



New submission for investigation "Central West Investigation"

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**Submission for the investigation "Central West Investigation"**Submitted on **21-10-2018**

Information provided by the author:

Title: **Mr**First Name: **David**Last Name: **Harris**

Description:

My name is David Harris, I am a long term resident of the area, and I urge VEAC to recommend that the whole of the Wombat State Forest be protected by being declared a National Park. Why ? Despite having been virtually destroyed during the gold rush, and again in Bolte style exploitation in the '60's and 70's, the Wombat forest today is a significant natural resource, providing a home for numerous threatened species of plants and animals. It is the source of some of Victoria's major rivers, and acts to clean and preserve the water which we later exploit as drinking water and for agriculture. In an earlier, ignorant age, we might have been forgiven for imagining that nature was infinitely bountiful, and impossible to damage. We know better now. Failing to protect this forest will be a crime for which our grandchildren will hold us accountable. I must just say a few words about the ridiculous suggestion that four wheel drivers and firewood collectors and hunters are somehow caring for the forest. Last year my wife and I walked to the top of Mount Wilson carrying large plastic bin bags, which we filled to the brim with bottles and cans left behind by off roaders. I regularly see trees chopped down by firewood collectors, and in walking in the forest for twenty years, I have seen one dead pig, but dozens of dead wallabies courtesy of our nature loving hunters. In declaring the Wombat Forest a National Park, we would not be 'locking it up' we would be preserving it for valid and well understood scientific reasons, and for future generations to responsibly enjoy.

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