

**MEDIA RELEASE**

20 November 2024

**Commercial operators invited to consider Lake Awoonga for their next business opportunity**

Commercial operators, business owners and entrepreneurs are invited to express their interest in possible business opportunities at Lake Awoonga.

Gladstone Area Water Board (GAWB), owner and operator of Awoonga Dam, provides high-quality and free to use recreational areas for our local community and visitors.

GAWB is seeking expressions of interest from businesses and entrepreneurs to help enhance the visitor experience at Lake Awoonga by bringing fresh and innovative services to the area.

GAWB encourages potential operators to think outside the box. Ideas such as a bait and tackle shop, a museum, art gallery, or other unique attractions are welcome, as are potential food and beverage services.

GAWB is eager to hear from those who can offer something distinctive that would elevate Lake Awoonga as a key destination for locals and tourists.

This could look like a permanent setup, a rotating roster, or part-time operations during school holidays or weekends.

**The Expression of Interest process opens on Wednesday 20 November and submissions must be received by 5pm Wednesday 4 December.**

GAWB anticipates being able to award contracts to commercial operators in the new year.

Gladstone Area Water Board CEO Darren Barlow said a strategic approach to developing the recreational areas at Lake Awoonga has delivered significant benefits for the community.

“In 2019, we asked the community what improvements they would like us to make, and from this we developed a five-year plan which concludes at the end of 2025,” said Mr Barlow.

“To date we have delivered new and upgraded picnic shelters and BBQ areas, more carparks and boat trailer spaces, an additional boat ramp, a walking trail, a boat loading pontoon and two new swimming pontoons.

“If you visit Lake Awoonga on any given weekend and during the school holidays, you’ll see the place packed with visitors having a swim, paddling out in Riverston Bay, and having a BBQ picnic in one of our freshly painted gazebos.

“It’s a great day out, and with additional activities like the Lake Awoonga Scavenger Hunt running from June to October each year, and the Aquaculture Gladstone Interpretive Display open Monday to Saturday, there are plenty of reasons to visit Lake Awoonga every day of the week.

“We are now looking to the next opportunity – inviting commercial operators to consider how their business could complement the offering at Lake Awoonga,” said Mr Barlow.

Whether it’s enhancing recreational experiences or offering creative services, GAWB invites submissions which will enrich the overall appeal of Lake Awoonga and support its continued growth as a premier visitor destination in Central Queensland.

Lake Awoonga is conveniently located just a 30-minute drive from Gladstone and within easy reach of other major regional centres like Rockhampton and Bundaberg.

Each year, Lake Awoonga attracts approximately 108,000 visitors. The lake is a key attraction in the Gladstone region, renowned for its natural beauty, recreational activities, and peaceful environment. Visitors can enjoy a wide array of outdoor pursuits, including fishing, boating, hiking, and wildlife watching, all year round.

It is also a premier destination for Barramundi fishing and throughout the year there are a number of fishing competitions held at Lake Awoonga.

Information about Lake Awoonga can be found on our website [www.gawb.qld.gov.au](http://www.gawb.qld.gov.au)

Interested commercial operators are invited to contact GAWB on 07 4976 3070 or via [gawb@gawb.qld.gov.au](mailto:gawb@gawb.qld.gov.au) for more details.

Gladstone Area Water Board, as a Queensland Government Bulk Water Supply Authority, delivers safe and reliable water services which promote economic development and enhances the lifestyle of regional Queensland. Gladstone Area Water Board owns and operates Awoonga Dam on the Boyne River, along with a network of delivery pipelines, water treatment plants and other bulk water distribution infrastructure.

## **ENDS**

For media enquiries, please contact Peta Leveritt-Baker on 0474 137 295 or email [media@gawb.qld.gov.au](mailto:media@gawb.qld.gov.au).

**Note to editors** – a selection of images of Lake Awoonga is available, as is some drone footage over Lake Awoonga.