

**Submission
No 89**

INQUIRY INTO CROWN LAND IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Birding NSW

Date received: 21 July 2016

I write as Conservation Officer on behalf of Birding NSW, incorporated as the Field Ornithologists' Club of NSW, a recreational club consisting of about 350 members.

As bird watchers, we are most concerned at the increasing threats to habitat in NSW. This of course affects not only threatened species of birds, but rare or threatened vegetation and an array of marsupials and other creatures that depend on 'unspoiled' bush or other habitat [marine or native grassland, for example].

Extensive sales of Crown Land, especially if the administration of same is driven by commercial motives, as would result from the conversion of the Crown Lands Division into a Public Trading Enterprise, would be likely to further increase the threats and to accelerate the deterioration of habitat.

In a previous submission [concerning Travelling Stock Reserves] I highlighted the fact that these TSRs often constitute the only remaining, relatively unspoiled bush in a wide area, and they can be absolutely vital in the preservation of rare and endangered species.

But even where there is residual bush near by, the TSR may have ecological values unrepresented elsewhere,

A case in point is the Bogee TSR in the Capertee Valley. Over many years our club and others have engaged in thrice yearly surveys of the bird life in the valley, specifically focusing on the endangered Regent Honeyeater, but also noting the presence or absence of other woodland species that are vulnerable under the Act.

The Bogee TSR was selected as one of a dozen key areas for our surveys.

This situation is duplicated all over the State.

Crown Land is vital in the ever more urgent fight to prevent the extinction of numerous species of birds in NSW.

It is crucial that remaining habitat is managed with an eye to ecological sustainability and maintenance of biodiversity.

That can only be ensured by it remaining in the public domain.

I have broadened the argument in a private submission, which for convenience I append here.

I am sure my club members would endorse its sentiments: indeed, I expect that some will have expressed them more eloquently already.

I thank the Committee for its attention to this important issue.