

4 November 2016



**GOULBURN
BROKEN**

CATCHMENT
MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY

www.gbcma.vic.gov.au

Victorian Environmental Assessment Council
Level 6, 8 Nicholson Street
East Melbourne 3002
Victoria, Australia

Dear Council,

Re: Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GB CMA) feedback on the Statewide Assessment of Public Land Discussion Paper and Draft Proposals Paper

On behalf of the GB CMA I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide input into your discussion paper on the Statewide Assessment of Public Land.

The GB CMA supports the draft recommendations R1-17 proposed by VEAC Council, and notes they are sensible and practical and will make broader understanding of public land management much clearer. We note that with any consolidation or simplification, the public land use categories must clearly define the purpose(s) of the public land to ensure the legislation and management arrangements for each land use category are consistent and readily understood.

The GB CMA also acknowledges the over 1,200 local community (volunteer) committees of management managing 1,500 Crown land reserves across the state and strongly supports the R19 recommendation, which includes increased support to community-based committees of management with a system of regional coordinators located in DELWP (based on the Landcare Regional Facilitators model). The GB CMA acknowledges the value of our Regional Landcare Facilitator model and the instigation of facilitators focused on supporting community committees of management would be well received and valued.

The GB CMA also acknowledges that the granting of Aboriginal title and joint management arrangements on public land are not acknowledged in the current system of public land categories. We suggest that VEAC contact each relevant Regional Aboriginal Party (RAP) or Corporation to discuss and update current arrangements. For example, in the Goulburn Broken Catchment, this would be Yorta Yorta Nations Aboriginal Corporation and Taungurung Clans Aboriginal Corporation.

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There are a range of status' relating to Public Land Water Frontages across Victoria that require review to provide consistent management aligned to the key values of these areas. We believe there is an opportunity to review (public) Water Frontage values as there is much to be gained by getting a better understanding of the values these areas provide. Water Frontages are not only important for access to water and water sources for landholders - they are also very important for biodiversity conservation (including threatened species), aboriginal cultural heritage, water quality (through the filtering function of the riparian zone) and recreation (fishing, bird watching, bushwalking etc). The report by the Public Land Consultancy in 2008 titled "A Review of the Management of Riparian Land in Victoria" would be a important reference for this consideration.

The GB CMA supports the recommendations of the inquiry and the proposed changes to public land categories, however this alone is not sufficient to protect natural and cultural values. We strongly advocate for improved public land funding, to ensure management agencies are sufficiently resourced, to implement management actions supported by detailed, science-based management plans.

The GB CMA has ongoing concerns regarding the current management of public land both within our Catchment and across the State. The lack of or reduced number of extension staff and resourcing being the obvious challenge. A key point is our community clearly needs to know where the public land is, who is the land manager, who is responsible for its management and how do they contact them, and what is allowed or not allowed regarding community use of that public land.

Should you require any further information regarding this response, please contact Steve Wilson GB CMA Land and Biodiversity Program Manager on 5822 7737, mobile 0438 394 353 or email steve@gbcma.vic.gov.au

Yours sincerely



Chris Norman
Chief Executive Officer
Goulburn Broken CMA