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LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

RECREATIONAL FISHING

SAFEGUARDING THE TERRITORY WAY OF LIFE

Key Points:

- » We will close Chambers and Finke Bays to commercial barramundi fishing
- » We will commit to the buyback of commercial fishing licences in areas deemed important and beneficial to recreational fishing
- » We will make safety on our waterways a priority and implement a new safety education program within the first 6 months of Government
- » We will trial the use of security cameras at boat ramps
- » We will boost the Fisheries Police Unit and ensure they are equipped to target those who break the law
- » We will build a self-launch boat ramp at Dundee Beach and investigate a secondary boat ramp at Shady Camp and locations for new suburban boat ramps in Darwin
- » We are against permits and payments for fishing

A Country Liberals Government will invest in safety and security on our waterways and boat ramps to protect Territorians and make their favourite pastime even better.

11 years of Labor has meant 11 years of broken promises, secret deals and political spin for Territory anglers instead of real action.

The Country Liberals are committed to making sure Territorians can fully enjoy our world class waterways.

We understand fishing is vital to the 'Great Territory Lifestyle' with around 50,000 recreational fishers in the Territory, which represents about 25% of our population.

The Territory also has the highest recreational boat ownership in Australia per capita.

As well as improving our quality of life, recreational fishing also contributes substantially to the Northern Territory economy to the tune of around \$90 million a year.



Unlike Paul Henderson and Labor, a Country Liberals Government will be open and transparent in any recreational fishing negotiations. We will listen to Territory anglers and ensure their views are heard and acted upon without delay.

Recreational Fishing Zones

The Country Liberals recognise the importance of recreational fishing to the economy of the Northern Territory and the special place that it holds in the Territory lifestyle. Appropriate management of these fisheries is critical to the ongoing future of the resource for both commercial and recreational fisherman.

We will introduce exclusive access to Chambers and Finke bays for recreational fishing and will close these areas to commercial barramundi fishing. This move will include appropriate compensation to commercial barramundi fishermen along with a firm commitment to the removal of effort for these fishermen through the buy-back of licenses. The Country Liberals will work with the industry to determine a fair price for license buyback based on a unit measure and will invite submission from interested license holders.

Law Enforcement

While Labor has severely neglected fisheries police, the Country Liberals Government will take them seriously. We will ensure the fisheries unit within NT Police will be properly resourced to apprehend those breaking the law.

Under Labor, the fisheries police unit has decreased from 21 officers to 14 officers. The Country Liberals will review this arrangement and conduct a comprehensive review of fisheries police equipment including boats, to ensure the unit can do their job effectively.

Fishing and Boat Safety

Safety on the Territory's waterways will be a top priority of a Country Liberals Government. Overcrowding of dinghies, reckless behaviour and inappropriate consumption of alcohol are all issues in the Territory and can lead to harm and even loss of life.

The Country Liberals will work with AFANT and the Seafood Industry Council to develop a comprehensive safety awareness and education programme delivered to the community, schools and remote and rural communities within the first 6 months of forming government.

Security

A Country Liberals Government will commit to the trial of installation and monitoring of security cameras at boat ramps where there is known high occurrence of crime. This will not only ensure those who break the law are punished and act as a deterrent to would be criminals, it will also allow anglers to relax while they are enjoying the Territory's great lifestyle, with the knowledge and peace of mind that their vehicles and valuables will be safe.



Boat Ramps

A Country Liberals Government will develop a self launch boat ramp at Dundee Beach and undertake a major review of boat ramps at; Adelaide River, Gunn Point, Shady Camp, Daly River, Dinah Beach, Buffalo Creek and Palmerston. The review will also include caretaker facilities, security, toilet and shower facilities, access roads and lighting. The review will in particular look at the possibility of developing a secondary ramp at Shady Camp as well as tidal issues, possible dredging and expansion at other ramps.

The Country Liberals will also commit to identifying new suburban based boat ramps in areas readily accessible to anglers at suburban foreshores such as the existing Ski Club boat ramp area.

A review of all roads to popular Territory fishing spots will also be conducted with particular emphasis on the possibility of upgrading Gunn Point Road.

Daly River

Considered to be the “Mecca” for recreational fishing, the Country Liberals will ensure the Daly River is managed for the benefit of all Territorians into the future.

The Country Liberals will ensure the Daly River becomes a tourism hub and strong contributor to the Territory economy while conducting long term and comprehensive

research and monitoring of the area, to ensure it remains ecologically sustainable.

Buy Back of Licenses

A Country Liberals Government will reduce the commercial fishing activity in areas deemed most important to recreational fishing activities.

However, before any buy back schemes are implemented the impacts on existing commercial operators will be fully investigated as well as the impact on employment, value of licences, businesses servicing the commercial seafood industry and recreational anglers.

Blue Mud Bay

The Country Liberals are against permits and payments for fishing; and unlike Labor we will inform Territorians of any negotiations or agreements with traditional owners. Labor has had four years to sort out the High Court’s Blue Mud Bay decision and they still haven’t reached a resolution. And they’ve hidden important information from Territorians along the way.

Marine Parks

A Country Liberals Government will adopt a ‘common sense’ approach to marine parks and will not establish any marine parks where they are not needed. Any proposals for a marine protected area must be based on demonstrated need and provide clear benefits.



Unlike Paul Henderson and Labor we will not make any decisions on marine parks without consulting the community first. We will not meddle with the environment – at a huge cost to Territory taxpayers – where interference is not necessary.

Awards and Recognition

A Country Liberals Government will establish a Territory Recreational Fisheries Award programme to honour individuals and organisations for their contribution to the conservation, restoration and enhancement of the Territory's recreational fisheries and their habitat.

Open Communication

A Country Liberals Government will create separate departments of Primary Industry and Fisheries and Minerals and Energy in order to facilitate better investment and development in the industry.

We will also re-open a direct line of communication with the relevant Minister by re-establishing Ministerial Advisory Councils and a new office of recreational fishing within the department.

While Labor has guarded their Ministers with so-called 'gatekeepers' a Country Liberals Minister will always be available to industry and community groups.