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A WIN FOR THE BOYNE RIVER

But what next for Round Hill Creek? No more getting suck on the Boyne 'bars



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BOATS being regularly walked across sandbars at the mouth of the Boyne River is destined to be an inconvenience of the past.

A dredging operation, the first of its size at the Boyne River, is under way to restore the channel after a gradual build up of sand followed cyclone and wet weather events in 2011 and 2013.

Dredging is scheduled to be finished by May, in time for thousands of boaties due to arrive for the annual

Boyne Tannum HookUp.

Member for Gladstone, Glenn Butcher said the long-awaited \$1 million project would make the river mouth a safer place for recreational and commercial fishermen.

"Every weekend there's someone who manages to get stuck on the sandbar, I've done it myself," he said.

"We've had people rescued at that sandbar because they've been stuck and there's been some medical emergencies there too."

While there is no long

term plan for future dredging work at the Boyne River, Mr Butcher said any further silting would be monitored closely.

Gladstone Ports Corporation chief executive Peter O'Sullivan hoped the increased depth would last a number of years.

The work, requiring the removal of about 12,000m³ of sediment, will allow half a metre of depth at the 15m wide channel during the lowest astronomical tide.

Gladstone contractor East Coast Maritime will complete the operation

using a "low impact" backhoe and barge method.

"We've chosen to take it nice and steady to minimise the impact on the environment," Mr O'Sullivan said.

"We will dredge for a number of hours (4 - 6) and then take the soil to the RG Tanna disposal area."

He said completing the operation before the Boyne Tannum HookUp was a challenge during the planning stages.

"We've pushed hard to

get the tender completed and worked closely with

the contractor to ensure they can do this with minimal environmental impact ... before the Boyne Tannum HookUp," Mr O'Sullivan said.

"So when the boaties are coming in to weigh that huge fish to win the big prize, they won't be stuck outside."

The dredge will be well lit to ensure it is easily seen by recreational fishermen and boaties. East Coast Maritime operations manager Lindsay Troy said five people were involved in the dredging.



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LONG AWAITED: GPC CEO Peter O'Sullivan and Member for Gladstone Glenn Butcher announce the start of dredging at the Boyne River.

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