



LETTER OF PROTEST re: proposal to change status of the Wombat State Forest.

Braden

to:

veac

05/11/2018 11:59 AM

Hide Details

From: Braden

To: veac@delwp.vic.gov.au,

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a resident of Woodend and the owner of a small ¼ acre house block within the Macedon Ranges Shire.

However, I grew up in Trentham & later in Newbury (both within the Hepburn Shire) where my parents have a property bordering the Wombat State Forest.

Over the last 27 years (since I was 10), I have had the privilege to utilise the Wombat State Forest in a variety of ways > from family picnics, to casual walks with my dog, camping, to mountain bike riding, horse riding, and even collecting wood in certain areas. Some of my fondest memories involve these activities within the Wombat State Forest.

I have also been lucky enough to participate in charity events such as the Riding Develops Abilities (<http://www.rdav.asn.au/>), better known as Riding for the Disabled. This is a 4 or 5 day camping & horse riding event where a number of volunteers give up hundreds of hours of their time to help raise money, awareness, provide services & to just put a smile on the face of someone not as fortunate as ourselves.

In all the years & the countless times I have utilised the Wombat State Forest, I can honestly say that myself & the people I was with have never left the forest in worse condition than when we entered it. We have respected it & looked after it to the best of our abilities.

When my children are older, I would like to be able to provide them with the same opportunities & similar experiences within the Wombat State Forest as I had.

The notion that Wombat State Forest communities want the forest to be reclassified to a National Park is a fallacy. I don't doubt that there is a minority that wish this change (there always is), but I personally know hundreds of people within the region, and I can categorically say that you would be lucky to find someone who supports this proposal by your department.

If you also talk to business owners within the area, many are also concerned that this proposed status change from State Forest to National Park will have a long lasting negative impact on their livelihoods & the wider communities.

As a local who has enjoyed the Wombat State Forest for over 2/3 of his life, I see no valid reason for changing it to a National Park and thereby imposing massive lifestyle changes to the lives of so many. I therefore strenuously object to the proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Braden Falkiner