



NATURE INSIGHTS: The Marcus High Dunes walk with Sonia McDonald. PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

# Major eco fight has real value

## Wallum walks reveal green space benefits

LAKE Weyba and the Marcus High Dunes are stunning examples of the need for vigilance, according to local environmental campaigner Anita Brake.

The Friends of Lake Weyba president has been part of the Sunshine Coast Wildlife Festival guided walks in Noosa, run with the Noosa Integrated Catchment Association.

Ms Brake recounted the epic battle waged by the Noosa and Sunshine Coast councils and the community against the Noosa on Weyba development proposal that "would have impacted both the environment of Lake Weyba and the Noosa community".

She said the area would have had to carry more than 3000 extra residents not factored into the town plan.

Noosa councillor Brian Stockwell also spoke during a Friends of Lake Weyba and Noosa Integrated Catchment Association outing.

Cr Stockwell said "all eyes should now be firmly fixed

on the State Government review of the SEQ Regional Plan".

"Keeping current urban footprint exclusions like the one around Lake Weyba is essential to safeguarding councils against out-of-sequence development and striking the right balance between protecting the environment and well-informed planning," he said.

"Development applications trigger planning and environmental regulations that are handled by different levels of government.

"This ensures that a proposal is examined to assess its potential impact both locally and where relevant, on ecosystem values of state and national significance."

The walks were the latest outing for Noosa Integrated Catchment Association's 20th anniversary, with a hot topic being a look back on the development battles fought and won, as well as

looking to the future.

At the site of the defeated Noosa on Weyba proposal, Ms Brake said: "Proposing large-scale housing developments in environmentally sensitive areas such as Lake Weyba is not what modern communities will accept."

Walk guide Janet Whish Wilson said the Marcus High Dunes were "the last substantial remnant wallum along the coast".

"These areas, hard-fought for by the community should be available to the public for their enjoyment and appreciation," she said.

Significant sections of the delicate local wallum ecosystem heathland have been burnt or slashed as part of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife management program.

On November 4 the Noosa Parks Association's Friday Forum will host QPW's Omar Bakhach, who will speak on fire safety management in national parks.