

**Barham Newsagency**

21<sup>st</sup> October 2009

Forests Assessment  
Natural Resources Commission,  
GPO Box 4206  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Sir/Madam,

My name is Garry Hall and together with my brother Daryl we own and operate the Barham Newsagency in Barham. We have a staff of three, and have had this business for the last 16 years.

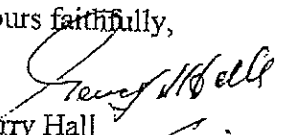
The Murray River and its associated forests are the "life blood" of the twin towns of Barham in New South Wales and Koondrook in Victoria. These forests and associated industries provide employment both directly and indirectly for approximately two thirds of the population of both towns. A total of around 2000 people.

There are 5 sawmills and as many freelance timber cutters in our area who supply timber for various uses including firewood which is distributed throughout Victoria, raw timber for building and construction purposes and added value products such as furniture for retail outlets both locally and in Kerang and Echuca.

Access to the forests provide recreational activities for campers and fishermen who flock to the area during holiday seasons. In all, our rivers and forests feature very heavily in the business and family lives of many on both sides of the river. It is estimated that over 500 jobs directly and around 1000 jobs indirectly could be lost, and the flow on effect on Shires, Schools, health services, including our hospital and sporting facilities would be devastating.

Closure would increase the fire hazard due to the build up of combustible material making it more difficult to access and fight the inevitable fires that will ensure. What we need is a sustainable management program that preserves the environment for future generations to access and enjoy.

Yours faithfully,

  
Garry Hall