

**Submission  
No 296**

## **INQUIRY INTO CROWN LAND IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

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CROWN LAND MUST BE KEPT IN PUBLIC HANDS AND GIVEN INCREASED PROTECTION.

Crown Land is an important part of our heritage and should be fully conserved. (Ideally administered by the indigenous custodians).

Crown land is vital for environmental conservation but also for active and passive recreation.

It would be utter madness for the NSW government to transfer Crown land to local council administration, allow conversion of Western Lands grazing leases to freehold, convert the Crown Lands Division into a Public Trading Enterprise or to put Travelling Stock Routes and Reserves in jeopardy

Crown land extends from marine, freshwater and coastal ecosystems to the arid ecosystems of western NSW. Crown land often contains relatively undisturbed natural landscapes in rural, coastal and urban areas which MUST be preserved .

Crown land is used for a wide range of active and passive recreational activities including going to the beach, jogging, bushwalking, fishing, kayaking and bird watching. Crown land must be managed actively to ensure that public enjoyment of and access to these activities is maintained.

Crown land has significant environmental values, and when properly managed, contributes enormously to the conservation of native vegetation, wildlife habitat and corridors, biodiversity and coastal environments, wetlands, rivers and estuaries in NSW. The retention and appropriate management of Crown land will provide a long-term public benefit including in the form of ecosystem services, landscape resilience and river health.

Crown land of high conservation value needs active management including control of weeds and pest animals and ensuring that its ecological value is not undermined by commercial activities such as grazing.

Reducing active management of the Western Division of NSW threatens biodiversity and ecosystem services as well as the viability of agricultural land, and will significantly increase carbon emissions. Proposed changes to the way Crown land is managed in the Western Division include conversion of

some leasehold land to freehold land, and removing requirements that management be consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.

Changes to Crown land management will be exacerbated by proposed changes to native vegetation laws in NSW which will see land clearing rules significantly weakened by the proposed Biodiversity Conservation Bill and Local Land Services Amendment Bill, including enabling broad-scale land clearing via the equity code.

Controlled grazing of TSRs has helped to conserve significant parcels of remnant vegetation including endangered ecological communities and threatened species in the Central Division. TSRs need appropriate grazing regimes and management to maintain their importance as wildlife corridors.

Crown land parcels in the urban environment can be easily forgotten and subsequently easy prey for developers. Below is an example where vital Crown land parcels should be better managed rather than disposed of thoughtlessly

<http://thegreenmanly.blogspot.com.au/2014/03/a-vision-splendid-for-manly-creek.html>