

Shadow Minister for Parks and Rangers

BILL YAN MLA

MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate circulation

SOMETHING FISHY ABOUT SHADY REPORT

The future of the Shady Camp boat ramp as a mecca for recreational fishos remains uncertain after an Aboriginal Land Commissioner report recommended the area for a land claim without proper regard to the extensive public use of the area.

Shadow Minister for Parks and Rangers Bill Yan said recent briefings as part of updates to the Fisheries Act had uncovered that both the NT and Federal Labor governments were preparing to sign off on the deal.

This is despite extremely concerning comments made in the report which stated ***“evidence of public use of Shady Camp Barrage is limited, save for sporadic instances of recreational fishing”***.

“References to Shady Camp being used only sporadically do not match my experience or that of rec fishos,” Mr Yan said.

“It is likely the most used boat ramp outside of Darwin.

“The Amateur Fishermen’s Association of the Northern Territory (AFANT) conducted an online survey with 1886 responses and submitted this to the enquiry however the Commissioner deemed it would have been ‘unfair on the claimants for it to have been received’.”

The report said the survey was rejected because it came from a selective audience, namely “people who are already committed recreational fishers, rather than the wider community as a whole”.

Mr Yan said he was concerned that the report was making recommendations to the Federal Minister while the Fyles Labor Government was staying silent on how it would affect the community.

“The danger here is that the Fyles Labor government, which has a reputation for ignoring the concerns of real Territorians, is likely to blindly support those recommendations,” he said.

“This includes developing ‘access controls’, which could include fees to use the boat ramp and rec fishers will have no clarity on what that looks like.

“This is in the context of the Labor Government shutting out access for generations of Territorians in other key fishing location like the Finniss and its silence on Shady Camp screams that it’s headed the same way.

“This would be further erosion of our lifestyle and the Fyles Labor government should bear at least some responsibility for not standing up for rec fishing in the Territory.

“They clearly showed their intent earlier this year when they removed the stand-alone Minister for Rec Fishing.”

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My Yan said the high level of uncertainty on access to Shady Camp and other areas around Darwin and would be raised by the Opposition at the AFANT's annual general meeting tonight (Thursday night).

"These areas are used by not only locals but tourists and tourism operators," he said.

"I would encourage all members to get down and make their voice heard.

"Selena Uiho and Paul Kirby are going to speak at the AGM and we hope they are made to answer to recreational fishers and how this decision affects them.

"The CLP Opposition stands firmly by recreational fishos."

ENDS