

From:
To: [NRC](#)
Subject: Logging in Brigalow and Nandewar State Conservation Areas
Date: Thursday, 31 July 2014 6:09:03 PM
Importance: High

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Milton Electorate of the National Parks Association of NSW represents approximately 150 members in the Milton-Ulladulla region of New South Wales. The Electorate Committee has carefully considered the recent draft report from the National Resources Commission (NRC) which recommends that logging operations be permitted in the Brigalow and Nandewar State Conservation Areas.

The Committee is strongly opposed to the key recommendations of the NRC for the following reasons:

- a. **Environmental impacts:** The impact of the recommendations, once stripped down to their essential core, will be to allow the introduction of commercial logging operations into areas previously specifically set aside to be protected in perpetuity from such commercial exploitation. These areas were set aside from commercial logging operations for good reasons at the time, and the NRC has made no sound factual or scientific case to suggest that these reasons should be revisited. The draft report is in fact unable to even credibly establish the scientific need for ecological thinning of the white cypress pine, yet alone its commercial logging. Bear in mind that the Brigalow is regarded by the federal government as one of Australia's national biodiversity hotspots.
- b. **Economic impacts:** If these recommendations are adopted, they will likely act as the thin edge of the wedge for a sustained push by the logging and timber industries for the commercial exploitation of other conservation areas. This amounts to a misuse of NSW taxpayer resources, \$51 million of which were previously paid out to the timber and logging industries by way of compensation when the Brigalow and Nandewar conservation areas were declared in 2005. Will they now be asked to refund that money if these recommendations are adopted?
- c. **Legal impacts:** The NRC report suggests changing current conservation legislation specifically to avoid laws which prohibit logging for commercial purposes. It is cynical in the extreme to alter the law simply because it no longer suits the commercial interests of certain parties, yet this seems to be what is being suggested here. Bad law makes for bad outcomes.

We know from bitter experience elsewhere that once protection for areas of outstanding environmental importance is lost, the areas rapidly degrade as short term commercial interests drive out their long term heritage value. Once this happens, they are lost forever.

We need far sighted government leadership to resist such pressures and accordingly request that the NRC review its recommendations to give effect to the longer term need to protect these sensitive areas from commercial exploitation.

Barry Tomkinson

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NPA Milton Electorate Committee