

Fuelling the jet ski debate

BALANCE: CALLS FOR TALKS IN PUMICESTONE PASSAGE SAGA

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DIVISION one candidate Rhys Reynolds has thrown his support behind jet ski usage in the Pumicestone Passage and called for all parties in the debate to come together to discuss a suitable outcome.

Mr Reynolds confirmed he is an avid jet ski user and recently helped rescue a boatie in the passage while travelling on a jet ski with friends.

He said if a blanket ban was applied to jet ski users in the passage it would drive away tourism and have a negative impact on local businesses.

"A lot of people come from across Queensland to jet ski in the Pumicestone Passage," he said.

"It's a fantastic part of the Coast and good for business.

"I did my jet ski and boating licence through the Caloundra Boating college and I know they use the passage when people get their personal watercraft licence. If we ban jet skis what would happen to their revenue each year?"

Mr Reynolds said more policing of jet ski users could help deter "cowboys".



POWERFUL ARGUMENT: Council candidate and jet ski user Rhys Reynolds is opposed to a blanket ban. Picture: ANDREW SEYMOUR



Jet skis are causing concern



How we've reported the jet ski issue

"I believe those people who do wrong should be further punished with hefty fines and loss of licence."

He said he was keen for a public talk to occur.

"I think it's time people took a step back and say 'What's the balance between

environment and tourism and leisure for people', there needs to be a talk on where the happy medium is.

"At the moment there's no medium.

"Can we have designated green zones in the passage where you're not allowed to

jet ski?"

In 2006 the former Caloundra City Council lobbied for a total jet ski ban in the passage and Sunshine Coast Water Police patrol the passage weekly.

Pumicestone Passage Environment Committee member Terry Edwards has constantly called for a ban of jet skis, saying a majority of residents do not want them for a variety of issues including safety, and that they are a threat to migratory shore birds.

Council has undertaken a

marine zone management plan study for the area.

Division two councillor Tim Dwyer, who does not support prohibition of jet skis, said council was close to completing the report which takes in the Pumicestone Passage, Mooloolah and Maroochy Rivers.

"It won't be a one-size fits all approach," he said.

"It must reflect the specific characteristics of each individual waterway."

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