

Natural Resources Commission

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Submission on Natural Resources Commission Draft Report

I am strongly opposed to interventions such as ecological thinning and targeted grazing in State Conservation Areas. I am also opposed to seeking cost recovery when implementing ecological thinning. Amending legislation to allow active and adaptive management in State Conservation Areas is also opposed, along with reviewing governance arrangements in the State Conservation Areas.

The National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 established State Conservation Areas to protect and conserve important environmental values in perpetuity. They represent only 2.5% of the land in the assessment area and should be conserved to protect the habitat for native flora and fauna. The Brigalow and Nandewar conservation areas protect essential remnant habitat for native wildlife in a highly cleared landscape. In 2005, at the end of the Western Regional Assessment, it was decided to permanently protect some land as State Conservation Areas (as part of the Brigalow and Nandewar Community Conservation Area). Other areas were classified as national parks, Aboriginal areas, or state forests. State Conservation Areas were specifically excluded from logging and grazing activities to protect their natural values. Logging State Conservation Areas is environmentally irresponsible. 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 taxpayers¹. Dense white cypress stands provide screening for fauna against predation and should be preserved. This review mentions that thinning white cypress pine forests may not necessarily encourage increased growth and regeneration of eucalypts. The science used to justify ecological thinning is hotly disputed. The draft report fails to credibly establish the scientific need for ecological thinning of white cypress pine. The Brigalow has been identified by the federal government as one of Australia's 15 national biodiversity hotspots. It is vital this area is protected and treated with respect. Ecological thinning cannot be justified due to the destructive effects on threatened ecological communities.

The destructive impacts of grazing in white cypress pine forests are unknown due to lack of comprehensive data. Targeted grazing in State Conservation Areas cannot

be justified due to potential damage to watercourses and habitats supporting threatened species.

In conclusion, I oppose active and adaptive management in State Conservation Areas. I also oppose amending legislation that allows active and adaptive management in State Conservation Areas and oppose reviewing governance arrangements in State Conservation Areas. I have every confidence in the NPWS management procedures and I endorse their continued oversight of these areas. Their resources should be increased.

Yours faithfully,

Leonie Kemp

References

1. [http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/la/latabdoc.nsf/0/bf97950d87b24f71ca2573a8007c7374/\\$FILE/Brigalow%20and%20Nandewar.pdf](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/la/latabdoc.nsf/0/bf97950d87b24f71ca2573a8007c7374/$FILE/Brigalow%20and%20Nandewar.pdf)