

Submission to the Natural Resource Commission

Ian Bell



Re: West Wyalong – Tallimba Cat 2 – Sensitive Regulated – PINK.

I have listed my experienced Cat 2 Sensitive regulated and listed proposed solutions at the end of this submission

CEEC LISTING IS INCORRECT

According to the definition of a CEEC, the vegetation in the West Wyalong area listed as Mallee and Mallee Broombush should be extinct by now– ie the CEEC determination was made in 2010 – yet 15 years on and despite the forecast by the Scientific Committee the vegetation continues to thrive.

This vegetation on my property and the West Wyalong-Tallimba area is **not likely to be extinct, nor has it ever been**. The geographical area of the timbered areas on my property has not changed negatively. I question John Bensons listing - I've lived on this property all my life and vegetation has been the same. The area in question has been my backyard since I was a child – and I'm now 61 years. If anyone is interested in the history of this vegetation has been the same, throughout this time – with minimum variation between extreme dry years and favourable seasons – there is little change in the timber.

John Benson who prepared the report to the Scientific Committee has never visited my property – he coloured PINK over my land I'm assuming by looking at satellite images and a drive around council roads. At no time has any ground truthing been performed. Pink randomly and incorrectly applied to areas of timbered country.

Errors in Mapping

An example of mapping error was confirmed by David Stein from LLS who spent a day investigating then prepared a detailed report submitted to the Map Review Team pointing out that the majority of the PINK does not contain any CEEC – the Map Review Team REJECTED his submission. The result of incorrect mapping has led to an accusation of illegal clearing.

Criminal Accusation based on NSW Government vegetation listing and maps errors

Listing of CEEC is a problem as it continues to cause landowners issues when incorrect mapping of a CEEC results in accusation of illegal clearing.

A personal example – the Compliance team sent information of illegal clearing – I requested a Map Review as I believe the area did not contain a CEEC - the Compliance Team's Wendy Illingworth stated **"You will not get a map review until this investigation is over"**. This is problematic as – the DECCEW Compliance Team, appears set on an accusation **without first inspecting area**. There had been no illegal activity. I cleared woody undergrowth along a fence line. I had no prior

information that this fence line had been listed as having a CEEC. Worse – Under the Continuing Use Land Management Code, I was able to clear up to 30 meters – I only cleared 6-8 meters because I was only getting the woody undergrowth off the fence. If Wendy Illingsworth had visited me, she would have seen that my work was clearing woody undergrowth was minimal. This was an error in mapping and I should have been given me an apology. Instead – she continued with her accusation – and accused me of criminal action. There are many examples such as this in the West Wyalong area.

Inability to control weeds and vermin

The PINK may result in the uncontrolled breeding of vermin eg the rabbits/pigs etc and noxious weeds – ie Bathurst burrs, Galvanised Burr, Cat-heads etc etc. Over the past 50 years, I developed knowledge of where the vermin will be found and where the noxious weeds will first appear. I've managed weeds and kept the areas biodiversity conservation areas. Foxes and rabbits and pigs are a problem that are now the biggest threat to the mallee fowl, quails, bush budgies etc. The area is a haven for kangaroos, wallabies. After 50 years, I am well aware of the areas that will require maintenance/ early emergence of noxious weeds.

Land Value

The listing of pink has taken 25% of my land value – ie landholders are now well aware that PINK designation is problematic.

The bank has advised they will not loan on PINK – which means I have no equity in the pink – eg – in the past, I had been able to borrow against the equity of the property – now that the 25% PINK on my property is viewed by the bank as valueless this puts me in a high risk situation with the bank.

Superannuation – Like most farmers, my land is my super. I am facing not only a 25% loss to reflect the amount of pink on my land – but also the opportunity to sell is dramatically reduced. We are seeing land in West Wyalong that contains a large portion of pink, is not selling – due to the inability to farm PINK land.

Proposed Solutions:

Request for lease payment

The NSW State Government has a responsibility to pay for my land - if it is intended for the greater good – either the Government needs to buy the PINK at market rate – or - pay an annual lease payment at market rate.

If my land, as PINK is for the 'good' of the Australian and NSW Community, they should pay for it – NOT ME. I have not 'donated' the land I have paid for to earn an income. I should be reimbursed for my land use if it is used for the NSW environmental objectives.

Request for land use change based on vegetation not critically endangered

Alternatively – as the land is not critically endangered, the PINK needs to be reclassified as YELLOW ie endangered or vulnerable to better reflected the true state of the vegetation. Which would give me more opportunity to manage and confidence to manage my land and make an income for better environmental outcomes.

Regards,

Ian Bell

