



Thank you
Questions?



Queensland **the Smart State**



Queensland Government
Natural Resources and Mines



Wild Rivers in Queensland

Wild River Coordinators January 2006

Queensland **the Smart State**



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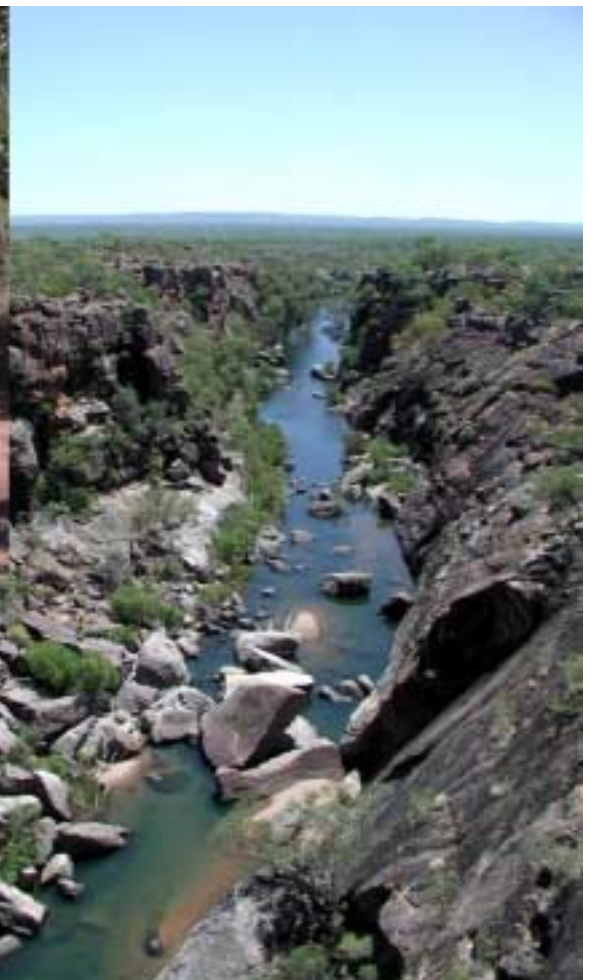


What defines a Wild River?

"A Wild River is a river system that has all, or almost all, of its natural values intact"

This is based on, for example,

- Water flow regime/pattern
- Sediment regime
- Healthy riparian vegetation and
- Connected wildlife corridors.





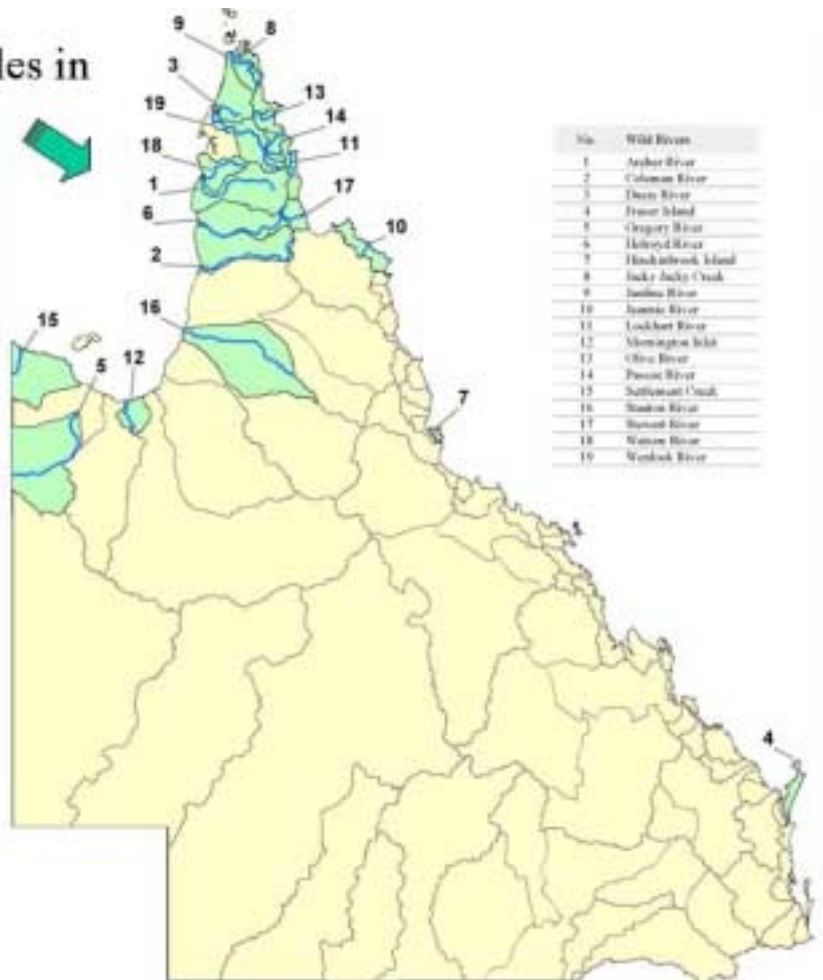
Queensland

Rivers provided as examples in the election commitment.

First six proposed rivers were announced Dec 2005 (group 1).

- Staaten
- Morning Inlet
- Gregory
- Settlement
- Hinchinbrook Island
- Fraser Island

Announcement of group 2 proposals expected mid 2006.



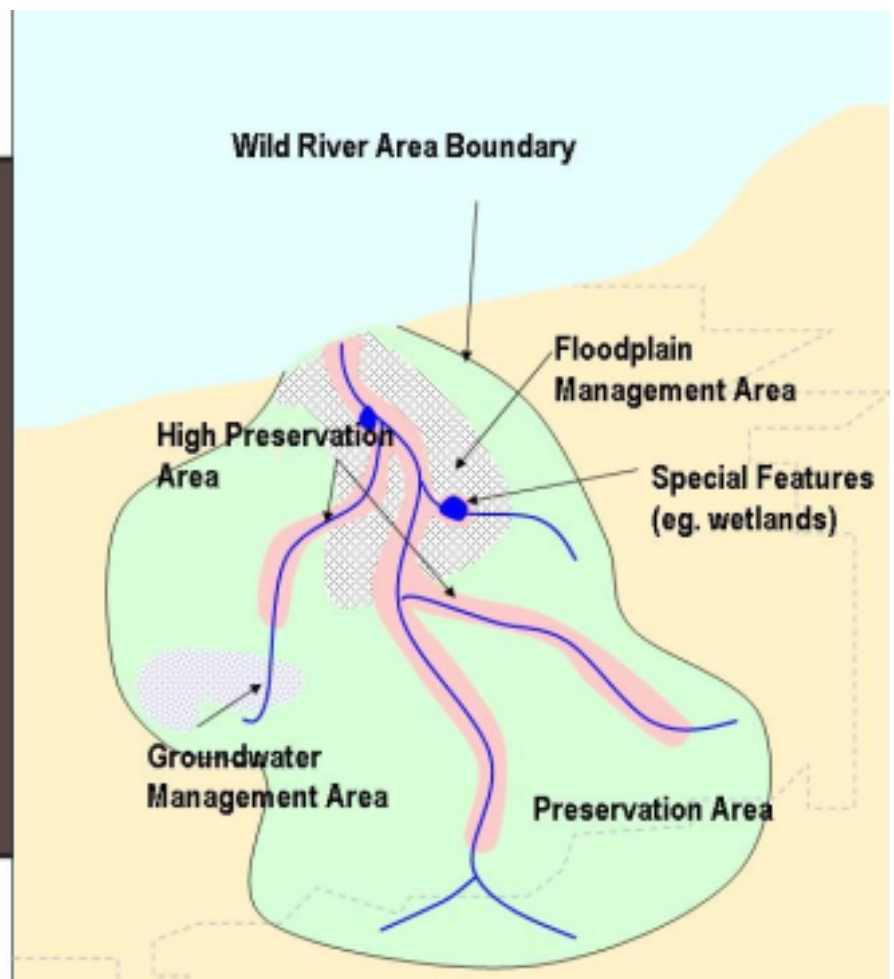


Wild River Areas

A wild river area may be divided into several management areas –

- High preservation area
- Preservation area
- Flood plain management area
- Subartesian management area
(currently for Gregory and Fraser proposals)

Example of Wild River Area





Activities/ Developments Not Affected

- Any existing use rights including
 - Agreements and Permits
 - Lease conditions
 - Undertakings
- Recreational fishing or camping
- Activities under Indigenous traditional law and custom, such as fishing and hunting
- Native title claim processes



Activities/ Developments Not Affected (cont)

- Grazing of stock
- Fencing (*except for mesh fencing in floodplain areas; this is now assessable*)
- Taking of water for stock and domestic purposes
- Any other activity not presently requiring a resource allocation or development approval

Except

- General agriculture & animal husbandry developments
- Developments on a floodplain or a wetland



What Cannot Occur in a Wild River Area?

- This depends on the management area
- The highest level of protection is in the high preservation area



New Developments Prohibited in a HPA

- dams and weirs
- levees, stream realignment, de-snagging
- mining and exploration (except limited hand sampling)
- agriculture (except grazing)
- animal husbandry and aquaculture
- environmentally relevant activities
- native veg clearing (except for specified exemptions)



Specified Works

- Generally include transport infrastructure/some works for disaster management or safety
- Activities normally prohibited in a Wild River area, but related to 'specified works', may be considered
- Specified works include infrastructure and works for:
 - roads and railways
 - transmission of electricity
 - pipelines

(refer to Wild Rivers Act for detail)



New Developments Prohibited in a PA

- In-stream mining and quarrying
- Stream realignment and de-snagging
- Dams (unless for stock and domestic)



Developments Affected – other

- Assessment of all other new development against relevant Codes
- Limits on water allocation and take
- Poned pasture structures and levees will be prohibited in floodplain management areas



Development Assessment

- Development applications are assessed against a set of Codes for impact on the following natural values:
 - hydrological processes (free flowing rivers/waterways)
 - geomorphic processes (stream physical integrity)
 - water quality
 - riparian function (e.g. shade, stability)
 - wildlife corridor function (e.g. continuity)



2004 Policy

- Aim to preserve State's remaining wild rivers for current and future generations
- Wild River has all, or almost all, of its natural values intact
- Protect against further loss of values
- Consider all activities affecting river health - in the river and its catchment
- Cheaper to protect than rehabilitate



Policy Intent

Not to:

- turn back the clock on development
- create catchment scale national parks
- lock out future economic and social growth

Set to:

- Preserve the existing natural values
- Raise the 'bar' above ESD
- Take a precautionary approach
- Encourage 'clean and green' industry & tourism



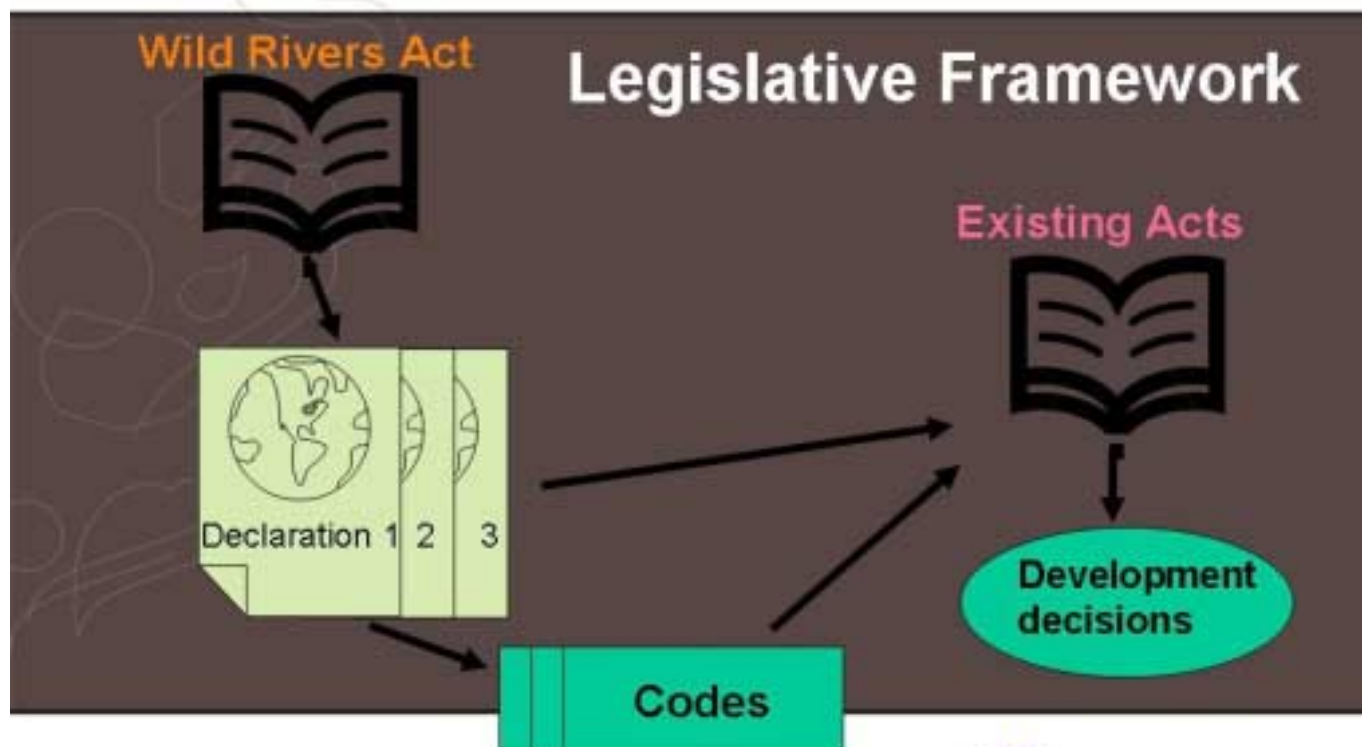
Legislative Framework

- Act provides planning process to declare a wild river
- A declaration is a statutory instrument (binding)
- A declaration has development assessment codes
- A declaration has water caps and release strategies



Legislative Framework

- Other Acts have been amended to –
 - prohibit new development in sensitive areas
 - recognise declaration and it's codes in assessments
 - make general agriculture activities assessable
- Assessment and compliance remains with other Acts



Declaration Process

- Minister assesses natural values in a river
- Minister publicly nominates river for declaration
- Moratorium imposed on water, clearing and mining
- Declaration proposal circulated for comment
- Public consultation
- Submissions received
- Minister decides whether to proceed or not
- If proceeding, declaration approved by Governor in Council
- Declaration gazetted and tabled in Parliament



Effect of moratorium

- Water – No new or increased entitlements to be issued during moratorium period
- Vegetation – No clearing in high preservation zone (with some exceptions)
- Mining – Watercourses and lakes and high preservation zone excluded from mining tenement (except for exploration permits)



Consultation timelines

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| • Hinchinbrook | 10 February 2006 |
| • Fraser | 17 February 2006 |
| • Gulf Rivers | 24 April 2006 |
| • Wild River Code | 24 April 2006 |



Wild Rivers Coordinators

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