

Forests Assessment
Natural Resources Commission
GPO Box 4206
Sydney NSW 2001

Dear Natural Resources Commission

Re: River Red Gum assessment

Having spent a significant part of my adult life working in central and south-western NSW, I have experienced first hand the beauty and ecological and economic value of the regions' River Red Gum forests. Unfortunately, I have also witnessed the widespread degradation of these forests. Logging, grazing, and probably most significantly of all, reduced water flow from over-use in irrigation, threaten these forests. Many stands of trees are highly stressed or dying, removing habitat for a wide diversity of animals (including threatened Superb Parrots and Squirrel Gliders among others), reducing recreational opportunities and leading to further degradation of the Murray, Murrumbidgee and Lachlan Rivers.

The protection of River Red Gum forests is essential to conserve their environmental values, including those areas listed as internationally significant under the Ramsar convention. The best way to achieve this protection is the declaration of new conservation reserves (national parks or nature reserves) over all of the available and suitable public land (especially the State Forests). Please make the gazettal of new conservation reserves the central recommendation from this forest assessment. I also urge you to recommend additional environmental flows of water for these forests to improve their health.

Regards,

Dr Carl Gosper PhD, B. Nat. Res.