

GARY VERRI

Submission ID: 203667

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**Organisation:** N/A

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**Location:** New South Wales

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**Supporting materials uploaded:** N/A

Submission date: 10/10/2024 8:02:13 AM

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**Topic 1. Sustainability of current and future forestry operations in NSW**

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Current land management practices limit the life of some of the coastal forests. Fire has been an essential part of the environment since Aboriginals started to burn on a regular basis, Christopher Pyne fire researcher quoted "aboriginals burnt in three ways, frequently, regularly and often in fact the only time aboriginals never burnt was when it was raining". Some if not most of the forests on the northern tablelands are simply a mix of invasive eucalyptus species, the original landscape was that of woodland and had around 10 to 12 trees per hectare, a report commissioned in by the QLD government 1880s and presented to parliament, in that report A Skirtcilly mentions what is now Willsons Downfall as seen from Mount Sugarloaf as open country quote "a horse could be ridden from Mount Sugarloaf to Bald Rock without drawing rein" now the scrub is that thick it is difficult to traverse some of that country. A Cunningham mentions the locality of what is now Maryland, Cullendore, Bookookoorara "state forest" Willsons Downfall, Jenners creek, and Bookookoorara when he traversed the area in June 1827 he mentions Aboriginal fires these would had to have been deliberately lit as no natural cause could have started a fire in winter, R Fletcher surveyed the the journey undertaken by Cunningham locating all of his reference points, Fletcher could not site the same distances Cunningham could because of eucalyptus scrub 1980/90, Fletcher noted that the only place Cunningham was held up by dense vegetation in this part of his journey was in Bookookoorara state forest. M H Marsh 1842 likens the New England to an English gentleman's estate with wide open spaces streams of crystal clear water, the point here is we have destroyed the original woodland and replaced it with an unmanaged eucalyptus scrub which in the long term is unsustainable, for example most of the trees in Basket Swamp National park were either killed or would be of no use as timber trees the fire here was intense as fuel levels were extremely high

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**Topic 2. Environmental and cultural values of forests, including threatened species and Aboriginal cultural heritage values**

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Some of the small forests are too small to have any real public value and have become nothing more than a fire hazard and put anyone living close by at risk and greatly increasing insurance premiums. Most of the small forests were Crown Leases and held by individuals for grazing purposes and logged under the rules by state forests, but state forests would not release them to enable the holder to turn them into Freehold, this affected land rates right the shire, Tenterfield shire went from having around 10% of the shire un-rateable to now 34%, incidentally a lot of the larger areas were turned into national parks. The Willsons Downfall State forest had a small population of glossy black cockatoos living in and around a catastrophic fire put and to that with no sightings for at least 20 years the same can be said for the greater glider and the Pygmy glider and to lesser extent the ringtail possums, there has been none of the type of fire required to make nesting hollows, also the scrub has become thick enough to discourage kangaroos. Willsons Downfall forest was the town common was also rich in alluvial tin and had large population of miners living in the common, environmental damage from mining is still evident today. The scrub is thick enough to affect stream flows, after the large fire about two decades ago

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the streams flowed for a considerable time so much so one of the downstream landowners complained about people pinching water, this affect has been well documented by various researchers, in places land holders have been paid to keep land clear of large woody vegetation. Various forests would have a significant aboriginal cultural value especially those forests on the coast this doesn't mean the forests shouldn't be logged but loggers should be aware of the cultural value

Fire management should be a priority there is a lot of aboriginal that have knowledge of fire management and there is lessons to be learnt

Silviculture should be practised, we seem to have forgotten how important silviculture is to good forest management (including national parks) who knows the next generation might just see the same landscape early settlers like M H Marsh wrote about.

The fires we are seeing today were not seen 50 years ago, there has been too much red tape, that has all but stopped even private landowners burning strategically with threats of litigation, if state forests want to keep all these small forests some one should be responsible for firebreaks

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### **Topic 3. Demand for timber products, particularly as relates to NSW housing, construction, mining, transport and retail**

The demand is evident with the price that is being paid for timber products, even landscaping timber is at a premium, some building products are in short supply,

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### **Topic 4. The future of softwood and hardwood plantations and the continuation of Private Native Forestry in helping meet timber supply needs**

Locally there has been a hardwood plantation fail for a number of reasons some reasons being wrong species susceptible to insect infestation, wrong location to far from the market it was going to supply, and a softwood plantation fail wrong species for the location, the growth was too slow to make it economical, in both cases reasonable timber was bulldozed stacked and burnt to make way for an inferior product that failed, hardwood plantations should not be a monoculture and should include species that are not useful timber species eg wattle banksias this nay improve biodiversity enough that prevents insect attacks

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### **Topic 5. The role of State Forests in maximising the delivery of a range of environmental, economic and social outcomes and options for diverse management, including Aboriginal forest management models**

Aboriginal burning is the key to the best environmental outcome, irrespective of what you do no social results will be achieved unless you take the public along on the journey, people here the word logging and immediately think of TV images of clear felling, and if it is a case of clear felling that should be adequately explained

In other words education is the key

Some of the small isolated forests (less than 300ha) should be disposed of a trade off could be to include more aboriginals in the organisation as workers, managers, fire educators and public liaison officers

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### **Topic 6. Opportunities to realise carbon and biodiversity benefits and support carbon and biodiversity markets, and mitigate and adapt to climate change risks, including the greenhouse gas emission impacts of different uses of forests and assessment of climate change risks to forests**

Forests need to be thinned to around no more than 45 trees per ha 10 to be harvested 10 next crop 10 healthy saplings plus 15 habitat depending on soil and rainfall

## Public submission

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To mitigate climate change number of trees should be kept to a minimum especially along streams and riverine riparian zone, as it is supposed to be getting hotter and drier, the CSIRO has done a lot of work on transpiration rates and the figures are alarming couple that evaporation rates and you will see where our water is going