

Dr John Keniry
Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 4206
Sydney NSW 2001

Re: Draft report – Active and adaptive cypress management in the Brigalow and Nandewar SCAs

Dear Dr Keniry,

I was extensively involved in the community consultation for the Brigalow Belt South Bioregion Assessment conducted by RACAC in the early 2000s. I authored the Brigalow Region United Stakeholders (BRUS) option and, along with Ted Hayman, was heavily involved in lobbying the Carr government and the communities of the Brigalow Belt South to support this option during the public consultation process. Since those days, I have retained a keen interest in the biological welfare of the Pilliga Forests, in particular, a place that has evolved many of its environmental values thanks to the direct action of humans.

I am so glad that the NSW Government is revisiting the idea of active management of stands of white cypress to benefit the environment! In my opinion, the passive management practised by the National Parks and Wildlife Service is totally unsuited to promoting biodiversity in this unique forest type. The stands stagnate if they are not subjected to some kind of disturbance. Fire is not really an option as an agent of this disturbance, because cypress forest won't ignite and burn except on days of extreme fire weather. Managers need access to all the tools in the kitbag in order to get the best out of these forest types. That includes judicious use of timber harvesting for thinning purposes.

I believe that generating an economic return from any saleable forest products that are harvested as a result of this active management is essential to the sustainability of the project, particularly in helping to fund the costs of continued government management of the area. And it also has the potential to be a sorely needed generator of local employment.

Having said that, I also believe that the addition of National Parks to the land tenures in the Pilliga (and the associated management centre in Baradine) has been of some value to the area economically. From my experiences as a volunteer at the Coonabarabran Visitor Information Centre, it certainly seems to be of interest to a few travelers for this reason – particularly the Salt Caves area and the Sculptures in the Scrub. So, it is important to maintain the NPWS presence in the Pilliga, as another string to the region's economic bow, so to speak.

Yours sincerely,

Jane M Harding BSc (Forestry) Hons