

Alliance to Save Hinchinbrook Inc.

WHAT PRICE WORLD HERITAGE?

COMMONWEALTH MINISTER FAILS HINCHINBROOK WILDLIFE

The proposal for construction of two rock breakwater walls at Oyster Point has been approved by the Commonwealth Environment Minister Ian Campbell.

In so doing, the Minister has delegated “signage” to carry out protection of the world heritage wildlife of the Hinchinbrook Passage.

- The only concession to the endangered wildlife of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area (for which the Hinchinbrook Passage is their natural refuge) is a requirement to erect signage explaining to users the values of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and actions *they* can take to minimise their impact on these values.
- The only construction conditions imposed are that the length and height of the walls must be limited to that applied for (100 and 200 metres), and that the water and seabed of the immediate area must be monitored for change.
- The Approval is completely silent on the developer’s proposal to dump the dredge spoil at sea, an action that was opposed by the Great Barrier Marine Park Authority right back in 1993.

Ms Moorhouse said “The Minister’s decision is not merely disappointing, it is insulting to the special world heritage listed species that have long been shown to depend on this precise area for their sheer survival, and to the Australian people.”

“In referring to the wildlife of the area the Minister clearly recognised that the Commonwealth has a duty to them. For the Minister to think that the Australian people would believe that mere signage is a substitute for Commonwealth protection goes beyond lipservice – it just seems unbelievably cynical.”

“The dugong is a World Heritage listed species and on the brink of extinction world-wide. As a result of this Approval, unrestricted and uncontrolled boating will increase in their heartland. We just don’t share the Minister’s irrational belief in the miraculous power of signage to protect them from these impacts.”

“The three year political term and the profit motive together form a lethal combination for our wildlife. Dugongs are harmless and helpless seagrass eaters. They live as long as we do, so it could be 100 years before the babies of today’s youngsters have died out, even though the human activities that threaten their species with extinction right now will diminish their survival capacities.”

“Unfortunately, they can’t vote, nor promise to make millions of dollars for an electorate or a local shire. Instead, they are the silent victims of land subdivision sales made on the basis of turning their habitat into a boating theme park.”

CONTACT:

Authorised Spokesperson for ASH: Margaret Moorhouse (Vice President)

NEW PHONE NO: 07 4779 6990 Mobile 0427 724 052

hinchinbrookalliance@gmail.com