

**Submission
No 77**

**INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LAND IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Mr Max Smith

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Dear Committee,

As a retired person after a lifetime of business I have for the past 10 years had the opportunity to enjoy the forests and Parks surrounding the ACT by walking and bike riding many kilometres on tracks and off-track. What this has convinced me is the necessity of maintaining and even extending these resources for low impact use. Doing so will be to the present and future benefit of the environment, Australians as a whole and with an additional economic advantage through eco-tourism.

The environmental benefit comes by preservation of the biodiversity promoted in large areas of relatively undisturbed country, distinct from farmed land, and the social benefit comes from the opportunity of making available to urban dwellers the experience of wilderness.

To maintain these forests and parks requires investment by governments to minimise damage within the parks and on adjoining areas from feral animals and wildfire. This is best done by increased funding of the professional park services.

It is an unfortunate fact that wherever high impact use of parks is allowed by vehicle or horse entry, there is an increase in litter, damage to facilities and disturbance of ground cover.

I am only aware of 1 of the specific areas referred to in the Terms of Reference, being the River Red Gum State Forests in the Southern Riverina, based on 20 years of living in Wagga Wagga. There is no better example of the need to preserve forests through low impact access and appropriate funding for maintaining these magnificent areas for environmental purposes.

I trust my brief submission will assist the Committee in its deliberations

Regards

Max Smith