

**Submission
No 286**

INQUIRY INTO CROWN LAND IN NEW SOUTH WALES

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Upper House Inquiry into Crown Land

I feel that Crown land contributes immensely to the conservation of native vegetation, wildlife corridors, biodiversity and wetlands and for that reason particularly I feel it should remain in public hands and have money allocated for its management. The Crown land of high conservation value needs to be managed to control weeds and pest animals and to make sure that grazing does not adversely affect its ecological value.

Crown land is also used by the public for a wide range of active and passive recreational activities. In Maitland two parcels of Crown land provide open space for recreational activities such as bushwalking, running and birdwatching. Walka Water Works combines active and passive recreation with history and is a refuge in our urban area for wildlife. Earthcare Park, a previously over grazed 60 ha has been rehabilitated by a land care group and is well on the way to being restored to its original Spotted Gum and Ironbark vegetation. Both these areas need to remain in public hands rather than be handed over to our council which may in the future decide that the sites could be developed inappropriately

As someone who grew up in Western NSW I am also aware of the importance of travelling stock routes (TSRs) which, with controlled grazing, has assisted the conservation of remnant vegetation and threatened species. However the grazing does need to be managed so that the TSRs value as wildlife corridors is retained

I am also very concerned that the proposed sale of Crown land will be done without any proper assessment of social, cultural or environmental values - far more public consultation is needed on the proposed changes to the use and disposal of Crown lands and far more transparency is needed about what will be done with any funds raised from these sales.

It would seem to me that our environmental, cultural and social heritage is at great risk with what seems to be a headlong rush to dispose of land that should belong to the public.