



New submission for investigation "Central West Investigation"

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Submission for the investigation "Central West Investigation"Submitted on **18-10-2018**

Information provided by the author:

Title: **Ms**First Name: **Francisca**Last Name: **Majoor**

Description:

Response to central west investigation – draft proposals paper I moved to Woodend from the ‘Bend of Isles’ ‘Environmental Living Zone’ in Kangaroo Ground in 2010. This zone attracts mostly people with a keen interest in environmental preservation and has stringent regulations to ensure minimal impact of human habitation. Regulations include no exotic plants, no removal of native vegetation, no dogs or cats. Preexisting land use rights does allow people who lived in the area before the rezoning to keep a dog and/or cat and that right is transferred on sale of the property. This continues to be a divisive issue between residents. My family however enjoyed the zone’s remarkably intact environment and spectacular displays of orchids and fungi etc. In short, its diverse vegetation and fauna. Without its Environmental Living Zoning, this area on the outer suburban fringe of Melbourne would have been subject to multiple uses, such as horse riding, 4 wheel driving, trail biking, the cultivation of exotics, and removal of native vegetation resulting in degradation of that environment. Our experience here has shown me that people and nature can co-exist, but regulation makes sure it happens in the best possible way. The Wombat State Forest is a similarly important natural environment and enjoys a similar diversity of plant and animal species. However historical uses such as logging and gold mining and current unchecked recreational uses like horse riding, trail biking etc. have impacted on its environmental integrity. Living in Woodend has opened my eyes to the incredibly diverse lifestyles and attitudes towards the environment. This can be best illustrated by a long nature strip bordering the railway line along Quarry Road. The local Landcare group has identified this strip as having native flora of local significance, however local residents would like to mow the whole lot as a fire protection measure. Different attitudes to the environment persist, but if science is used as a guide and communities are educated to appreciate the validity of regulation we can all benefit from an intact environment around us. Also, I was horrified to see a ‘controlled burn’ on Mt Macedon get out of hand 2 years ago, leaving a huge patch of affected land on the vulnerable steep slopes near its summit. I question the validity of controlled burning. Many environmentalists suggest that burning off actually dries out forests hence encouraging potential future fires with

multiple impacts on water catchments and ecology. Given that population and tourism in this region will increase dramatically, it seems to me that land degradation throughout Victoria must give way to more considered regulations especially in areas where habitat is still intact. The proposal to rezone sections of the Wombat State Forest to national forest restrict but does not curtail the recreational needs of trail riders etc. and allows for the preservation of local habitat. I completely endorse your draft proposals paper. It takes into consideration present and future uses and is comprehensive. The proposals balance recreational needs with the impact of climate change, population growth and water catchment management whilst endorsing increased recognition and partnership with traditional owners in public land use and management. I hope the government accepts your proposals.

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