



Central West Investigation, Draft Proposal Paper - Submission

Richard

to:

veac

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From: Richard &lt;

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

I am writing in response to the Central West Investigation Draft Proposal Paper prepared by your organisation, the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council. I am writing in relation to the 'Macedon Block', specifically the Wombat State Forest. I am opposed to your recommendations within the proposal for the reasons outlined below.

Having grown up and spent the majority of my life in the area, my family and I have frequented the Wombat State Forest for decades and that I continue to frequent several times a month year round. I believe I have an ongoing interest and appreciation in the land and first hand experience in its regular usage.

I support the reasonable management of the land however, I do not support the recommendations to convert the status of the existing public land into either national, state or conservation parks as stated in 7.10 Draft Recommendations made by VEAC.

The Proposal states that the native flora and fauna within the land is primarily under 'pressure' from perceived increases in recreational activities and use of natural resources. Specifically, the activities of pest control, camping, four wheel driving, bike and horse riding and resource collection are suggested as the main sources of the pressure.

The Proposal seeks to eliminate this pressure primarily through recommending the land status be converted to state/national park, thereby introducing strict controls and outright bans on recreational and other activities that are currently enjoyed on the land.

Despite the reasoning in the Proposal, it is my experience that the majority of frequent users of the land take a considerable amount of pride and connection to it through the activities they undertake. Camping, four wheel driving, bike and horse riding are restricted to old, well established sites, tracks and formed roads. Furthermore the general maintenance of these tracks and roads are dependant on the regular debris clearing provided by these user groups.

These users are not typically careering off these paths blundering through the bush and destroying ever increasing amounts of virgin vegetation and chasing away fauna as suggested in the Proposal.

Furthermore, the collection of firewood by individuals contributes significantly to both the upkeep of the roads and reduces the fuel on the forest floor. Again, the local resident collecting lifestyle firewood isn't going around the bush felling 100 year old free standing mountain ash as suggested.

The Proposal also claims that there were 'many' community submissions that support the formation of park status but was vague on the specific number. However it was clear that over 20% of the community opposes the conversion of their public land into park. This being the case, how can the Proposal possibly claim it has the support of the local community when the majority of submissions specifically oppose the recommendations?

I do not believe implementing the recommendations in the Proposal will obviate concerns in relation to the flora and fauna. On the contrary, I believe they are entirely misguided and will result in overall increased risk of wild fire and spread of feral and pest species. Given this, one has to question if the stated intent behind the recommendations in the Proposal are for the reasons outlined or if it is driven more by ideological concerns.

Regards

[Richard Jordan](#)

Mobile No.