



Hunter Environment Lobby Inc.

PO Box 188
East Maitland NSW 2323

Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 4206
Sydney NSW 2001

Friday 8 August 2014

nrc @nrc.nsw.gov.au

Dear Commissioner,

Response to Draft Report on Brigalow and Nandewar State Conservation Areas

Hunter Environment Lobby Inc. (HEL) submitted comments to the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) assessment of management of white cypress pine in the Brigalow Belt South and Nandewar bioregions in October 2013.

The main recommendation from HEL was that best approach for actively managing cypress regrowth in the Brigalow Belt South and Nandewar State Conservation Areas for ecological outcomes is through a well structured seasonal mosaic burning program.

HEL notes that this active management tool has not been considered by the NRC in any section of the draft report or in the recommendations.

HEL strongly objects to the recommendation that State Conservation Areas be opened up to grazing and commercial timber harvesting operations.

HEL also strongly objects to the recommendation to amend various state and federal legislation to legalise and facilitate commercial operations within State Conservation Areas.

This is setting a poor precedent within NSW to open up protected areas for commercial exploitation. There is no evidence within the draft report that this proposed direction will provide improved ecological outcomes in the long term.

HEL wishes to remind the NRC that commercial timber harvesting operations and silviculture management practices of Forests NSW were the cause of the white cypress regrowth 'problem'.

The future of natural resource and biodiversity management in NSW cannot be dependent on 'cost recovery' commercial enterprises. Especially those subsidized by the NSW taxpayer.

The broad ecological services outlined in Table 3 (p22) of the draft report give a good analysis of the values that the State Conservation Areas provide to the people of NSW including regulating services, cultural services and supporting services. These are important values for the taxpayers of NSW and should have a calculated economic value in their own right.

HEL is concerned that the NRC has chosen to recommend access to the provisioning services through opening up the areas to grazing and commercial timber harvesting. This outcome will not provide equal value to the NSW taxpayer nor will it demonstrably improve ecological outcomes in the region.

HEL believes the recommendations are counter intuitive to the statement within the report that: *'opportunities for cost recovery or other commercial benefits must be a secondary consideration to the promotion of improved ecological, cultural and recreational outcomes'*.

The NSW Government has just launched the Save Our Species program to highlight the problems of providing habitat security for threatened species.

HEL considers that the recommendations made in the draft report will counteract the objectives of this new statewide program.

HEL trusts that the NRC will take more notice of this submission than was taken of the previous input into this assessment process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jan Davis". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Jan Davis
President