



New submission for investigation "Central West Investigation"

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23/06/2017 05:16 PM

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Submission 2

Central West

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Submission for the investigation "Central West Investigation"

Submitted on **23-06-2017**

Information provided by the author:

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Description:

I believe that State Forests provide the right balance between use, management and conservation. 1) The areas considered are especially bushfire prone and need to be managed to reduce risk to built up areas. 2) Gold prospecting is a major economic driver in these areas. Hunters also have a similar pattern of using small local shops and caravan parks. Many small towns and businesses rely on the visits of prospectors and hunters to remain viable. Residential populations and densities are not enough for all of them. Tourism will not replace the prospectors in sufficient numbers, nor will these tourists frequent as many shops and businesses in different towns as prospectors do. If these small businesses are lost so too will the service to the residents of the area. This will result in residences needing to drive further, putting more traffic on the roads with the knock on effects from this. 3) Managed wood collection is allowed in many state forests as a fire risk management tool and also helps offset some of the cost of living in more remote rural localities for those collecting. This would be stopped under a national park. The effect would be two fold - no free wood collection for residents who do collect and a greater demand on wood from private land, driving up prices for residents who don't or can't. 4) Beekeepers will be disadvantaged with yet another red tape requirement and associated costs. 5) Horse riders will not be able to ride the forests anymore unless on specially designated tracks, with the resultant permit costs and transportation to and from the designated track. 6) Camping will be severely restricted to expensive campsites run by the National Parks authority. A huge area will be out of bounds to Australians who want to just enjoy the experience of camping in the bush away from modern life and government control. 7) 4WD and trail biking will not be allowed, yet another restriction on people wanting to use the natural resource that the State Forest is. 8) Kangaroo numbers will increase, feral animal numbers will increase and collisions with these on the roads will increase. Already there are areas in and surrounding the investigation area that are extremely dangerous. It takes 3 weeks to get your car panel beaten in Maryborough, most because of kangaroo impacts. What is one supposed to do while waiting for 3 weeks? There is already enough of Victoria designated National Park with the extra special protections that land is given and the hazards it produces. State Forests protect the forest and allow it to be used. I believe the balance is right. Why change what is working already? There would have to be very good reasons for this. It would have to fix some big problem.

The cost benefit ratio would have to include the impact on all businesses, residents and road users. I do not have the confidence that VEAC investigators will look at all of what would be lost to them if this proposal should go ahead. And certainly change should not occur to justify the VEAC investigator's jobs and certainly not to win the favour of any particular political constituency. The will of the people who live in the area and surrounding area should come first. That is what government is supposed to do.