

Submission
No 243

INQUIRY INTO CROWN LAND IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I would like to comment on the lack of proper management of the Newnes State Forest near Lithgow. It is like the wild west out there, with very infrequent control of the illegal activities going on out there every week. Such as illegal trailbike activity: involving unregistered bikes, unlicensed riders, and the use of illegal single tracks in the bush (i.e. off formed roads). The bikes race around at high speed and sometimes collide with other traffic or other bikes or 4WD's.

There are also increasing numbers of other illegal vehicles, such as quad-bikes and dune-buggy type vehicles. Some 4WD activities are also illegal, such as driving and ripping up powerline roads.

These activities have been reported for years to Forests NSW, who have done very little, and often say that it is a police matter. When these activities are reported to the police they do little as well.

The illegal activities are a danger to the general public, as well as to trailbikers themselves who are regularly being injured (check the ambulance records!).

This anarchy must stop.

The Newnes Plateau has high conservation value, so I would like to see the bulk of it added to the National Parks estate,

This has not already happened because of coal mining interests in the area, but I think that the areas not under current approved coal mining leases (or areas where mining has passed through already) should be protected in a reserve. There are parts of the Newnes SF and Ben Bullen SF that fit that criteria, and they should not be left in limbo for many decades, and mismanaged as they are now, just because there is coal or sand mining in other parts of the area.

I would like to see the unique Newnes SF ecosystem protected, more passive recreation activities encouraged, and a serious crackdown on illegal activities which are antisocial, dangerous, and damaging to the environment.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on an issue which is of serious concern to me. I live near that area, and have witnessed the decline of the situation over recent years. The "bad guys" are winning at the moment, due to the lack of enforcement of the law. Forests NSW are aware of what goes on out there but put it in the too hard basket, and the police don't want to know about it.