

Mr John Dawson

23<sup>rd</sup> October 2009

Forests Assessment  
Natural Resources Commission  
GPO Box 4206  
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Sir/Madam

It is clear from the National Resource Commissions,  
Preliminary Assessment Report,  
Riverina Bioregion  
Regional Forest Assessment  
River red gum and other woodland forests  
30 September 2009.

that the landscape in the Riverina Bioregion is highly modified,  
both pre European and post European occupation.

The present resource use and classification has both an economic,  
cultural, reserved and a biomass benefit for all who use the forests.

The area maintains an increasing volume of standing timber and a  
very profitable and sustainable industry, which is compatible with  
the aims and outcomes of those competing interest groups, who  
have polarised the debate on there continued viable use.

These Red Gum forests are certainly Icons as Commissioner  
Williams states in his Foreword, what is not recognised generally  
is that these 'Icons' have been used by both the First Australians  
and subsequently since European occupation of Australia as  
providers of a multiplicity of food and timber and they still  
maintain their Icon status.

They are highly productive forests, self maintaining and deserve  
nothing less than continued use forever. If the Oak forests of

England can produce logs for over 1500 years there is no sound reason why we in Australia can't do the same and better.

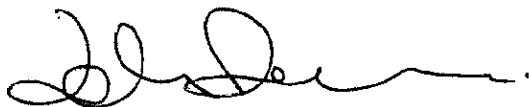
There is no valid reason to consider putting these areas into a reserve system that will not maintain them in their present iconic condition.

The modified river flows and series of weirs and impoundments has helped to enhance and increase the area over which Red Gums (*eucalyptus camaldulensis*) occur, through increased water availability both standing and raised water tables. The historical evidence suggests that the Pre-European distribution of Red Gum was typically a riverine species and had a ribbon-like distribution across the landscape, with some breakouts on flood plains, not the contiguous forests we have today in the Millewa Forests area for example.

A Forest Reserve system should be put in place using the existing legislation to conserve the high value areas such as RAMSAR sites and those significant cultural, vegetation and European cultural areas. This would maintain the diverse uses, which the community enjoys presently and into the future.

I look forward to the Commissions recommendations and final report.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Dawson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Dawson.