

Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society Inc.

FOUNDED IN 1955

AFFILIATED TO THE NATURE CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF NSW

Forests Assessment
Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 4206
SYDNEY NSW 2001

21 October 2009

Dear Natural Resources Commission

River Red Gums Assessment – create new National Parks

Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society Inc has been active in the conservation of natural resources for more than 50 years and has over 300 members. Two objectives of the Society are to

- ❖ act to protect and foster an interest in the natural environment ... and to
- ❖ co-operate with other groups to achieve these objectives at local, state, national and international levels.

We are deeply concerned about the deteriorating condition of the River Red Gum forests of south western NSW. We recognise their significance as habitat for nearly 50 species of endangered fauna and more than 20,000 waterbirds, including many migratory species covered by international agreements; they also have deep cultural significance and satisfy a wide range of recreational needs.

The Society believes the protection of the River Red Gum forests and the health of the Murray River are inextricably connected. The recent phenomenon of climate change on top of excessive use by the irrigation, grazing, and logging industries, have stressed the River Red Gum forests to the extent that 75% of the trees are unhealthy, dying or dead. We must not let logging deplete the small proportion of healthy trees left.

These industries are stressed themselves, and alternative sources of employment and economic stimuli are needed for the region. In Victoria, where new National Parks have already been declared in River Red Gum forest areas, employment opportunities are occurring in the recreational field. State Forests cannot provide a safe recreational experience – there are dangers to individuals from active logging practices and from the ‘conservation hunting’ that has recently been allowed in NSW.

Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society Inc urges your Commission to create new National Parks across the entire River Red Gum State Forest estate. These National Parks must include extensive stands of old growth trees which provide crucial habitat for threatened species.

Yours sincerely



Elizabeth Cameron
Honorary Secretary

Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society Inc.
ABN 86511271725
PO Box 52 Mortdale 2223
Website: off.oatleypark.com