

Submission on Natural Resources Commission draft report: active and adaptive cypress management in the Brigalow and Nandewar state conservation areas

The proposals to allow “ecological thinning” of White Cypress Pine, grazing, and controlled burning in the State Conservation Areas, and to allow commercial logging by seeking cost recovery and cost sharing opportunities set a dangerous precedent for commercial exploitation of conservation areas.

Opening these important areas to commercial logging and grazing would cause significant environmental damage and degrade their conservation value.

At the end of the Western Regional Assessment scientific study in 2005 it was decided to permanently protect some land as State Conservation Areas (as part of the Brigalow and Nandewar Community Conservation Area).

State Conservation Areas were specifically excluded from logging and grazing activities to protect their natural values.

Commercial logging, grazing, firewood collection and use of timber/biomass for electricity generation will result in significant degradation of the conservation values of these State Conservation Areas.

Opening these areas up for commercial purposes sets a dangerous precedent, and could be the thin end of the wedge to opening up other areas of the national parks estate.

NSW taxpayers paid \$51 million in 2005 for these areas to be protected from logging and grazing

In 2005 when the Brigalow and Nandewar conservation areas were declared, the timber and logging industry received a multi-million dollar pay-out as compensation. To open these areas for logging now isn't just bad for nature, it is double dipping on an asset already paid for by taxpayers.

Dr Peter Barker