

**Submission
No 270**

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

Organisation: Far North Coast Branch NSW National Parks Association
Name: Mr Neil Denison
Date received: 23/08/2012

Sirs

I am writing on behalf of the Far North Coast branch of the National Parks Association to express my concern with regard to the nature of this enquiry. This enquiry represents yet another mixed message about the Government's commitment to existing and future protection of our national estate. The State government has recently legislated to allow recreational hunting in national parks despite an election promise not to do so. The terms of reference for the enquiry are highly skewed in favour of economic interests and fail to cover the importance of a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system to provide resilience for our natural environment. The views of the majority of this committee appear to be against the principles of protected areas. It is inconceivable that the chair of the enquiry is Mr Robert Brown of the Shooters and Fishers Party. This man and his party are on record for lobbying the government to allow even more access to national parks for inappropriate activities. Our conservation areas are important not only for biodiversity protection, but also for other critical ecosystem services such as fresh water and catchment protection, and carbon sequestration and must be protected. The terms of reference for this enquiry are biased towards economic values and disregard the experience and professionalism of the National Parks and Wildlife experts. The enquiry fails to address the significance of landscapes, places and objects for their Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal cultural values. The case studies chosen by the committee are new additions to the national park estate and do not represent examples of the long term benefits of national parks to local communities. Unless the government can ensure a more evenhanded approach to this enquiry the result is inevitable and will not gain the approval of the majority of the public