

**Submission  
No 151**

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

**Name:** Mr Gary Thompson

**Date received:** 30/07/2012

---

**The Director  
General Purpose Standing committee No 5  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2001**

**Dear Sir or Madam**

**SUBMISSION -**

**INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LAND IN NSW**

Let me express my concerns over the inquiry into the MINORITY use of public lands in NSW and in particular National Parks.

As a long time Liberal voter (I am 69 years of age) I always naively thought that the major objective of any Government was to leave the environment in which they were given the privilege of managing for **ONLY A SHORT PERIOD IN THE LIFE OF THE STATE AND THIS NATION. LEAVING IT IN NO WORSE A CONDITION THAN THEY WERE GIVEN.**

Clearly this is rapidly becoming a very naïve view. I have now formed a view that Governments (of all persuasions) are only interested in a very short term horizon and that means they will take whatever it takes to remain in Government.

One of the very narrow short term view politicians have does not allow no room for how history will judge them. Over recent times history is quick to judge and majorities can dissipate quickly. History will recall long after I am gone that, as an example, the Carr/Iemma Governments were totally incompetent, it will equally recall on what I have seen so far that the O'Farrell Government was no improvement.

As I have stated above, in my opinion. an essential and important function of Governments is not to deteriorate the condition of the State that they inherited (on behalf of the voters) on assuming Government. It is fine to attempt to improve it, however, it is criminal to destroy or degrade it.

To me, as a 69 year old retired person with children and grandchildren this means leaving the public preserves in a condition that they might possibly enjoy in the same condition that my wife and I enjoyed in the 1960s. 70s. 80s and so on. Recent proposals such as allowing shooting in National Parks means that I will be reluctant to take any grandchildren into areas we long treasured for personal safety reasons.

Decisions such as shooting in National Parks being spun as a feral control measure insults the intelligence of people such as myself. For example the major feral pest in Kosciuszko National Park is feral horses and these are excluded. Why, because another highly vocal minority group might object. That fact that there is no apparent independent "body" count to be conducted by the RSPCA to see that any kills were humane means that any utterances of humane treatment offered by the Government cannot and will not be taken seriously.

As a long retired lawyer I am always reminded of those majestic words uttered by President Lincoln at his Gettysburg address that **"to ensure the survival of America's representative democracy, that the "government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."** These words encapsulate a fundamental premise in all Western Democracies. They recognize for example, that within a short period minority and single interest parties such as the shooters party will soon be forgotten as have the Democratic Labour Party, the Democrats, Family First and so on

These days that important axiom of Lincoln seems lost. Hence we now have **"Government for the vocal, by the politicians, for the minority or those who shout the loudest"**.

I deplore current trend that access to lands throughout New South Wales to be turned over to accede to the wishes of very small minority groups because of short-term expediency. These lands, particularly National Parks, were preserved by they were considered to have unique characteristics by your predecessors. Some Parks in our State were confirmed as early as 1879 (Royal National Park).

In my later years, I have found that the wisdom of our elders (including Politicians) has increasingly more merit in their view

(expressed at the time) of our heritage. This seems lost on our modern selfish generation. Governments fail to realize that they not only have obligations to the electorate they also have obligations to those who come after us. Again, if I may indulge from the Gettysburg Address **“It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced”**.

**Unfortunately I have little confidence that Politicians today have that sense of obligation or history.**

The Public Estate has been bequeathed to us from our fore-fathers in a condition that merits our respect for that wisdom. I am disgusted that for some short-term reasons a basic fundamental obligation to future generations does not count.

These assets of Government have been held on behalf of the State for many years, some for over 100 years for special and important reasons. For example who knows whatever mineral wealth is hidden below say the Warrumbungles. Your predecessors rightly considered that this area was so special that it should be preserved for all time irrespective of that. It is an incredibly arrogant view that today, Governments can allow years of heritage to be despoiled.

Once you allow intrusions of any sort into our heritage where do you stop. Shooting in National Parks, next 4wheel driving everywhere, Horse riding in wilderness areas, exclusions for mining and so on. Throughout the western world this generation is already labeled as the most selfish and self interested in history. Decisions to desecrate or destroy heritage given and preserved by previous generations will only reinforce that view.

It is little wonder that people such as myself donate funds to organisations such as Bush Heritage to purchase Estate for future generations as we no longer have any trust in Governments to do so. Thankfully private land is sacrosanct from such violation.

As I have previously stated, I had large expectations that the O’Farrell Government would seek to correct many of the things that have gone amiss in this State, particularly in country areas of NSW. I am rapidly becoming disillusioned that we are seeing NO improvement outside of rhetoric. Political parties should NEVER forget that while people

like myself would NEVER vote Greens or Labor we have the option of wasting our vote.

In closing I would make a strong objection over the composition of the Committee. I never thought I would see a situation where, as a long time Liberal voter, see a Liberal Government shortly after being elected resort to Labor Party tactics of conducting an inquiry where the result was already determined. No wonder Australian governments are seldom taken seriously.

GARY THOMPSON