

Forestry (State Forests) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2025

Explanatory notes for SL 2025 No. 83

made under the

Forestry Act 1959

Nature Conservation Act 1992

General Outline

Short title

Forestry (State Forests) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2025

Authorising law

Sections 32 and 97 of the *Forestry Act 1959*

Sections 29 and 175 of the *Nature Conservation Act 1992*

Policy objectives and the reasons for them

The objectives of the *Forestry (State Forests) and Other Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 2) 2025* (Amendment Regulation) are to provide for:

- redescription of four State forests;
- revocation of part of one State forest;
- redescription of two national parks; and
- additions to two national parks.

The core aim of dedicating new or amending existing protected areas is to permanently preserve, to the greatest extent possible, the area's natural condition, to protect the area's cultural resources and values and provide for ecologically sustainable activities and ecotourism. The amendment will redetermine four State forests to improve plan accuracy, revoke part of one State forest for road purposes, make additions to two national parks and redetermine two national parks to improve plan accuracy.

The proposal to revoke part of Powrunna State Forest is to allow for the opening of Powrunna Road along its constructed alignment. A redescription is required due to a replacement survey plan which subdivides the area into two lots, allowing the area of road to be revoked.

This Amendment Regulation also includes minor amendments, such as updating of the plans that define the boundaries of State forests or protected areas using contemporary survey and mapping technology. Reasons for these updates include correcting area calculation errors, more accurate descriptions of the area following tenure actions and updating plan information (including updating area calculations where necessary) to improve clarity, accuracy and transparency for the protected area and forest estate reporting system. Correcting administrative errors and amending descriptions will meet description requirements under the *Land Act 1994*.

Achievement of policy objectives

To achieve its objective, the Amendment Regulation amends:

1. Schedule: State forests of the *Forestry (State Forest) Regulation 1987* to:
 - a. redescribe the entirety of Powrunna State Forest as lots 13 and 14 on SP352347, containing a total area of 2,768 hectares (a decrease of about two hectares due to a replacement survey plan); and subsequently revoke the setting apart and declaration of part of Powrunna State Forest, described as lot 14 on SP352347, containing an area of 31 hectares, about 43 kilometres north-west of St George, to allow for the opening of Powrunna Road along its constructed alignment;
 - b. redescribe the entirety of Curra State Forest as lot 700 on AP23898, containing an area of about 4,750.48 hectares (an increase of about 9.3617 hectares), using contemporary survey and mapping technology and standards, about 160 kilometres north-west of Brisbane;
 - c. redescribe the entirety of Booyal State Forest as lots 1 and 2 on AP23907, containing a total area of about 1,058.152 hectares, (an increase of about 3.4503 hectares), using contemporary survey and mapping technology and standards, about 47 kilometres south-west of Bundaberg;
 - d. redescribe the entirety of Wongi State Forest as lots 1 to 3 on AP23764, containing a total area of about 69,859.07 hectares, (a decrease of about 170.0673 hectares), using contemporary survey and mapping technology and standards, about 59 kilometres south of Bundaberg.
2. Schedule 2: National parks of the *Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Regulation 1994* to:
 - a. redescribe the entirety of Expedition (Limited Depth) National Park as lots 27 to 31 on AP23909, containing a total area of about 109,139.64 hectares, (a decrease of about 780.703 hectares), using contemporary survey and mapping technology and standards to provide a more accurate representation of the area without changing the boundaries on-ground, about 146 kilometres north of Roma;
 - b. dedicate an area described as lot 54 on plan LX927, containing an area of about 2,435.1149 hectares, as part of Grongah National Park, about 63 kilometres south-west of Maryborough. The area contains suitable habitat for the threatened koala and the addition will consolidate the national park boundary and improve management effectiveness;

- c. dedicate an area described as lot 1 on AP23885, containing an area of about 6.89 hectares, as part of South Cumberland Islands National Park, about 56 kilometres east of Mackay. The island is in excellent ecological condition and dedication as national park increases protection of habitat for migratory and other species including the white-bellied sea-eagle;
- d. redescribe the entirety of White Mountains National Park as lots 1 and 2 on AP23905, containing a total area of about 112,592.25 hectares (an increase of about 392.25 hectares), using contemporary survey and mapping technology and standards, about 143 kilometres west of Charters Towers.

Consistency with policy objectives of authorising law

The Amendment Regulation is consistent with the objectives of the *Forestry Act 1959* (Forestry Act) and *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (NC Act), namely:

- the Governor in Council may make regulations under the Forestry Act and NC Act;
- an area of State forest may be revoked in whole or in part by regulation, if the Minister is satisfied that the land is to be opened as a road for public use; and
- the dedication and declaration of areas representative of the biological diversity, natural features and wilderness of the State as protected areas.

Inconsistency with policy objectives of other legislation

The Amendment Regulation is not inconsistent with the policy objectives of other legislation.

Benefits and costs of implementation

Protected areas provide conservation and ecosystem services which have indirect economic value and positive benefits to society. Protected areas also provide special places for recreation and tourism activities and are often places of important cultural and spiritual significance for Traditional Owners.

Each area of land being added to the protected area estate was transferred for conservation and/or boundary management purposes. As encumbrances have now been resolved, transitioning this land to protected area tenure will formalise tenure for the land to ensure that the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Partnerships within the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation (DETSI) can manage it as a protected area in accordance with the NC Act for the benefit of the environment and community.

The updating of plans allows the resolution of boundary and area issues and improves clarity, accuracy and transparency of protected areas.

Implementing the Amendment Regulation is in the public interest and is not considered to constitute significant subordinate legislation and will have negligible costs.

Costs relating to DETSI's administration and ongoing management of associated areas are met through existing annual budget allocations.

Consistency with fundamental legislative principles

The Amendment Regulation has been drafted with regard to, and is consistent with, the fundamental legislative principles as defined in section 4(5) of the *Legislative Standards Act 1992*.

Consultation

Stakeholders that currently have, or are likely to have, an interest in the proposal areas have been consulted such as Energy Queensland and Powerlink Queensland. Feedback from stakeholders consulted about the Amendment Regulation was generally positive.

The Office of Best Practice Regulation was notified on 23 May 2025 that a self-assessment was undertaken in accordance with *The Queensland Government Better Regulation Policy* (the Policy), and it was determined that the regulatory amendment is excluded from further regulatory impact assessment as it is machinery in nature, in accordance with the Policy.

A public notification was published on DETSI's website seeking views in consideration of the *Human Rights Act 2019*, including Aboriginal peoples' and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultural rights. The consultation notice for the proposals in the Amendment Regulation was published on 28 April 2025 and closed on 26 May 2025. During the 28-day consultation period, three queries were received from third parties, but there were no queries or comments that related to human rights, and DETSI progressed the proposals accordingly.

No further external consultation was required on the amendments under the *Forestry (State Forests) Regulation 1987* or the *Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Regulation 1994* as the amendments are machinery in nature.