

Submission
No 279

INQUIRY INTO CROWN LAND IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: Garigal Landcare

Date received: 24 July 2016

Inquiry into Crown Land

Garigal Landcare has been working in areas around Garigal National Park and in particular on Crown Land.

Our group is in operation for over 12 years and initially we interacted occasionally but now regularly with the departments that administer Crown Lands. In 2016 we worked roughly 420 hrs so far.

Only 1/3 of our local natural bushland area is protected within Garigal National Park and the rest is Crown Land, privately owned or land leased from the Crown.

We treasure our bushland and ask that it is managed in a way that pays tribute to its natural values. We know that more than about 1/2 of our threatened and endangered ecological communities are outside of the National Park and that our most impressive wildlife species like Tiger quoll and barking owl have been on and are visiting Crown Land. We further know how important it is that the bushland needs preservation as a whole and piecemeal necrosis, by degradation or sell off of individual parcels of land will destroy the habitat provisions dramatically.

Our regular twice weekly bushregeneration also gives us a good insight to other human activities that take place in this bushland. Regularly we see people jogging, walking, walking with dogs, mountain biking, horse riding, motorbike riding and driving in to access a model aeroplane flying field. Occasionally real nature enthusiasts come along as well eg for ant surveys, owl observations or frog surveys. Also groups of aboriginal students have started to come in, guided by aboriginal leaders to visit their cultural sites. In short many people engage with Crown Land and see it as it is: their land.

Our group has now got a contact person and is able to communicate with the regulating authorities, however it was difficult to establish a contact. We would hugely appreciate to have a better understanding and interaction with the different sub departments that look after Crown Land. For us, as wanting to keep natural vegetation as much as possible, the importation of what was called 'clean fill' for track work, proved a major set back. It proved it was not at all clean fill and the consequences were ignored by the culprit. In other areas we had tracks badly widened which made them a new asset for 4 WDs, again something we and most other users find very upsetting.

Another point to raise, is the benefit resulting from combining management with adjacent land managers eg National Parks, which seems to be lacking.

We are pleased to see the inquiry about Crown Lands is happening and request that Crown Land is protected for the future to preserve and restore all its inherent ecosystem functions to provide clean water, clean air and highest carbon storage functions as result from the protection or restoration of the native vegetation. The land must protect habitat for indigenous flora and fauna and destructive human activities must be curtailed. We request that financial and other resources be provided to achieve this.