

**Submission  
No 19**

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

**Name:** Ms Elizabeth Weiss

**Date received:** 22/06/2012

---

20 June 2012

**RECEIVED**

22 JUN 2012

**GPSC's**

The Director  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam

**Parliamentary inquiry: Management of public land in New South Wales**

**1. Recreational hunting in National Parks and State Forests**

I am writing to strongly urge the committee responsible for this inquiry to recommend against permitting hunting of animals in National Parks and State Forests in NSW by anyone other than rangers employed by the National Parks and Wildlife Association and the forestry department.

Recreational hunting goes entirely against the intention of a national park or state forest, even if it is for the purpose of pest management. The community has agreed to set aside areas with high conservation values as National Parks, to be preserved as naturally as possible for scientific reasons, and as places for low impact recreational use. Hunting is not low impact, and where there are recreational hunters, no-one else can safely use a park.

As an experienced bushwalker, I have spent many days and nights in our National Parks and State Forests, and I have on a number of occasions come across hunters presumably operating illegally. I have seen them damage bush tracks in delicate alpine terrain, manage their weapons in a sloppy fashion, and heard them shoot in areas where there were campers and walkers. These will be among the people who are seeking licences for recreational hunting in the name of pest management, and all the assurances and licence requirements in the world won't change their behaviour on the ground, which is difficult to monitor.

Pests like wild pigs can be dealt with by traps by rangers who have every intention of eradicating them. Hunters are motivated to maintain pest populations at a level which ensures ongoing availability of game. Let's not be naive: this is the traditional

ethos of hunting. Permitting hunters into our National Parks and State Forests won't get rid of feral animals at all.

## **2. Economic development in National Parks**

I am also writing to urge that we do not desecrate our parks with unwarranted economic development. The whole point of setting aside high conservation value areas as national parks is to ensure their natural beauty and unique flora and fauna are preserved for future generations, for low impact recreational use and for scientific and environmental reasons. These areas cannot be properly preserved if economic development occurs, even at modest levels. We cannot always foresee the environmental damage which is done by permitting a hotel or some other such development in a pristine area, but once the damage is done, it can be impossible to repair.

So little of our land in NSW is set aside as national park, and the rest of it is open to economic development. Let's keep it that way, so that there's something of our natural landscape left.

Please act with the best interests of future generations in NSW in mind. Don't let short term economic or political interests overturn the enormous efforts that have been made in creating our precious National Parks.

Yours sincerely

Elizabeth Weiss