

**Submission
No 399**

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

Name: Mrs Margaret O'Connor

Date received: 31/08/2012

Submission Re Rural Ratepayers Armidale Dumaresq Local Government Area

As endorsed Liberal Candidate in the upcoming Local Government elections (8 September 2012) I feel it incumbent on me to draw this Inquiry's attention to the plight of primary producers in the Armidale Dumaresq Shire. (I am one of them I might add.)

We are surrounded on several sides by National Parks which abut farmlands of the old Dumaresq Shire. These are Guy Fawkes River National Park, Oxley Wild Rivers National Park, Carrai National Park, Werrikimbe National Park, Cunnawarra National Park. The increasing number of feral animals that predate livestock from their base in these National Parks is destroying agricultural capacity and viable livestock husbandry. The "feral" animals are, in order of damage, wild dogs, wild pigs, foxes, wild cats (which in undomesticated form grow to extremely large sizes). There are some native animals which are also becoming statistically significant predators, including sea and wedge tailed eagles. Kangaroos and wallabies can become significant "pests" when culling levels diminish to the point that they outcompete commercial livestock in high value grazing areas. With a 200 year drought event just behind us, the GFC and generally diminishing margins in grazing operations these accumulations of animal competition, which flow from large areas of National Park lands, are causing a significant diminution of commercial returns and or changes in patterns of livestock deployment on our grazing lands.

For example in the Wongwibinda /Wollomombi area (where the writer has a property) the wild dog problem is so bad that we can no longer run ANY small animal (sheep, goats, or other small animal enterprises.)

Weeds are another problem as they flow in from National Parks, roadsides vegetation and stock routes via wind borne seeds, bird droppings and trucking activities.

Noxious weeds, untreated in showgrounds due to lack of funding for weed control to showground trust boards is another major bio security threat to primary production.

I believe that many land holders in AD Council area will want to enlarge on these issues at any hearings this Inquiry may hold in Armidale.

(Signed Margaret O'Connor)