



New submission for investigation "Central West Investigation"

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## Submission for the investigation "Central West Investigation"

Submitted on **07-12-2018**

Information provided by the author:

Title: **Mr**

First Name: **Russell**

Last Name: **Newton**

Description:

I own property which is within several hundred meters of the boundaries of the new Wombat National Park and I oppose the creation of the Wombat National park on the following points I think the cessation of domestic firewood will have a negative impact on the communities who surround the Wombat forest area and rely on wood as a vital source of heating. The collection of domestic firewood has a benefit in the management of the current state forest. The current situation where DELWP crews thin trees on roadsides where fuel reduction burns are planned and then allow domestic firewood collection to remove the fallen timber, which reduces the fuel load on the road sides helping to keep the burn in place and reducing time spent patrolling the edges. Currently the Hepburn Regional Park has areas which could have been opened to domestic firewood collection after a storm knocked down hundreds of trees to the south of Daylesford, which has been left on the ground and has allowed the area to become choked with invasive weeds. Between the fallen trees and the weeds the area to the south of Daylesford is now a massive fire risk which will be difficult to control in the event of a fire. A risk which could have been mitigated by better management and is an example of what will become of the rest of the Wombat State forest under parks management. Given this attitude to domestic firewood I think the new management of the smaller section of the park which will allow collection, firewood will not likely be made available either. The wombat forest has been logged for generations and is now mostly regen forest which requires management to help it return to a healthy mature forest. I do not want to see a return to the commercial sawlog harvesting of the past but the vast areas where the forest is currently tightly packed spar and will take many generations to naturally thin out while posing a significant risk of bushfire to the communities who live on its boundary's. These risks are currently being managed and I think are highly unlikely to be maintained to this degree under Parks leadership. A ban on hunting will negatively impact the residents surrounding the forest by creating a haven for foxes and other introduced species which without recreational hunters keeping the numbers down will have a negative impact on wildlife in the new Park. 1080 poison is not the most humane way this can be managed and has impacts of the natural predators eating

poisoned animals. Banning prospecting within the Park is a very poor way of preventing the few prospectors who are making any mess from further damaging any sites of historical significance perhaps proper policing of the current rules would be more suitable. I would like to see the current level of access to the Four Wheel drive community be maintained by allowing people to access the smaller tracks within the forest there is a better chance of fire crews gaining access to control fires started by lightning strikes etc. I think free camping is important and should be maintained. Any change to the current usage of the forest area for Hunting, Prospecting Horse riding, camping and four wheel driving etc. will have a negative impact of the businesses which currently support those activities further reducing employment in struggling towns. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to make a submission.

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