



**Rob Stokes MP**  
**Minister for the Environment**  
**Minister for Heritage**  
**Minister for the Central Coast**  
Assistant Minister for Planning

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NEW NATIONAL PARK TO BOOST WETLAND CONSERVATION**

Over 5000 hectares of internationally significant wetlands will be protected following the creation of the Everlasting Swamp National Park and of the expansion to the Gwydir Wetlands State Conservation Area and Doodle Comer Swamp Nature Reserve.

Environment Minister Rob Stokes said creating the Everlasting Swamp National Park near Maclean in northern NSW would protect one of our largest remaining coastal floodplain wetlands, combining an additional 1700 hectares of land to the existing Everlasting Swamp State Conservation Area.

“The Everlasting Swamp and the adjacent Imersons Swamp form one of the largest coastal floodplain wetlands remaining in NSW and an intact ecosystems of this size is extremely rare and globally significant,” Mr Stokes said.

“The creation of a new national park will protect vulnerable wildlife and habitats, preserve water quality and natural connectivity in the landscape. It will enhance the protection of vulnerable floodplain wetlands, and protect wetland and estuarine biodiversity.

“The Swamp provides internationally significant water bird habitat and provides feeding and breeding grounds for a number of birds listed under international migratory bird agreements. It is also an iconic bird watching area.

“With the support of the local community, NPWS plans to restore the wetland to a more natural hydrological cycle and functioning wetland which will alleviate the acid flush risk and support a more sustainable fishing industry for the Clarence River.

Mr Stokes said over 3000 hectares have been acquired for addition to the Gwydir Wetlands State Conservation Area, located on the Gingham (Upper Gwydir) Watercourse, about 60 kilometres west of Moree.

“The Gwydir wetlands are an inland terminal delta that plays an important role in the biological functioning of the Murray-Darling Basin and provides important habitat when other major wetlands are dry,” Mr Stokes said.

“These additions comprise the largest remaining naturally vegetated wetland parcels on the Gingham Watercourse and importantly provide a landscape linkage between the Gingham Watercourse to the Lower Gwydir River.

At Henty, in southern NSW, 200 hectares are proposed as additions to the Doodle Comer Swamp Nature Reserve.

Mr Stokes said this nationally important wetland is the largest of a number of swamps and depressions scattered across the 'Billabong Creek Valley Plains'.

"As an ephemeral wetland comprising a shallow basin, it receives seasonal inflow from winter rains in most years," Mr Stokes said.

"This will enhance the diversity of wetlands protected in the reserve system, increase the protection of vulnerable floodplain wetlands, and safeguard wetland and estuarine biodiversity."