

Submission
No 146

INQUIRY INTO ACCESS RESTRICTIONS TO PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERWAYS

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Access Enquiry for NSW National and Marine Parks

Tens of millions of my fellow New South Welshwomen and men visit our beloved National Parks every year. We value the quiet amenity, being near and in nature. We recharge and find peace. Our kids learn and all this in a way that is quietly managed and governed and so we feel that we can enjoy it without our being there disturbing the biodiversity in these very special (and quite often delicate) environments.

A recent example of this quiet human/nature interaction that National Parks excels in is the new Gidjoom Gulganyi 4-day, 42 km walk between Mount Jerusalem and Nightcap Ranges national parks in the Tweed Byron Hinterland. I, along with our group Byron Bird Buddies, have walked part of this track for many years doing bird surveys for Key Biodiversity Area, Birds Australia data gathering. We have watched the new carpark being built and the track, which was already there, being upgraded and heard about the new camp sites. People and families can now walk this track and camp along the way, using existing and now upgraded roads and campsites. They can enjoy and learn about our beautiful environment with minimum disturbance.

With climate change and species extinction, our tax-payers dollars must be used by NSW national parks so that the parks remain a refuge for our flora and fauna.

If NSW National Parks allows commercial practitioners and other new disturbing activities, this would mean a lot more managing and governing by NP staff, because no matter the promises in the beginning, there are many people who think they are the exception to the rule, when rules apply. Staff would then be doing less and less of environmental monitoring and management and this is the real work of National Parks.

Any idea that National Parks should be opened up to hunting should surely be discarded given the outcry that happened in NSW in 2013 when hunting was allowed on a trial basis, and later the government stopped the hunting after a review. The public has said time and again it does not want hunting in National Parks. Any culling that needs to take place should be by professional shooters who are managed by National Parks, as happens at the moment.

I want our National Parks to be the best in the world. The best in protecting our flora and fauna and the best in allowing our quiet enjoyment of the NPs amenities and beauty.