

**Submission
No 442**

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

Name: Mr Bruce Thompson

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COVER NOTE.

Hoping someone can see some sense in allowing some of our park land to return to productive well maintained and well managed forests which pay for themselves, create local employment and are an economic asset instead of a drain on the public purse because of city and academic driven ideas without local knowledge or input.

If anyone would like to come to our area and have a look I would be happy to try to arrange a meeting (privately) with 3 or 4 select personal that know far more about the workings of the forest than I do.

Yours sincerely,

PS I just hope someone has the time to read this as it is one of many drafts trying to defend an important part of our area and what was and still can be an asset to Australia.

RECEIVED

03 AUG 2012

GPSC's

BRUCE THOMPSON

The present Red gum Forests, Now National Parks became National Parks on a desperate political CON in an attempt to secure 'greens preferences' and city votes in a last ditch effort by Nathan Rees to cling to his role as N.S.W. Premier without even waiting for his own report to be completed. The attempt failed as he was "dumped" as Premier within hours of the declaration of National Parks and the declaration is also failing the Red gum Forests plus the local communities.

When white man came to this area there were no Red gum Forests. The whole area was in fact open grassland with scattered trees which was easily transversed by horse and cart. As described by some local aborigines the River Red gums are "white fella's weeds". 'Fire stick' management had for many years been the way to maintain these grasslands and as "we" all know red gums are very susceptible to fire especially if they contain a hollow limb which acts as a chimney!

The 'top island' fire of October 2006 demonstrated this so well. Beginning in an overgrown/locked up area it burnt over days an area of 700-800 hectares where no timber harvesting, logging, grazing or firewood collection had been allowed for 20 years - sounds like a National Park set of rules doesn't it. The fire was hard to control because of lack of access and the impenetrable denseness of growth in the area.

The result was a lot of good timber and fire wood went up "in smoke". Many good (solid timber) trees killed, many maimed or scarred and in the area I have seen not one habitat tree was left standing. Not only were the habitat trees burnt to the ground but along with the trees went most of the inhabitants. In mid to late October this would have almost certainly

included many young unable to fly Superb Parrots - the very parrot that Peter Garrett says he wants to protect by locking up over 47,000 hectares of the Millewa group of Red Gum Forests in N.S.W. similar that which was done by Bracks and Brumby with the Basmah Forest on the Victorian side.

The same reason for turning vast areas of managed and working profitable wealth creating State Forests into National Parks was present. Nothing more than a vote grabbing exercise for a political promise to gain the votes of the "greens" and a seriously misinformed city population.

Both decisions were purely political and no consideration what so ever was given to the local workers and nearby rural communities or in fact the long term health of the forests or its' inhabitants.

One Hundred and Fifty years of forest management which has included timber harvesting, milling, thinning, firewood collection and cattle grazing have created a mainly healthy working forest with many more trees including habitat trees. This is despite a severe drought during which some the healthiest trees were in areas that had been logged and thinned in recent times.

Many local jobs, much local knowledge and \$70 million income a year has been lost by these poorly thought out decisions. There is no way that the promised but not delivered increase in tourists will ever go close to offsetting the losses involved. Already some are conceding that the red gums need to be controlled and thinned but the fools are cutting down trees that would make good valuable timber and leaving the damaged and blemished ones to grow.

River Red gums do not need watering every year or to be under water for too long. I am told that trees are already dying because of too much water. If managed properly red gums can go for long periods without a flood. Since the proclamation of National Parks noxious weeds

appear to be not controlled, road access and maintenance is not being carried out. Ferral animals and over population of native animals must be controlled.

As our red gum forest inevitably dry out during our usually hot dry summers an over grown, impenetrable fuel laden mess is just waiting to go up in smoke.

Fires will destroy far more habitat trees than timber harvesting ever will. Timber harvesters want tall straight solid trees and the parrots and the possums want white ant ridden trees with hollows in them - completely different trees.

I will include a list of observations about our River Red Gum Forests that I believe are much closer to the truth than the so called "science" which must be manipulated to arrive at the conclusions used as reasons to lock up these vast area as National Parks

I just hope that someone will have the intestinal fortitude to make the right decision for our forest even if it is only a trial over a substantial area to compare and evaluated in 20 and 40 years time.

Heres hoping for some "common sense" actually not so common these days and please take some notice of those that have worked in the forests for years because they clearly have not completely destroyed them yet.

If anyone wants to come out and talk or just go for a quite drive in the forests please feel free to get in touch

Yours sincerely and in hope

Salient Points about Our River Red Gum Forests

1. As State Parks/Forests harvesting and thinning produced employment, financial return and allowed regeneration.
2. When "white man" arrived the area was heavily grazed with scattered trees allowing a horse and cart to travel freely.
3. Genuine indigenous folk refer to the Red Gum Forests as "white man's weeds".
4. The number of trees in the forest area is much greater than 150 years ago.
5. With a heavy fuel load Red Gums will erupt into an eucalyptus inferno on hot windy summer days.
6. Any habitat tree with a hollow will most likely catch fire and be reduced to a pile of ash releasing CO_2 .
7. After the 2006 Top Island fire that burnt 700-800 hectares I could not find one habitat tree that survived.
8. That fire was in late October in mild weather and destroyed much good timber as well as habitat trees.
9. Along with the habitat trees went the inhabitants.
10. Due to the timing many young Superb Parrots most likely got fried.
11. To my knowledge the counts since 2006 (Superb Parrots) have been poor. Those in charge of the count have moved the count date forward 3-4 weeks. Last year many of the new hatchings most likely were still in the nest - not flying.
12. Birds don't run their calendar for human convenience because Christmas maybe approaching.
13. Timber harvested for houses, furniture, railway sleepers, garden landscaping, poles and posts are all 'carbon storage'.
14. Any timber used for furniture or indoor construction is long term carbon storage.
15. Any regrowth is carbon sequestration - the healthier the regrowth the better the result.
16. Red Gums need room to grow and spread to gather sunlight and moisture. Thinning is essential.

17. During the recent drought we had 10-12 years of dry getting drier.
18. The Top Island fire of 2006 destroyed more habitat trees than loggers have or would in a hundred years.
19. The loggers want good healthy, solid trees.
20. The parrots and possums want white ant ridden trees with hollows in them.
21. The forests have been harvested for 150 years and are still there, in most cases thicker than when logging began.
22. The city/green ideologs say harvesting is unsustainable - how will reducing the area by 100,000 hectares help.
23. It will only put many good, hard working people/families and communities on the scrap heap.
24. Any "so called" science that as claimed says the forests need to be locked up has to be very selective in choosing its data and science that had an agenda before they began.
25. As any politician knows, 2 opposing sides can make the same set of figures say completely different things.
26. Ask most people who have lived near and worked the forests for many years and they do not believe the so called science.
27. Our River Red Gum Forests dry out completely most summers.
28. If the forests are not logged, thinned and the fuel load reduced they will almost certainly burn with devastating effects.
29. If not looked after properly the creeks and water courses leading through the forest will become choked and stagnant.
30. The roads of late have not been well maintained, fallen trees are not cleared off tracks which would be very dangerous in time of fire.

I am sure that there are other points worth making but to my way of thinking the declaration of National Parks is a disaster for our forests especially when being looked after by armchair experts and a very valuable working asset is being lost due to flawed ideology and "crap" science.