



NSW APIARISTS' ASSOCIATION INC.

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Forests Assessment
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Submission River Red Gum Assessment

The Honeybee Industry has been a regular legitimate user of the River Red Gum forests of the Riverina for over 100 years.

Large areas of the River Red Gum is on the border between New south Wales and Victoria and is a key species for the sustainable upkeep and recuperation of both New South Wales and Victorian apiaries. (Some 85 beekeepers utilize 800 sites).

Given the concern over Honeybee decline throughout the World, and the increasing realisation that society will not be able to feed itself if we do not have enough Honeybee pollinators, resources such as the River Red Gum are essential for the maintenance of the pollinator of society's food.

Due to long term drought conditions and the stressed financial position of the Honeybee Industry in Southern New South Wales and Victoria, some beekeepers have been forced to fail to pay for their sites. The drought and inappropriate rain rejection flows have not allowed normal access or flowering of the River Red Gum in some areas, hence many of these sites have not been able to be used in recent seasons.

The Honeybee Industry cannot afford to lose access to any of these sites if the Honeybee Industry is going to be expected to facilitate food production (through pollination) for the future.

Pollination is usually short term (3-4weeks) and hives have to be in suitable condition (have sufficient bee numbers and contain adequate honey reserves) to effectively pollinate food crops. Hives must have resources (pollen and nectar) to support the hives for the other 11 months of the year, and River Red Gum is an important resource for the sustenance of hives.

It can be seen by the figures of bee sites (600 within the Assessment area) that this is a most important area to the Honeybee Industry.

There is an estimated 40-50 beekeepers who utilize the Millawa Forest with a further 15-20 who utilize the Moura Forest area alone.

This does not take into account the private property or the RLPB sites which access the River Red Gum areas.

During all other assessment processes, including Western Regional Assessment of the Brigalow-Nandewar Region, the policy stating that all existing Honeybee use will be recognized, must be put in place, if a change of management to Conservation is to occur.

The Honeybee Industry insists it must retain access to all previously used sites in the Assessment area.

Yours sincerely

Bill

Billy Weiss
President
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