

NICK DAMETTO
Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

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Cardwell dredging – show me the money

THE Federal Coalition Government has been called out over dragging the chain on a \$1.5 million commitment to dredging Cardwell's One Mile Creek.

Cassowary Coast Regional Council may be subjected to a lengthy grant application process to access funding to dredge the waterway.

Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto said local residents had every right to be furious after the Coalition formally announced \$1.5 million to dredge One Mile Creek in October – without mentioning council, the proponent of the project, may have to undergo a formal application process to access the funding.

"The people of Cardwell believed the money was already in the bank and are asking the big question, "when will the dredging start"? Unfortunately, for everyone involved, it may take over six months for council to be successful in unlocking the required grant funding if the Federal Government fails to fast-track this project," Mr Dametto said.

"After years of lobbying by locals to get this project started and my own efforts to ensure the government followed through on their election promise for funding, we have the potential to be bogged down in departmental procedure.

"We had a team of LNP representatives waving around a fake cheque in October which has misled people into believing that they had delivered the money. I'm giving the government one last chance stop playing political football with Port Hinchinbrook. I'm calling for this funding to be fast tracked now."

Mr Dametto said he was not aware of the Coalition at any stage mentioning to the public that council would have to undergo an additional approval process before the dredging funds would be released.

"If this is the case, I would hope that measures will be taken to give this project the special consideration it deserves," he said.

"The council should be handed the full \$1.5 million immediately so that works can start to secure the right permits required to commence dredging as soon as possible."

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In a Facebook video posted by LNP Senator Susan McDonald featuring Burdekin MP Dale Last during the funding announcement earlier this year, Mr Last claimed Senator McDonald “presented a cheque to Cassowary Coast Regional Council for \$1.5 million to dredge One Mile Creek”.

Senator McDonald went on to say the Federal Government “believe in the regions of Australia” and she was “proud of the \$1.5 million this government has delivered”.

Mr Dametto called on Mr Last and Senator McDonald to “explain themselves” as to when exactly the council will see this funding.

“Mr Last and Senator McDonald were more than happy to make that big announcement in Cardwell. Now it’s time for them to explain to the good people of Hinchinbrook why there’s no dredge coming for Christmas,” he said.

“At this rate, it’s unlikely we will see all tidal access restored to One Mile Creek before the next state election.”

—ENDS—

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Video/photo captions:

One Mile Creek and Port Hinchinbrook at low tide in Cardwell.

Media Enquiries

Michael Serenc – 0423 108 848