

**Submission
No 296**

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

Name: Ms Anita Menhofer

Date received: 26/08/2012

I am a private landholder bordering a National Park and also an eco tourism operator. I am very concerned about recent developments regarding the management of National Parks, in particular allowing sports shooters and hunters into National Parks for "pest management" which has never worked in the past and elsewhere.

With regard to this inquiry I wish to make the following points:

1. I am concerned that the committee, chaired by a member of the Shooters Party, is biased.
2. I am concerned that the terms of reference are biased towards the economic value of our reserves and disregard the expertise of National Parks & Wildlife Service.
3. Our conservation areas are important not only for biodiversity protection, but also for other critical ecosystem services such as fresh water catchment protection, and carbon sequestration, way beyond a short-term economical benefit.
4. The main aim of conservation areas is to protect their natural values. The NSW government is a signatory to the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment whereby the Australian Government and all State Governments agreed to the establishment of a comprehensive, adequate and representative system of protected areas, and while the NSW government has made significant progress to date in this regard, many biogeographic subregions remain under represented.
5. Local communities benefit economically and socially from national parks. NSW in particular has most government services employment and business development support focussed on Sydney with high unemployment in most of regional NSW. Like in our area, National Parks & Wildlife Service is often a major employer in regional Australia and the only significant industry is tourism, particularly eco tourism.
6. While National Parks and Wildlife Service manages the reserves with highly skilled staff, the effective management of national parks for conservation is hampered by budget pressure and demands to manage and provide infrastructure for an increasing number of recreational activities such as hunting and horse riding. NPWS had and still has to accommodate more and more budget cuts. If anything is needed to better manage our reserves, it is increased funding of National Parks & Wildlife Service rather than the cuts the current and previous government have implemented.