged to grow up playing and swimming on the river, particularly at Matilda Bay, as have my children.

The Swan River has great meaning to the Noongar people. In the Aboriginal Dreamtime, the Wagyl, an ancestral serpent that moved across the river plain, created the Derbarl Yerrigan Bilya, which has traditionally been used as a trading place and site for rituals, camping and initiation, including important women's business.

In more recent history, it was home to the Crawley Baths, a public swimming facility in Matilda Bay. Opened in 1914, it was the largest enclosed body of water in the Southern Hemisphere at the time. It served as an important recreational facility in Perth for over 50 years, with many schools, including my high school, Hollywood Senior High School, holding their swimming lessons and carnivals there—long before I was a student, I will just point out! It was demolished in 1964 after Beatty Park was built to host the 1962 Commonwealth Games. We would all be familiar with Eliza, a swimmer immortalised in bronze, who stands in the river near the former location of the Crawley Baths, poised to dive in for a swim. Eliza's ever-changing outfits tell a story about what is happening in Perth at any given time.

The Swan River is also home to one of the most photographed spots in Western Australia—the infamous, 90-year-old blue boathouse. The hashtag #blueboathouse has nearly 25 000 Instagram posts to its name and has become something of an Australian icon through its inclusion in tourism advertising campaigns. In fact, I recall stepping off a train in Singapore a few years ago and seeing people standing in front of a cardboard cut-out of the blue boatshed and taking selfies.

Alongside this history, I want to outline some of the diverse activities that occur on the banks of the Derbarl Yerrigan in my electorate. I do so to show the river's contribution to tourism and recreation in Western Australia and to highlight the importance of the amendments in this bill, making it easier for people to do business here while also protecting the river's social, cultural and environmental value.

I was at Matilda Bay on Saturday for the Perth Frontrunners Pride Run and Walk. Perth Frontrunners is a social running and walking group for the LGBTQIA+ community and allies and welcomes all sexualities, gender identities,

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ages, backgrounds and fitness levels. The group has structured its activities to cater for people of all abilities and ages and, perhaps most importantly, their dogs. The group does a weekly walk or run on a Saturday morning, usually setting off from Kings Park. Perth Frontrunners is part of International Front Runners, an 8 000-strong community of LGBTQIA+ allies running and walking in over 100 clubs around the world. Front Runners groups play an important role in LGBTQIA+ history, having been named after a novel by Patricia Nell Warren. *The Front Runner* was one of the first novels about gay love to find worldwide popularity, with 10 million copies sold.

Saturday's event is an annual run to mark the Perth Frontrunners birthday, celebrated during Pride Month. There was an amazing turnout of nearly 200 people. I was proud to stand alongside the Lord Mayor of the City of Perth, Basil Zempilas, and set the runners and walkers on their way. The group has grown significantly over the past year and, proudly, has the largest membership of any LGBTQIA+ sporting group in Perth. I congratulate co-presidents Laurie Butterly and Richie Yates for this fantastic achievement and for their ongoing contribution to creating safe and inclusive communities and access to sport for the LGBTQIA+ community.

As well as being host to a range of recreation and tourism activities, the Swan River is an important environmental asset for all Western Australians, home to many species of plant and animal life. I want to acknowledge the work of the Swan Estuary Reserves Action Group to improve the river environment. This non-profit community-based organisation aims to protect, conserve and restore the rich and diverse natural heritage value of the Swan River estuary. In Nedlands, it works across three sites on the Swan River, with a particular focus on Pelican Point. The group was formed in 2010 in response to what it felt was an urgent need for action to ensure the long-term health and wellbeing of three unique sites in the Swan River estuary. As I said, it is a volunteer-run group with a lot of expertise in environmental management as well as an understanding of the history of the area, and it works to restore and strengthen the resilience of the native habitat in and around the river. Projects involve planting with indigenous species, weeding and soft erosion control measures as well as community efforts to pick up rubbish on occasions such as Clean Up Australia Day.

Many activities take place on the Nedlands stretch of the Swan River. It is home to five yacht clubs. The Perth Dinghy Sailing Club is one of the only yacht clubs in Perth operated entirely by volunteers—the start crew, safety boat drivers, coaches, office staff, membership officers, and the staff running the canteen and the bar. The club was also one of the first to have a female commodore. The Pelican Point Sea Scouts group has been in continuous operation since 1913, shaping the experiences of many young people, including my own son, in their enjoyment and protection of the river.

Cafes and restaurants, including the Matilda Bay Tea Rooms, pumped out hundreds of coffees for the Frontrunners on Saturday morning, as they do most weekends for the many community members who gather there. There are windsurfing and paddleboarding lessons and hire, and the Jo Wheatley All Abilities Play Space. This playground is a unique and remarkable inclusive, accessible playground, built under the existing tree canopy. It covers 10 000 square metres with wheelchair access throughout. The park contains a sensory garden, a flying fox that is built for adults, climbing obstacles, slides, swings, picnic areas and water play. The playground is fully fenced and protected. It also includes an activity area for older persons. I am reassured that, as I still go on the flying fox, I am not quite ready for the seniors activity area just yet! The rotary clubs of Nedlands, Subiaco and West Perth raised more than \$2.6 million in capital funding to bring the park to life.

Nedlands foreshore is also home to soccer fields and a rugby field, which is the home ground of the most successful Rugby Union club in Western Australia—"Neddies"—which was established in 1934. I thank the club members for their ongoing patience in educating me about Rugby Union.

Just on our little stretch of the Swan River foreshore in Nedlands and Dalkeith, a great variety of tourist and recreational activities are available. This amendment bill intends to make it easier for businesses related to those tourist and recreational activities to operate. Although it introduces regulatory reforms, it does not change the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions' rigorous assessment of licence agreement and permit applications to ensure the environmental protection of the Swan River remains unchanged—something I know is really important to my community. The bill will continue to support local tourism and hospitality businesses and associated jobs, while ensuring that the important cultural, social, recreational and environmental value of the Swan and Canning Rivers remain protected.

Streamlining will occur through a number of regulatory reforms that will remove duplicative processes, such as granting combined licences and permits for commercial operators. The validity of existing combined licences and permits will be recognised, creating a seamless transition for existing tourism operators.

The amendments also remove the requirement for delegation instruments to be published in the *Government Gazette*, and the inclusion of a condition that will require permit holders to take out and maintain insurance, which is a standard licence condition that cannot currently be applied to permits.

Given the importance of the Derbarl Yerrigan Bilya to the WA community and, particularly, my local community, for a variety of uses, and to ensure its ongoing accessibility and varied use while continuing to protect its environmental value, I am happy to commend this bill to the house.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie) [5.22 pm]: I am very pleased to rise to speak to the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill 2022 and give it my full support. “Activation” is perhaps an overused word in some circles, but it is a word that captures what I think we need to do in some parts of the river. Indeed, this bill addresses the idea of activation where tourism operators want to put forward projects that will be attractive to locals and visitors to the city alike. I am also very excited by the increasing amount of passive recreation that could occur along the Swan and Canning River system.

I recently had the pleasure of hosting the Minister for Environment in my electorate. He joined me, the chair of the Armadale Gosnells Landcare Group, Pat Hart, and Shane Hunter, also from the Armadale Gosnells Landcare Group, as we inspected the latest stage of the creation of some trails along the Thornlie–Maddington part of the Canning River. This is very much needed because we have suffered a little bit. We have a situation in which many people in the Thornlie and Maddington area may not really be aware that a river passes through their suburb. The problem is that the area has been a bit of a no-go and it has seemed a little bit dark and intimidating but with a little bit of careful landscaping and the integration of some paths, we will enable people to get to a brand new play area, where there is indeed a flying fox! The minister was very courageous; he was happy to have a go on the flying fox, and I followed him. I let him go first, though!

Mr R.R. Whitby interjected.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Our test pilot!

That is already bringing people down to the river foreshore. The next stage is to get them into this new area that we have spent \$200 000 on. It is one of the commitments from the 2021 election. The trails there will be accessible to many people who come from backgrounds and cultures that mean they are not automatically familiar with the Australian ecology. They need just a little bit of guidance to appreciate it for its beauty, incredible resilience and harshness at times—its ability to survive our dry, hot summers and come to life in the wetter months. They need to see it for its incredibly evolved natural beauty. That is something that this trail network will provide for and I am really excited about that. I am thrilled that people will be able to enjoy, in the Thornlie, Maddington and Kenwick areas, a quality river that provides for barbecue-type recreation, but also interaction with the natural ecology of the area. That is something that is really positive.

It is also an example of activation. This legislation is very much about facilitating tourism operators so that they do not have to go through a permit system and a licensing system. There will, of course, be necessary checks in place to make sure that operators’ activities do not damage the ecology, biodiversity or fauna and flora of the river system and their operations can go ahead in a well-managed way that helps people have that sense of connection and contact with the Swan and Canning river system, which is, after all, the defining feature of the City of Perth and this part of the world that we live in. I understand that, for people from other parts of the state, it is a much spoken about asset that they do not constantly interact with, but for the vast majority—well over two million people who live in this part of the state—the Swan and Canning river system really is the defining natural feature. When I speak to people who have visited Perth and I ask them what they recall, they say the Swan and Canning river system. That is one of the defining features, along with Kings Park, the beaches and, perhaps, the hills as well. This beautiful river system that we have comes to mind automatically, and visitors connect with it just as much as locals.

This all means that we have a river system that is very much the focal point of our two million-plus people. I believe it is coming under increasing pressure because it is being used in such a positive way. Many people are interacting with the river, and that is something that we want to encourage, but there are some issues. Inevitably, there is going to be a degree of friction; there are going to be some problems that we will have to manage. To the credit of a succession of state governments, we have developed things such as our *Swan Canning River protection strategy*. That first came out in 2015. We have since had a progress report that came out in 2019. A lot of the objectives in the report are around water quality—quite rightly so. That makes a lot of sense because one of the things that really could be an incredible threat to the health of the river system is nutrients getting into the river, which could cause terrible things like algal blooms, which contribute to the mass death of fish stocks, and all sorts of things like that.

Naturally, water quality has been, and, indeed, should continue to be, a strong focus of the *Swan Canning River protection strategy*, but I am particularly concerned about another area relating to the fauna and especially the birdlife around the river. It is a real concern that we have a problem with a certain category of recreational fisher. We absolutely want to encourage people’s enjoyment of fishing, but some of them do not realise that their fishing activity can be to the detriment or even the death of birdlife. Unfortunately, that is happening all too often at the moment. We have a sad situation that has been highlighted by one group that is involved in rescuing seabirds such as pelicans, swans, cormorants, darters and egrets—a whole host of beautiful bird species. In fact, the pelican has

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pride of place on the strategy, with a beautiful pelican appearing on the cover of the *Swan Canning River protection strategy*. It really is a magnificent bird. I think that the Australian pelican has one of the biggest wingspans of any pelican and many birds. It is a magnificent animal. It has quite a character; it is quite an intelligent bird. Pelicans are curious, and they can learn bad habits and come too close to people who are fishing. The same goes for birds such as heron—the nankeen night heron is a beautiful bird—and some of the darters and cormorants. They are stunning animals. They can be triggered by the “plop” of a sinker and a fishhook going into the water; they hear that and think it is a fish, so they go and catch the hook. They get hooked up. Then a certain category of inexperienced, untrained, unqualified recreational fisher thinks, “I have a cormorant on my fishing line; what do I do?”, and they cut the line. This is actually the worst thing they can do. But I do not hear people in the recreational fishing community talking about what they should do, and I think this is where we have a job to do as a government. We have to make sure that the educational levels are improved. Fishers should not cut the line; they should gently bring that bird in, as though it were a fish, and then try to get the hook out themselves. Perhaps the bird will be fine. If not, they should call the Western Australian Seabird Rescue Group. This wonderful volunteer group is averaging about two call-outs a day at the moment to deal with various fishing line entanglements.

When we talk about entanglements, I think people have an idea that a bird is walking around the foreshore and somehow gets discarded fishing line wrapped around its foot; that is a nuisance and a bother, and sometimes the bird has to have its foot amputated or something. That is not what causes entanglements. They happen at the moment that someone is fishing. They are highly avoidable. The simplest way to avoid them would be for people to have a sense of responsibility. If people see egrets or herons nearby, they might choose to fish somewhere else. They might move on and respect that those birds are fishing there at the moment; they can go and fish perhaps 500 metres further along and have a wonderful time fishing there. They do not need to fish exactly where the birds are. I have seen this happening down at the WA Maritime Museum in Fremantle. Night herons roost there. People go down and night fish right underneath where they roost, so as soon as the sun goes down, the birds start looking at these plops in the water and thinking there are fish there, they go and get caught on the lines. That is totally avoidable and unnecessary, but we have to educate people.

I have spoken briefly to Dr Andrew Rowland, the CEO of Reefishwest, about this. I know that Reefishwest’s actual penetration into the recreational fishing sector is quite limited. It does have some membership, but not all recreational fishers are members, by any means. Some people who are out there fishing do not understand the risks of their activity—what it can mean to the biodiversity and especially the birdlife of our Swan and Canning Rivers system. Those uninformed fishers are sometimes very young kids. Mum and dad perhaps thought that it would be a great idea to buy a couple of fishing rods for the school holidays, and their young kids can go out and go fishing. What a great, healthy way to amuse themselves! I can understand that, but not when it is doing this amount of damage—to the extent that the WA Seabird Rescue Group is getting two call-outs a day to deal with entanglements. Those volunteers really see a spike in the number of call-outs when we get into the better weather. During the winter when it is rough weather, no-one is out fishing, and so they do not get many call-outs, but they get a big spike in the number of call-outs as the weather gets better. These members of the Seabird Rescue Group will be flat out for the next six months, really. I acknowledge those real local heroes who go out and spend a lot of money on petrol as they drive around. They get tipped off by members of the public. There is a Facebook group that I know the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions could monitor, if it were so inclined, to get a general idea of the activity, but there is a members’ Messenger group that is even better. They hear about every call-out. It is quite striking. I want to especially acknowledge people like Rowan and Mary Walsh, who are real experts. They have developed an amazing skill set in their ability to catch birds, and it is a difficult job.

It is sad that when a bird is really sick—it may have had a hook in its mouth or body that has got into its bone, an infection gets into the bone, and the bird is getting quite sick—it is easier to catch, but when people take it to the WA Wildlife hospital in Bibra Lake, the prognosis is not so good. The animal is too sick. It is better to catch the animal as early as possible. If members drive over Canning Bridge and look up, they will see the pelicans perched on the lights there. They have an amazing ability with their huge wingspan to come in on quite windy conditions and land on a space that is probably about 50 centimetres by 50 centimetres. It is amazing that they can use that as a landing point. But if members look up at them, generally, hopefully, they will see that they are in good condition. Sadly, though, they may look up and see a fishing line hanging off the bird, and then a bit of blood oozing out where the hook is doing its damage. They may see that the animal is fluffed up and not looking particularly healthy because it is already suffering the consequences of an infection. This is all highly avoidable. We have to address this.

I am coming to this point. With that very important protection strategy document, we also have the *Swan Canning River protection strategy: Progress report 2019*. There is a little case study in it that refers to the “Reel it in” project. It states that 111 kilometres of fishing line have been collected. However, as I have said, the number of kilometres of fishing line we have brought in through the “Reel it in” bins is not the key KPI. The key KPI—the sad one—is the number of call-outs for birds that have been hooked up. That is the one we need to target, but that is not in this

strategy. I think that needs to be in the next progress report. A whole lot of indicators need to be updated. The original document goes back to 2015 and was signed off by then Minister for Environment; Heritage, Albert Jacob. In the 2019 progress report, we pretty much took every single action from the original report and just carried them across. Objective 4 of the report is “Protect, manage and enhance biodiversity”.

We really need to have an action item in here to reduce entanglements. What I have said about entanglements for birds could well apply to dolphins as well. Dolphin entanglements are fortunately not as frequent as bird ones. I think that our Swan River dolphin population of 25 animals would be wiped out if dolphin entanglements were anywhere near as frequent as those with birds. Fortunately, the situation with dolphins is not as bad. We need a clear key performance indicator or action item to reduce the number of bird entanglements.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: That is certainly due. I am sure the government is looking at the next update of this protection strategy, and this would fit in nicely with that. The 2019 strategy is just reporting on the 2015 strategy. It makes for interesting reading. It has some positive features. On the water quality side, there are a lot of green lights for when things have gone extremely well; we have seen a turnaround, or at the very least a stabilisation, of a problem. Generally speaking, things are trending in the right direction.

I also want to acknowledge some other people who are working consistently hard. When I think about the people who are working with Western Australia Seabird Rescue, all volunteers of course, I also think about the trauma that they have to go through. Trauma is something that wildlife volunteers encounter. It is recognised across the board that wildlife conservation volunteers will encounter some pretty awful situations. It is sometimes easier to cope with the end of the spectrum when the animal is taken to the vet and is straightaway euthanised. In other situations, when we see the amount of suffering that an animal has gone through, or recover a bird that has been hanging on a line that has been wrapped around a tree, we can only hope that the death was relatively quick. This review is absolutely necessary from an animal welfare perspective. I know that the real purpose of this legislation is around tourism. However, if anything can be damaging to tourism, it is a poor animal welfare track record. If we do not get animal welfare right, we might damage our state’s reputation, and that would be a real shame.

I also want to acknowledge Angela Radalj and Craig Underwood. Their ability to catch injured animals is incredible. In talking about swans, there is an interestingly saying that the beating wing of a swan can break a man’s arm. It turns out that swans are easier to catch than most other birds. Once a swan is caught around the neck, it goes quite floppy. It is amazing. Swans might do a bit of hissing, but Angela and Craig just go for it and get them. They are developing a real skill in catching birds. They sometimes use a net launcher, which works by setting off a little explosion that sends out a net that drops over the bird. Another way is a leg rope or lasso that sits on the ground, and when the bird steps into the lasso, they pull it tight so that they can grab the bird around the leg and catch it. That is often a good way of catching a pelican that is fit and has had the hook just go into it, because it is not easy to catch pelicans by other means.

I also want to acknowledge Kaylene Taylor, a very busy mum who is always ready to do rescues; Aaron Shackleton; and Matt Watson, who is a Marine Stewardship Council certification professional in his spare time. It amazes me how people can find the spare time to fit in these very lengthy rescue operations. They might see a bird in one area that needs to be rescued and then hear that it has moved. That often takes the best part of at least a morning or an afternoon. The rescue procedures are often very lengthy. I also want to acknowledge Dr Halina Burmej, one of the leaders in the group.

Mr D.J. Kelly: A fabulous woman.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: She is an excellent person, well known to the Minister for Water. She is a great inspiration to others in the group. She is one of the people who teaches new members of the group about the various techniques that can be used. Others are Fiona O’Sullivan, the president, and Rachel Olsen, Maud Lowe, Lee Rose Beavis and Claudia Karwacki. They are fabulous people. I thank them for the absolutely fantastic work that they do.

I also want to acknowledge the great work that is done by the WA Wildlife hospital. I have not mentioned that a lot of these cases end up at that hospital. The veterinary bills may also be very expensive. A bit of negligent behaviour by someone who has not thought about where they are going fishing might end up costing thousands of dollars if we costed it properly by considering the time taken to catch the bird and take it to the wildlife hospital, and the X-rays and other veterinary procedures and techniques that are employed. That could perhaps be picked up in the development of the new edition of the *Swan Canning River protection strategy*. I have talked about what is going on in the Perth area. This problem obviously extends right across the state to some extent. There are WA seabird rescue groups in Mandurah, the Moore River area and Albany. There are great people doing amazing things across the state.

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This legislation will provide for the coming together of the permit or licensing arrangements. I thank the officers from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, Brendan Dooley and Sophie Moller, for their excellent briefing and for helping me to understand the intricacies of the bill.

I want to finish on a local Thornlie note. I was talking to one of the very talented Aboriginal artists in my electorate, Nerolie Bynder, and I commissioned her to do a painting of the Swan–Canning River system for me, with the Perth hills in mind as well. She did a magnificent piece of art for me, and she gave me some words to help explain it. I will read it out so that I can give members, even without seeing this beautiful piece of art, a sense of what our river means to Noongar people —

The wargle represents our river. The water overflows in the background as the river waters branch out all over country.

The spirits are happy and moving down the hills towards the river edges.

The three waterholes are connected by the white dots and represent traveling from place to place.

The sprockets add a link to riding bikes around the rivers and hills. The whole wargle is surrounded by the chain links to link the bikes with the river as close as possible. The spirit of the wargle watches over us all.

Leaves are for the trees all around the hills and beyond in Perth.

It is being by the river that links us to many people and to never forget the Ancestors of the past who lived in peace along the river's edge.

Thank you, Nerolie, for those words and also for your beautiful artwork.

I commend this bill to the house. I am thrilled to see so many of my colleagues in this place who were elected by the good constituents of riverside suburbs. I count Thornlie as one of those. I know I am in good company and that the people of Western Australia always want the very best for our Swan–Canning River system. I am sure that is what this legislation will provide.

MR P.C. TINLEY (Willagee) [5.48 pm]: I rise with great pleasure to speak on the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill. This bill is quite personal for most of us who grew up anywhere near a river. The Swan and Canning Rivers have a unique place for all of us. For me, the Swan River, particularly towards the Fremantle end, played a significant part in my childhood, and for my entire family cohort. My children have all grown up around and have used the Swan River.

In fact, on a personal note, it is a rite of passage down Fremantle way to jump off the “new bridge”, as they call it; the Stirling Bridge must be 40 years old now! There is Blackwall Reach and the “White Lady”. We learnt to swim in the river. I got my basic and intermediate swimming qualifications at Bicton Baths, swimming amongst the jellyfish. I have very fond memories of getting stung by the man o' war jellyfish! Of course, during our teen years, on very hot summer nights, we had great fun prawning with dragnets in the Swan River and then sleeping on the beach sand. From time to time, we ventured into the Canning River.

Ms M.M. Quirk: You sound all Tim Winton.

Mr P.C. TINLEY: I know. There is a dirt story right there.

We made fires and cooked the prawns and the occasional crab we had caught and then slept on the river bank. We tried to fish off the jetties in the river but all we came up with were buckets of blowfish. Occasionally we would get a kingfish swimming through, if we cast out far enough. On a weekend down at Bicton, the challenge of a swim across the river to the CSR sugar refinery was not unusual. We would find our way into the sugar refinery to see what we could pilfer! It was a very good adventure. In fact, the last bit of the CSR refinery that is left is the hydrothermal energy system. The refinery got its power from thermal energy. Neesham family members swam across the river one day and brought back a pipe that was connected to that system. It now heats the Bicton water polo club pool, as it has for the last 20-plus years.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Going to the CSR sugar refinery was one of the only school excursions we ever did.

Mr P.C. TINLEY: That is right.

Mr D.J. Kelly: We didn't steal any pipes, though. We left that for the Neeshams!

Mr P.C. TINLEY: That is right.

The river is much more than the natural body of water that flows between the banks; it very much flows through the lives of all of those who have experienced it. Knowledge of the river and its role in individual's lives is fundamentally important to the Perth community and Western Australia generally. That connection with the rivers is not unique to us. For 60 000-plus years, before it was called the Swan River, it was called the Derbarl Yerrigan. To this day,

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it is a very special place for First Nations Australians. We represent First Nations Western Australians who have a heritage that goes back many thousands of years. A simple welcome to country teaches us about the Whadjuk Noongar people's Dreaming stories of the Swan and Canning Rivers that we can all so fondly connect with.

Of course, there is a relationship with the groundwater system, and beyond that the wetlands of the Swan coastal plain, which have been impinged on severely by development. We are coming to understand only now that they are the aqualungs for this sandy plain. The rivers are very much part of that hydrological system.

It is always important to acknowledge the lessons from cities around the world that have planned for their rivers. It was natural to position urban development along a river. In fact, we often talk about the Canning and Stirling Highways as the early routes to move from the port to the city, but history tells us there was also a strong thriving business of ferries and barges moving along the Swan River. In Nairobi, Kenya, in the 1990s, the government had to destroy buildings constructed in particular areas to mitigate the impact of floods. Nairobi is an example of a growing African city that has not adequately protected its rivers. It is very important that we consider the impact of rivers and their role in a drying climate and extreme weather events when we take on climate change. We are yet to see those sorts of things in Western Australia, particularly with our rivers. Most of the older cities of the world developed along rivers. Rivers played a major role in sustaining the city and the people, as they did in Western Australia, providing water and natural resources, food and so on, but they also provide flood mitigation or prevention. Tampering with or close to the edges of or around rivers can have a significant impact, as we found with the wetlands. We built towards the edges of the wetlands because we did not understand that the greenbelt was part of the filtering system that that body of water needs, creating that environment.

Heavily polluted cities obviously have a significant impact on their rivers. We are very fortunate that the Swan River Trust's approach to managing the river in Western Australia goes from aerating the upper reaches to repopulating it with certain fish species and trying to keep down the numbers of the endemic pest species that populate it or eradicating them when possible. The management of the health of the river is fundamentally important. We often think of the river with the edges that we know today, but early photos of the river, particularly around the Narrows Bridge, show a lot of land was reclaimed from the river and mudflats—Langley Park and those areas. People wonder why the city was built so far back from the riverbank. It was because it was low-lying and in parts very swampy land, and with the early styles of construction, it was not particularly suitable to build the city closer to the water.

There was a military component to that decision, too. We often forget that the French were on the sniff when English settlement was underway in Western Australia. Perth was chosen as the place for the capital because it was further up the river than Fremantle and it was easier to defend. I am very much simplifying a long history. The best defensive position for protection of the approach to the city up the river was of course what we now know as Kings Park. It was the best place for gun placements. Historians of architecture tell us that was the origins of Kings Park. It was originally retained for defence of the city. It was preserved during early periods of white settlement from being built on and used. As the highest point around the place, it would be a nice urban development zone. The Kings Park we have today is in large part thanks to the military tacticians of the early white settlement; they retained it because they needed it to be retained.

Langley Park and those areas of South Perth that we now know of as the South Perth foreshore were all mudflats. Again, that is why they had to build further back from the river. In places, one can see the historical high-water mark on the pavement. There are small markers around Perth. It is a very interesting part of our history. The river threads its way through our history time and again, as I said, up to the modern day.

The river has never been under more pressure but it has also enjoyed a renaissance, if you like. I have talked to people about and read reports on the health of the river and its rejuvenation. For many years, we did not see dolphins in the river. We had determined that they had all vacated the river. In more recent years, pods of dolphins moving up and down the river is a common sight. Of course, unfortunately, we also get the odd bull shark moving up and around. We had a tragedy last year at Blackwall Reach, where a swimmer was mauled by a bull shark. It is not a very common occurrence. Before that, the last one was in, I think, 1932. It was a long time between shark attacks in the river. On the other side of it, I note that the health of the river is on the mend as we have seen nursing sharks come into the river during different parts of their life cycle. We are also seeing a better quality of fish, with a significant reduction of mercury and lead in their flesh. That is an important component of the health of the river. When we move to the upper reaches of the river and into the Swan Valley, we see that it is of fundamental importance to the agricultural and horticultural industries in those areas.

Although this bill may seem to be a minor amendment, this chamber should always be diligent when attending to anything that deals with the natural environment to ensure that we make the right decisions on its behalf because it really does not get a voice. If you like, its voice comes many years after a decision is taken, such as decisions that impinge on any river or waterway. For example, I refer to the impact that a four-lane freeway would have had on the Beeliar wetlands if it had been built right through the middle of it. We would not have seen its true effects

until many years afterwards. The diesel particulate plume alone would have extended many hundreds of metres beyond the road itself and would have significantly impacted the flora and fauna around it. A decision taken in haste relating to our natural environment can always have a consequence that we did not see, cannot understand and will not necessarily feel the effects of in our generation, and potentially several generations thereafter.

During the small contribution that I have made today, I wanted to highlight the connection between the rivers and our lives, both in the urban and natural context, in our lived experience and for many generations after us. We hope that we leave a legacy of enjoyment and contribution from this great waterway to the lives of our kids and their kids. I look forward to the bill passing the house.

MS J.J. SHAW (Swan Hills — Parliamentary Secretary) [6.02 pm]: I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill 2022. As has been discussed by other members, this bill is part of the Streamline WA initiative to streamline regulations and regulatory practices. It is intended that it will support tourism and hospitality businesses while ensuring that the special environmental values of the Swan and Canning Rivers are protected. A number of businesses in the Swan Valley are very interested in utilising the Swan River as a tourism asset. Indeed, the opportunity is fantastic. I understand that the Swan Valley wine region is one of the only wine regions in the world connected to the CBD by a river. It is a very under-utilised asset in terms of tourism. There is certainly a real appetite to improve that situation. It is very important that as we do that, we preserve and protect those environmental values.

As the name would imply, the seat of Swan Hills has a significant stake in the Swan River. It runs right through the electorate—through the Avon Valley, Brigadoon and Upper Swan. The western border of my electorate in the Swan Valley is the Swan River. We have a vested interest in making sure that that asset is not only utilised, but also protected.

As part of my contribution to this evening's debate, I wanted to talk about a number of groups in my electorate that contribute to our efforts to protect the Swan catchment. Some fantastic work is done by community heroes, who are often unsung. I wanted to take the time this evening to acknowledge some absolutely fantastic work. The first group that I would like to talk about is the Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise. I am very proud to be the patron of the Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise. The western swamp tortoise is Australia's most critically endangered reptile species. Ellen Brook, which is part of the Swan catchment, is the only place left in the world where western swamp tortoises naturally occur, and right next door to the fastest growing part of the metropolitan area. Tens of thousands of people are moving into an area right next door to the one place on the planet where western swamp tortoises naturally reside. It is important that we do what we can to protect that little ecosystem that is so vital to sustaining the western swamp tortoise. The driving force of the Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise is Jan Bant and Cathy Levett. They are two environmental warriors. They are very committed to raising awareness in the general community, particularly in schools, about the plight of the western swamp tortoise. The friends meet regularly to plant the Ellen Brook Nature Reserve and the Twin Swamps Nature Reserve. It has been revegetated. In fact, we had to undertake a major revegetation initiative following the Wooroloo fires when Ellen Brook reserve was burnt out. Thankfully, only one western swamp tortoise was injured during that fire. Major work was required to replant that part of the habitat of the western swamp tortoise.

I was also very privileged to participate in three releases of western swamp tortoises into the wild. Perth Zoo and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions do some absolutely fantastic work breeding western swamp tortoises for release into the wild. I have been very privileged to be part of that. It was quite emotional to do that; it is a special experience. It is lovely to hear about the success of the western swamp tortoises being released in that area. They are breeding. The work of the Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise is fantastic. The program is succeeding through the group's support. The membership released a record number of swamp tortoises this year—147. That involved a lot of traipsing through the mud into the swamp to release them. It was really wonderful to do that. Membership of the Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise is free. Schools can get involved. They can do educational visits. They hold seed bomb manufacturing days, where people get together and put all sorts of native seeds in vermiculite and then “bomb” them into the habitats, so the bombs explode and the seeds grow. As I said, the friends do quite remarkable work.

Alongside the community and the Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise, we lobbied the City of Swan very heavily last year to refuse a subdivision that would have considerably intensified dwellings between the Twin Swamps reserve and the Ellen Brook reserve. There is now data that shows that western swamp tortoises migrate between the two spots. Obviously, if a whole heap of houses were built in the area, the movement between the two habitats would be prevented. It was very pleasing to see that the City of Swan voted against recommending that change to a local planning scheme, which would have allowed subdivision in that habitat. That is one good thing that the City of Swan has done. The Friends of the Western Swamp Tortoise is an absolutely amazing organisation.

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The other organisation that has a significant impact on the Swan River is Chittering Landcare. I would like to give a nod to Doreen Mackie and Rosanna Hindmarsh. I met Rosanna in connection with her work with Perth City Farm and the Forever Project. She is a really fierce environmental warrior. In fact, today Chittering Landcare hosted a bush tucker event in collaboration with Bullsbrook Landcare. It holds night stalk events in Julimar State Forest to explore nocturnal species throughout the catchment. It held native wildflower displays of species local to the Chittering area in September, it planted essential vegetation in Moondah Brook to improve water quality and habitat in July, and it has also hosted a junior landcare project in collaboration with the state-run natural resource management program to connect young people to the natural environment. That is great. A couple of years ago, I was very pleased to join Chittering Landcare at the Yanchep Inn to celebrate the group's twentieth anniversary. The driving force behind Bullsbrook Landcare is Anne and Richard Janes; they are very dear friends of mine who work tirelessly on environmental issues. Just recently, in October, Bullsbrook Landcare participated in the great Aussie Bird Count, recording 37 species of bird along the Bullsbrook bridle trail. That group is constantly rehabilitating the bridle trail and doing planting and fantastic work to rehabilitate degraded environs in the Bullsbrook area. Bullsbrook Landcare hosted an educational drop-in info desk for Landcare Week at Ethel Warren Community Centre in August, providing information on weeds and protecting local fauna and native plants. As I said, it also hosted a tree planting at Kingsford in July. Ki-it Monger Brook runs through the new Kingsford development and Bullsbrook Landcare assisted with planting out that area to protect that tributary that also feeds into the Swan River. I was very pleased at the 2021 election to provide some funding for Bullsbrook Landcare for new equipment to help with its rehabilitation efforts.

I mentioned before that I met Rosie through the Forever Project, and I acknowledge the work that the Forever Project has done in my electorate. Chris Ferreira is doing incredible work to raise awareness about waterwise and fire-wise projects. He runs educational sessions and puts together display gardens right through my area. He particularly supported the Wooroloo fire recovery process. He ran workshops and helped people recover in an environmentally sensitive way from the Wooroloo fires.

The Ellen Brockman Integrated Catchment Group is also a very significant group that operates in my electorate. Again, Richard Janes is part of that, as are Errol Howard and Doreen Mackie. It is dedicated to maintaining the health of waterways in the Ellen-Brockman region, particularly Ellen Brook. Again, it is funded through the natural resource management program. The Ellen Brockman Integrated Catchment Group received \$149 000 from the Community Rivercare grant program in January 2022 to assist with foreshore revegetation and weed control.

We also have an organisation called the Friends of Pioneer Park. That is a bit further up into the south-eastern hills part of my electorate. It received \$65 000 through the Community Rivercare grant program to assist with weed control and natural regeneration. It has been removing weeds through the course of the year but it did a big project in October. A range of volunteers and contractors get onboard to maintain the health of Pioneer Park and surrounding bushland in the hills.

The Susannah Brook Catchment Group is another great group. I think Susannah Brook runs through my electorate, but the lion's share of it is further west. It runs from West Gidgegannup through Red Hill and down into Millendon. That group also aims to protect and enhance surface water quality, maintain and enhance biodiversity, understand the impacts of climate change on the catchment and educate the community about sustainability and impacts. It also received a \$10 000 Community Rivercare grant to assist with habitat improvement for birds and other waterway-dependent species. Right the way across Swan Hills, a range of environmental groups are doing absolutely fantastic work.

I would like to take this opportunity, whilst we are talking about the Swan River catchment and the great work that community champions do in the furtherance of environmental causes, to acknowledge a truly outstanding member of my community who, very sadly, passed away on 12 October 2022. I think it is no understatement to say that she truly was a remarkable woman and a great advocate for the environment. That is, of course, Dr Anne Margaret Sibel. I want to take a moment to reflect on her life because I can tell members that as a local member I do not think I have met anyone as deeply committed to the community, as hardworking or as measured and effective in her advocacy for her community or as deeply committed to making the place she lived in a better place as she was.

Anne was born in Victoria and died in Bullsbrook. She initially trained as a primary school teacher. She went back to university later in life and did her PhD in community psychology and was widely acknowledged as a Western Australian expert on the impact of FIFO on wellbeing and, in particular, the impact of FIFO on families and, importantly, how to make things better for workers and families at home.

She was always passionate about her community. From volunteering to teaching adult literacy to supporting refugees in detention, if there was a cause to be taken up, you could bet your life that Anne was prepared to pitch in and she was passionate about achieving outcomes. Making sure that everyone had a voice was always central to everything she did. I can attest to that. She would often advocate to me on behalf of her community and often the voiceless within her community. Her whole life was about standing up for what she believed in, from protesting against conscription

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in the Vietnam War as a young person to contacting my office on any number of community issues. She absolutely loved Bullsbrook where she lived from 2003 until her death.

She was involved in a wide range of community organisations, including Communities for Children. She was on the board of the Zonta House Refuge Association. She was part of the stable fly working group and worked with the poultry industry, market gardeners, experts and landholders to address stable fly issues, which are significant in Bullsbrook in particular. She was heavily involved in Landcare. She held various positions in Landcare. She was also a member of the Bullsbrook College board and the South Midlands Pony Club committee and she won a City of Swan citizenship award.

I met her during the campaign for the 2017 election. She was president of the Bullsbrook Residents and Ratepayers Association. I will say we actually did not get off to a good start. I wrote to her and I misspelt her surname as “Sybil”. I spelt it as one would spell the lead character in *Fawltly Towers*, and she let me know in no uncertain terms what she thought about that. I very quickly realised that here was quite a formidable woman in Anne Sibbel and I was at pains to make sure we spelt Anne’s name correctly from that point forward. She was on the panel of the very first community meeting that I was invited to as a candidate. I had never done anything like this before and I had been invited to a community meeting on an issue that I will talk about. Anne was there in her capacity as the ratepayers’ association president. She was remarkable. She was measured but fierce in her advocacy for her community, so I was impressed by her. In a very calm, sensible way, she prosecuted an excellent argument on the need to oppose what were some terrible projects that were being applied for in the Bullsbrook community. That was my first experience of seeing Anne in action.

After I was elected, the tip proposal issue was one of the very first issues that I took up as a local member. From that day forward, I worked with Anne on a wide range of community issues. Anne established the Bullsbrook Residents and Ratepayers Association, and she was its president for many years. She was the driving force behind the establishment of the Bullsbrook Museum, and hit me up for funding for it. I was very pleased to do what I could to support the establishment and the development of that community asset. She was responsible for organising many Bullsbrook community events—outdoor movies, the Bullsbrook Country Fair, music nights and Christmas carols. You name it, Anne was behind the scenes working on it. I thought it was fantastic the way that she established the team in the Bullsbrook ratepayers’ association meeting and how she then went out of her way to assist other community groups to get themselves set up by auspicating them. At times when it was difficult to get a constitution together, or costly, or someone did not know how to put the rules together or what their insurance requirements were, Anne would help community groups through auspicating. It is such an important part of helping fledgling community groups to get on their feet.

[Member’s time extended.]

Ms J.J. SHAW: Anne was also very willing to provide advice and support to other fledgling ratepayer and resident associations on how to effectively campaign on community issues. In my time as a local member, the Upper Swan District Ratepayers and Residents Association formed and it had a very complex community issue that it needed to advocate on, and Anne was always very willing to provide what advice and support she could, because she was really good at it; she was very effective at advocating for her community.

I will run through some of the issues that Anne raised with me. She was constantly advocating for improved public transport links between Bullsbrook, Midland and Ellenbrook. She was a fierce advocate for safe water for west Bullsbrook; the PFAS issue has been an ongoing struggle for the Bullsbrook community. Anne was unrelenting in her pursuit of outcomes on that issue, and I was pleased to support the work. Anne also was right on it when we were talking about the proposed quarantine facility for Bullsbrook, which now sits there, and wanted to make sure that the community’s needs were considered. She certainly advocated to me, and, in turn, on the community’s behalf, I was very pleased to assist. Anne always raised with me the importance of community banking. The Bullsbrook Residents and Ratepayers Association did quite an extensive amount of work to try to retain the Bendigo Bank branch there. Anne again realised the need for community facilities and amenity in Bullsbrook. She also took up the cause of the impact on rural properties of rating reviews to change from unimproved value to gross rental value. Anne really took up that issue on behalf of her community. It affects places like Bullsbrook and Gidgegannup. Anne constantly lobbied me for an alternative point for access and egress on the Shady Hills access road in case of bushfire. I was very pleased to work with the BRRA to secure a state government funding commitment for the delivery of an alternative point for access and egress, and we certainly look forward to the City of Swan working to deliver that project. Anne also advocated to me on the need for upgrades to Stock Road to make that asset integrate with NorthLink. She also advocated on the issue of traffic on Chittering Road. As I mentioned before, she was on the Stable Fly Action Group and was also involved with the Bullsbrook heritage trail. Her advocacy and use of her community development expertise really helped shape the Kingsford development. She was a fierce advocate for the protection of the banksia woodlands in west Bullsbrook. Anne worked tirelessly to put together submissions on the tip proposals on Jenkins and Chittering Roads, and advocated to state, federal and local government stakeholders. She sat for days on end in State Administrative Tribunal hearings and she made depositions to councils.

That project was terrible for Bullsbrook and I believe it would have gone ahead but for Anne Sibbel's remarkable advocacy and tireless work, along with the other members of the Bullsbrook Residents and Ratepayers Association.

Finally, I want to mention one issue that Anne advocated to me on—voluntary assisted dying. She gave me permission to read her contribution. She emailed me about it and said that she was quite happy for me to use her words. According to my notes, she said —

As you know I have metastatic breast cancer. It can't be cured. I am not afraid of death but am very concerned about the process of dying. I don't know how it's going to be for me, but having nursed both of my parents through their awful journeys with cancer, and my aunt through her drawn out death with emphysema, I know I don't want to go that way. I believe assisted dying is a basic human-right and a very personal one—not a political or religious choice—in this day and age we don't have to have agonising deaths where families are left traumatised by their loved ones' suffering. People can die a kinder and better way. I would like to have the choice.

The Bullsbrook Museum is now creating a memorial garden in Anne's memory, and I think that is very appropriate. We have lost a kind, funny, caring and very compassionate woman and, I think, one of the most effective community advocates I have had the pleasure to work with. She is truly irreplaceable. She and I really connected when she discovered that my parents used to breed Newfoundland dogs. Anne had newfies. She was a remarkable woman. We are so very grateful for the contributions that she has made to our community. I extend my deepest sympathies to Frank, Kate, Jo and Nick, and their partners, and her grandchildren.

The protection of rivers, the protection of the environment and the advancement of deeply held grassroots community issues depend on people like Anne Sibbel. It all depends on people standing up and being prepared to put in hours of work and face some pretty difficult criticisms, sometimes from other parts of the community that face adversity. Anne Sibbel was remarkable, and I want to thank her for her incredible contribution to Swan Hills.

MR G. BAKER (South Perth) [6.25 pm]: I rise to speak on the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill 2022. I would like to thank the Minister for Environment for bringing this bill to the house. As the member for South Perth, rivers surround my seat on three sides; in fact, South Perth is a peninsula between the Canning and Swan Rivers. The Canning and Swan Rivers—the Derbarl Yerrigan and the Djarlgarra—are central to the life of our city. At every turn of history, our city has relied on these rivers for food, transport, recreation and commerce. However, we have not always been aware of the environmental and social consequences of management decisions that were made and, for a time, allowed the river to degrade to a sorry state. It has taken a lot of work to come back from that.

This bill will streamline the administration of many uses of the river, while protecting the river environment. As part of the Streamline WA initiative, the bill will improve regulation and the regulatory practices to make it easier to do business in Western Australia, but it will not change the rigorous assessment that the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions applies to licence agreement and permit applications to ensure the environmental protection of the Swan and Canning Rivers under the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006. Managing the river is beyond the capacity of a single local government authority. More than 20 local government authorities border the banks of the two rivers. We have also had a succession of organisations in Perth looking after the river. We had the Swan River Conservation Board between 1959 and 1976, the Swan River Management Authority between 1977 and 1989, and the Swan River Trust, which started in 1989 and was largely folded into the Parks and Wildlife Service in 2015 and is now within the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. Past that, an array of other government departments, such as the departments of lands and tourism, and even the Civil Aviation Safety Authority, have a bit to say about the management of the river. Who could forget that the Premier opened an airport on the river in South Perth earlier this year? Not many people know that—a whole airport. Simplification is a welcome reform, but we also want to protect the natural habitat.

The Derbarl Yerrigan is an ancient waterway that nurtured the Noongar community for thousands of years. Evidence of this can be found on the Como Beach foreshore, where archaeologists found the shellfish middens left by generations of Whadjuk camp sites.

Since the arrival of European settlers, the river has changed radically. In 1829, colonists noted that the river water was a little brackish, but not as salty as the sea. As late as 1950, Chinese market gardeners on the South Perth foreshore were able to use river water on their market gardens. We all know about the swimming baths in Como and, as the members for Willagee and Nedlands reminded us, in Bicton and Crawley. We all know about the swimming baths along the river. My dad thought nothing of swimming in the river at the Preston Street jetty. Today, it is really hard to imagine jumping in for a quick swim with all the salt water and the jellyfish, but we have to remember that back in the day, the water was not salty; it was fresh and it was a completely different marine environment from what it is today.

This all began to change in 1902, with the removal of the reef at the mouth of the Swan River as Fremantle Harbour was built, allowing tidal water to creep up the river from the sea. Additionally, the clearing of native vegetation from the wheatbelt brought salt to the surface, which, over time, has pervaded our rivers systems. These two factors have slowly, over 100 years, transformed the Swan and Canning Rivers from freshwater rivers into salty estuaries. With that change came a huge change in wildlife. For one, we have largely destroyed the natural habitat of the black swan. We used to have thousands of black swans on the river; they were a staple food for the colonists. I have seen photographs of pens of swans kept at the Old Mill in South Perth. They were all clipped and ready to be eaten in the way we would eat ducks or geese. There were thousands of them, but they are mostly all gone; not just the swans, but the entire ecosystem that supported them. This complicates the notion of protecting the Swan River environment in the present day.

If we wish to have similar habitats as we had 100 years ago and support the traditional fauna and flora, we need to create freshwater lakes along the banks. We have done that in South Perth, with Millers Pool, Lake Hurlingham and Douglas Lake. They are freshwater wetlands that swans and other freshwater birds can feed and drink from. We have also created Djirda Miya, which means “homes of the birds”. That is a small island in the Swan River off Douglas Lake. That is a joint project between the state government and the City of South Perth. It is between Coode Street and Lake Hurlingham, and is a rocky and sandy island just off the shore. It can be seen very easily. The island allows black swans a safe place to breed, while giving them access to the fresh water at Douglas Lake where they can feed and drink. The intention of Djirda Miya was to provide the black swans with a home, but it has been adopted by birds of all kinds, especially pelicans.

While I am talking about Djirda Miya, I will give a shout-out to Veronica McPhail, who photographs and documents the wildlife along the South Perth foreshore, and the revival of the black swans breeding there. She has been photographing the swans and other waterbirds around the new island haven since 2001. She has snapped several families of swans that have successfully produced cygnets while nesting on the island, which is great to see. Members can see some of her photos around Parliament House. One is in the Premier’s office and a couple of others are on the interactive video display, just outside in the corridor.

However, the changing salinity does not stop our need to protect the river and its environment. New species have moved into the ecological niche that depend on the health of the river. Currently, the river has over 130 species of fish, including rays, cobblers, herring, bream, flatheads, leatherjackets and blowfish. We have jellyfish in abundance, bottlenose dolphins, prawns, blue manna crabs, mussels, molluscs, black swans, gulls, twenty-eight parrots, rainbow lorikeets, kingfishers, red-tailed black-cockatoos, Australian pelicans, Australian magpies, ducks, shags and all sorts. We also have small mammals like water rats, brush-tailed possums, short-nosed bandicoots, quenda, snakes, lizards, spiders and insects that all inhabit and depend on the foreshores and the wetlands along there.

What are we doing to preserve the foreshore habitat along the river? The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions is working on the Riverbank program to manage the foreshore with the state and local governments. Funding is available for a wide range of foreshore restoration and protection activities.

Recently, we have funded programs all the way up and down the river, from Fremantle, Bayswater, the City of Swan and Armadale to South Perth. In South Perth, this funding has recently gone towards the restoration of the Mt Henry Spit, as well as river wall replacement, beach creation and revegetation around the Coode Street foreshore. Added to this is the work on restoring the wetlands along the foreshore, like the Andrew Thomson Conservation Reserve along the Waterford foreshore, and efforts to replace introduced trees with local native trees. Now we are getting somewhere. Now we have a beautiful river running through our vibrant city. Through careful management, we have a clean river that is the envy of any large city around the world. We can swim and sail in the river without concern, except for the jellyfish, and we can eat the fish, crabs and prawns. This is not a given in all similarly sized cities around the world. I remember the disappointment and confusion when I first went to Adelaide and looked at the River Torrens and saw a little trickle.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk): That is disappointing, member.

Mr G. BAKER: It is. The Yarra River was a poisonous, tiny little thing running through Melbourne. I also think of places like Cleveland, which is an industrial city with a poisoned river, and Los Angeles, which has a huge concrete gash going through the city with hardly any water running through it. Even cities like London and Amsterdam sit on big rivers, but they are very dirty rivers.

Our environmental success is a wonderful commercial and recreation success story. We love our river, and we love visiting it. I will give members one example of this from South Perth. Last weekend, at Sir James Mitchell Park, we saw the return of South Perth Streats, better known as the food trucks down at the foreshore. That is a South Perth institution. Thousands of people gather there in the evening to watch the sunset and chat with friends while eating cheap meals from the food trucks. I have been down there many times, enjoying sushi, Canadian fries, Thai, pizza, Tex-Mex, bao buns, mango ice cream, or whatever is on offer that evening. You can’t go wrong. I commend it to

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everyone. Just pick the food truck with the shortest queue, and members will be pleased. In a few years, it has become a huge event, attended by people from all across the metropolitan area. That has created its own management problems. These are problems that can be solved, but there is a surprising amount of back and forth across departments and local governments to work through them. For example, the land in Sir James Mitchell Park is a mix of freehold land owned by the City of South Perth and crown land owned by the state government, but the water on the shoreline is managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. That is just for Streats. I could go on about Skyworks and how difficult it is to manage that across many departments, but 7.00 o'clock is approaching. Managing this popular demand for commercial and recreation uses across government departments and 20 local governments while protecting the environment is the key.

The Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill 2022 will make this job easier. First, we will simplify administration around the licence agreements for commercial operators in the Swan Canning Riverpark by amending section 32 of the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006. Secondly, we will amend section 13 of the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006 to remove duplicate consultation on projects. These changes should be seamless for operators and save government resources while maintaining the same level of environmental protection.

We have a lot of people in Perth who want to enjoy their river. When I talk to small businesses or local government, too often they talk about the administrative complexity in getting anything done. These sensible reforms will make things a little easier and further unlock the potential of our river while maintaining high standards of environmental protection. As I said, the seat of South Perth is surrounded by river on three sides, and the Swan and Canning Rivers are dear to our hearts. Ask someone to take a great photo of South Perth and invariably they will take a photo of the river. It gives me great pleasure to support this bill to create better administration of the rivers while protecting our environment.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [6.38 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill 2022 on behalf of the opposition. In doing so, the resolution of the opposition is that it will support this bill. I have a couple of reservations that I want to express, and I will do that as we go through those matters. The opposition will, in general, support the bill that has been presented to Parliament.

I want to start by reflecting upon the speech given by the member for Swan Hills. She gave quite a passionate tribute to Anne Sibbel of Bullsbrook and I would also like to join with the member in reflecting on the passing of Anne. She was well known in the Chittering area generally; she was someone I had quite a bit to do with over the years and for whom I had a lot of respect. Obviously I was not as close to her as was the member for Swan Hills, but I would like to say how sad it was to hear of her passing.

Another little commonality between her and my electorate is the Ellen Brockman Integrated Catchment Group, which had its genesis in the Lower Chittering area. The member spoke of people from the Chittering Landcare Centre who were involved in the Ellen Brockman Integrated Catchment Group. That group started out as the Ellen Brook Integrated Catchment Group back in the day, but changed its name. It started off because a worrying level of salinity had been observed in Ellen Brook and other streams in the area, including Marbling Brook and the Brockman River. The group was formed by people mainly from the Lower Chittering area, including Hartley Read, a then councillor with the Shire of Chittering and a very well known local who has a long history of dealing with water. He is an earth mover and understands the construction of dams and how water moves across the environment. As I understand it, the first meeting of the group was held at the Lower Chittering Hall. Another constituent of mine for whom I have a great deal of respect, John Lambie, was also an early member of the group, and for many years it has been working assiduously towards improving the quality of water in that catchment area that ultimately flows into the Swan River. The group is mainly based in my electorate, but actually shares in some of the issues around the Swan River. It just shows that water does not respect boundaries that much as it flows through, and that is one of the issues that the member for South Perth reflected upon. Many local governments are tied up in the Swan catchment area as well. Water does not really respect political boundaries; it flows around, and it needs to be treated across the whole of its extent rather than just wherever an organisation exists, be it state or local government.

Returning to the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill 2022, the opposition will support it for the reason that we generally support legislation that tries to make life simpler for people with less duplication, and this legislation will remove some regulatory duplication. The need to have both a permit and a licence will be done away with and only a licence will be required, which apparently will be of some benefit to people affected by it. I think a couple of organisations have leases and they will remain special leases; there is the flying boat, as it is called, and the zipline.

I want to ask some questions about proposed section 13, which will remove the need for the Minister for Environment to consult on changes to the development control area when those changes relate to an amendment to the metropolitan region scheme that has already been approved under the Planning and Development Act and has been the subject of consultation. What difference will this make, in a practical sense? If the minister can answer that in his reply to the second reading debate it will maybe satisfy me so that I will not have to take the bill into consideration in detail.

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As I said, the opposition will support this bill. The shadow Minister for Environment is Hon Tjorn Sibma in the other place, so I am sure that if he has questions of a technical nature, he will be able to ask them in Committee of the Whole in the other place as required. My question is: what is the practical change? What is the implication, in particular, for people who may comment on or appeal against a proposal? Will there be any difference in rights of appeal, for example, for something that might happen under the changed arrangements in proposed section 13?

Another matter that I am a bit curious about is proposed section 30. I think there is a heading change that substitutes “licence” for “lease”. I am curious as to why that has occurred, when the bill I am looking at makes reference to consequences of contravening conditions of a river reserve licence, whereas before it referred to a river reserve lease. Throughout the actual provision, there are still references to leases and lessees and the like. That does not seem to reflect “licence”, so why has the heading changed but not the matters that are the actual substance of the provision—the difference between “licence” and “lease”?

Those are the issues I wanted to briefly raise with the minister. I ask also if he could enlighten me on proposed section 32(6), which states —

A licensee must not, without the prior approval of the CEO, sell, transfer or otherwise dispose of, in whole or in part, the licence agreement or any interest in it.

Can the minister give me an understanding of whether those transfers can be through family arrangements? What happens if a parent wants to pass their licence to one of their offspring? Is that something that is of an automatic nature? In the unfortunate event of the demise of the licence holder, is it something that can be passed down through inheritance? Is it possible, in fact, for the estate of a deceased person to hold the licence? It provides that a person holds the licence; is that something that is actually possible under the legislation?

Those are the few little queries I have. If the minister can look at them in his reply, I may well be satisfied with that, because the bill is otherwise considered non-controversial. With regard to proposed section 13, I would be interested to know what the ramifications may be for people who want to comment on a proposal or appeal a decision. With that, I will conclude my remarks and look forward to further contributions from government members.

MS C.M. TONKIN (Churchlands) [6.49 pm]: I rise today in support of the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill 2022. I think we all know the significance of these rivers to the Whadjuk Noongar people in particular, but we are only beginning to appreciate how these rivers figure so prominently in their dreaming. The more we learn from the traditional owners, the more we will be in awe of this magical environment. Their stories and their understandings of the river environment add enormously to our own understanding, and make this a very rich place for all concerned.

Like for many people who live in Perth, the Swan and Canning Rivers have a very important place in my heart. My mother used to speak with great fondness of her childhood experiences fishing and netting prawns with my grandparents during the 1930s along the river at Applecross. It was not only the stuff of magical childhood memories, but also very necessary for feeding a large family during economically difficult times. There were six children in my mother’s family, and she was the youngest. My mother had happy memories of her father cooking the fish whole in the coals of a fire on the beach. She said that he never used to gut them—the guts used to just shrivel up inside the fish and you could pull them out easily and eat them. That is something I have never tried, but something my mother thought was wonderful. As adults, my mother, aunts and uncles would go prawning in the river on a hot summer’s evening, repeating lessons learnt and joyful memories from their childhood.

In primary school, we used to have an annual end-of-year excursion to the Swan River, where I learnt to swim. It was wonderful. I went to a Catholic primary school in East Victoria Park. It always seemed hot in East Victoria Park! Going to the river on the bus with the nuns, with all our picnic gear and swimming stuff, was fabulous. It was the highlight of the year for me as a child.

When my sons were young, they loved to fish. My role was to provide the transport and to ensure that the bait was bought and the fishing lines were untangled. That was my constant role—untangling fishing lines, and occasionally getting hooked myself. It was an enormous pleasure to see the delight my sons experienced in this simple activity. Of course, I often used to take them fishing at the jetty adjacent to Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club. It was, and still is, one of our favourite places in the world. It is a place to which my sons have taken their children to fish. I always knew when any of their relationships were getting serious when the girlfriends would be taken to the favourite fishing spot as well!

The Swan and Canning Rivers are of such personal significance to so many of us, but some might rightly ask: what possible interest could the member for Churchlands have in these rivers?

Mr G. Baker: Exactly.

Ms C.M. TONKIN: Exactly. My electorate does not border the rivers. To this I must say that it is a little-known fact that the overflow from Galup, Lake Monger, flows into the Swan River from a drain at the south-east corner

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of the lake. At the moment, it carries contaminated run-off from the freeway and drainage from surrounding areas into the Swan River. The overflow from the lake into the river is contaminated because the swales through which the drainage flows along the eastern side of the lake are no longer fit for purpose. It is over 20 years since these nutrient-stripping channels for stormwater run-off were established. In that time, the swales have slowly deepened and lost their filtering sedges. Work is currently underway on my \$700 000 election commitment to redesign, decontaminate and revegetate the swales. When the swales are made shallower and planted with sedges, they will do what they were designed to do—reduce the rate of water flow and filter out the pollutants and nutrients flowing into the lake. This will improve water quality and better support the lake's natural fauna and flora. This project is funded by the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and is being delivered under a project managed by the Town of Cambridge. I must thank the honourable minister, Dave Kelly, for his enormous commitment to this project. I am sorry he has just left the room so I cannot thank him in person, but I am sure he will read about it in *Hansard*.

This project will be watched closely by the Friends of Galup–Lake Monger, a community group formed earlier this year with a committee drawn from over 120 local residents who love the lake. The friends group will play a role in the ongoing maintenance of the swales through weeding, planting and replanting sedges, and generally observing and caring for the environment. This ongoing role of making sure that these swales are managed effectively will be important to their longevity. Most of the work on the swales will be undertaken this coming summer, with planting of vegetation to occur when we get some rain during May and June. One of the first things to be done will be to remove the she-oaks on the east side of Galup. These were planted about 20 years ago and are now causing significant problems in this area, as they spread rapidly by sending out multiple suckers. They also release chemicals into the soil that suppress the growth of other native plants. As the she-oaks are removed and the swales are redesigned to make them shallower, more suitable natives and sedges that will work to strip nutrients from the water flowing into Galup will be planted. These water-quality improvements will be enjoyed for many years to come by native flora and fauna, as well as the visitors to Galup. With the swales functioning as they should, water flowing from Galup into the Derbarl Yerrigan will be cleaner and, therefore, better for the natural environment of the Swan and Canning Rivers.

This bill is not directly about managing the natural environment; it is about streamlining the regulatory regimes around the use of the rivers. That said, regulating activities on and around the rivers will affect the natural environment by circumscribing and controlling those activities. The bill will also make the granting of licences and permits more streamlined, which will make it simpler and easier for commercial river users to develop opportunities that will bring tourists and the local community to enjoy this exquisitely beautiful environment. On Sunday, 27 November, there is going to be an exhibition of electric watercraft down on the river near the Matagarup Bridge. A local company called Electro Nautic has been developing a really cool, as my son would say, watercraft that is similar to a jet ski but with none of the smell and noise. It operates on hydrofoils and comes up out of the river and glides along silently. It gives people all the enjoyment that they would normally have using a jet ski but is much more friendly to the environment. There are going to be many forms of electric watercraft down at the river. It is called Aquakhana and it will be worth people coming along. People should wear their hats and sunscreen, because it is no doubt going to be a hot day. These sorts of activities that bring people to the river and enhance their enjoyment of it, in this case in an environmentally friendly way, are some of the things that this legislation aims to facilitate.

The purpose of the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Amendment Bill is to amend the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006 to implement government policy commitments identified through the Streamline WA initiative. These are intended to change the consultation process; amend the development control area; clarify provisions to address duplicate approval processes for licences and permits; make transitional arrangements for existing combined licences and permits as well as specific licences; insert a new regulation-making head power in relation to requiring insurance as a condition of a permit; and remove the requirement for delegations to be published in the *Government Gazette*. These might sound like boring provisions, but they are aimed at making life much more streamlined and easier for all concerned, both for the agencies—the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, which administers a lot of these arrangements—and those who want to use the river for commercial, tourism and other community purposes.

The amendment bill will introduce regulatory reforms under the government's Streamline WA initiative. Streamline WA is seeking to improve regulation and regulatory practices to make it easier to do business in Western Australia. Importantly, this bill will streamline practices, but it will not change the rigorous assessment by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions of licence agreements and permit applications to ensure environmental protection of the Swan and Canning Rivers under the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act. This is a really important thing to recognise. There will be no compromising on the natural environment or its management; this is all about streamlining the processes around the use of this wonderful resource. The bill will support local tourism and hospitality businesses and associated jobs, while ensuring that the special values of the Swan and Canning Rivers remain protected. Those values are important to many in our community—to the Whadjuk Noongar people and all of us who have fond memories of these rivers and look forward to using them in a way that will preserve them and make them a magical, special place for generations to come. I know my

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grandchildren will enjoy these rivers. As stewards of these rivers, we must do all we can to make that happen effectively, including putting in place measures such as those in this amendment bill.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)**.

House adjourned at 7.04 pm
