

VEAC Central West Investigation submission December 2018

I wish to support the recommendation by VEAC in regard to the establishment of a large new national park, the proposed **Wombat –Lerderderg National Park**.

I live in Trentham, almost surrounded by the beautiful Wombat Forest, and value its trees, plants, birds and animals. I often walk in the forest, savouring its peaceful atmosphere, watching out for the seasonal changes in plants and bird life, and wondering how we can preserve this magnificent legacy for future generations to enjoy.

The establishment of the proposed national park is vitally important for the following reasons:

- As noted in the VEAC report it is an area of very high biodiversity including threatened species such as the Powerful Owl and the Wombat Leafless Bossiaea. It is renowned for its unique fungal diversity with over 400 species being recorded.
- It is a habitat for migratory birds with some species returning in Spring to breed.
- The Wombat forest is already a refuge for many species and will become even more important as climate change affects the habitats of our birds and animals.
- As the area includes the headwaters of several rivers, including our local ones the Coliban and Campaspe, it is imperative that we protect our water supply and catchment areas.
- National Parks bring tourism, and properly managed, will allow many of the current recreational and other public uses to continue.
- It will allow the Dja Dja Wurrung more certainty in the custodianship of their country.
- **With so much forest already destroyed or degraded it is important we conserve such areas for future generations to both enjoy and to learn from.**

Jill McCallum