

Enquiries: Julia Franco
Telephone: 9433 3328

2 November 2016

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council
PO Box 500
East Melbourne, Victoria 3002

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Statewide Assessment of Public Land

Nillumbik Shire Council welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback to the VEAC Statewide Assessment of Public Land Discussion Paper and Draft Proposals Paper. Nillumbik Shire has extensive tracts of Public Land and is the Committee of Management for various Crown Reserves. Therefore, we have direct involvement and interest in the management and use of this land.

We are supportive of the assessment of public land as outlined in the Discussion Paper and are supportive of the recommendations outlined in the Draft Proposals Paper. We see these recommendations as a positive step forward and are happy that the key issues have been captured. However, we provide comment on both papers as follows.

Discussion Paper

The response received from other local councils aligns with Nillumbik's concerns for public land. On page 37 and 38 of the Discussion Paper it refers to a range of elements of change, including one that deals with crown land managed by Council. There is a need to verify what changes are recommended here that might affect Council's current Committee of Management status for various pieces of land. In addition to this, the transfer of ownership and/or management of land to local government will need to be appropriately resourced prior to transfer if this was to occur.

Regarding the element *Facilitation of linkages to local planning schemes to manage natural and heritage assets* the proposed changes for the Yellingbo area may have an application for other areas of high significance, particularly in Nillumbik Shire and is supported.

Draft Proposals Paper

Although Ecological vegetation classes (EVCs) are the standard unit for describing native vegetation types in Victoria and have been used as surrogates for ecological communities for many years, the use of EVCs would seem to be missing out on more accurate descriptions of vegetation communities which is important to the proper differentiation of such communities and protection of their constituent species.

Page 14: It would be beneficial to have figures on what proportion of Victoria's \$20 billion tourism industry can be related to public land.

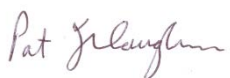
Page 15, 2.3: The following statement *and the limited resources available to public land managers to deal with an ever-widening range of responsibilities* identifies the problem of limited resources available for public land management, but this should be put into the context that there has been reduced funding from the government for this purpose than there was in the past. This is especially so for the management of weeds and pest animals on public land. Some of this is explained by the diversion of resources to the management of bushfires since Black Saturday, but it would be useful to compare the past 20 years of financial allocations for weed and pest animal management on public land.

Nillumbik Shire Council is supportive of all the recommendations outlined in the Draft Proposals Paper, but provides the following comments:

- Recommendation 3d: This recommendation might impact government roads in Nillumbik Shire, being mindful that many will need to be re-surveyed as they are not where they are mapped.
- Recommendation 11: In terms of representation it appears that only non-reserved public land is being looked at to improve representation. Given the probable impacts of climate change it would be wise to look at habitat connectivity across all regions to better facilitate adaptation to a changing climate through movement of species along suitable corridors. This could require both private and unreserved public land to be effective.

We hope that you will give this submission your fullest consideration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,



Pat Vaughan
Executive Officer