



National Parks Association
of Queensland Inc.



Conservationists 'dismayed' at LNP push for cableway in World Heritage Area

24 October 2024

A coalition of environment groups has rejected attempts by LNP leader David Crisafulli to breathe life into a tourism development proposal in Springbrook National Park that was rejected by the Beattie Government years ago.

In a Courier Mail story today Mr Crisafulli was quoted as backing a cableway in the Gold Coast hinterland, a proposal that "dismays" local environment group Gecko Environment Council.

Gecko, along with Queensland Conservation Council and National Parks Association of Queensland is calling on the LNP to rule out a cableway through the World Heritage listed Springbrook National Park and commit to meaningful consultation with local communities before announcing plans for developments in and around protected areas.

Gecko Environment Council Campaigner Lois Levy said:

"A cableway to Springbrook would significantly impact threatened species and increase risk of fire and landslip in the National Park.

"It would completely endanger the integrity of this small National Park which is home to exceptional wildlife and habitat.

"If Mr Crisafulli truly wants to avoid 'wanton destruction' as he claims, then he needs to make it clear the LNP does not support a cableway route to Springbrook.

"Springbrook National Park is recognised as a global biodiversity hotspot with World Heritage protection."

Queensland Conservation Council Protected Areas Campaigner Nicky Moffat said:

"David Crisafulli should rule out any support for a cable car that would impact on Springbrook National park.

"We absolutely oppose any cableway that would damage or threaten the World Heritage values of Springbrook National Park.

"Queenslanders love National parks, particularly Springbrook, and we will fight to protect it."

National Parks Association of Queensland CEO Chris Thomas said:

"We're disappointed that greater attention to community views has not been sought before the LNP made this announcement.

"Tourism benefits greatly from our wonderful natural assets in Queensland, and brings visitors and prosperity to regions. But tourism in protected areas will be hindered by an approach that takes shortcuts around necessary community consultation.

"We urge the LNP to have a more considered approach and to value the opinions and expertise of local residents, tour operators, conservationists, and the scientific community who all treasure this renowned world heritage area."

Background:

Despite its natural values, a cableway was first proposed by a private consortium in 1998, and was rejected because of the risks that it posed, including:

- It would destroy habitat and impact on wildlife, with clearing for towers, access roads, and helicopter pads.
- It posed a risk of landslips on the geologically unstable soils
- It would increase fire risks, a risk that has grown in severity after the 2020 bushfires that burnt down rainforest and Binna Burra Lodge.
- It would require more sewerage and water truck movements up and down Springbrook Road, and more.

The previous rigorous environmental assessment found that the risks and damage would be too high and the location inappropriate for environmental, cultural, and social reasons.

Gecko's Lois Levy was involved in the original campaign to protect Springbrook National Park from this proposal, and says the community remains strongly opposed.

"Gecko supports positive eco-tourism in the hinterland, such as a world class visitor centre, providing information about the unique natural values of Springbrook and Lamington National Parks.

"A cableway through Springbrook National Park poses unacceptable risks and damage to the environment."

Gecko Environment Council has long advocated for improved management of Springbrook National Park, including additional rangers and park and ride.

Available for interview - live in studio or phone / pre-record:

Gecko Environment Council Campaigner Lois Levy: 0412 724 222

Media contact:

Gecko: Sara Hicks, 0428 139 603

Queensland Conservation Council: Ellie McLachlan, 0407 753 830

ENDS