1/10/2002

To: DALY Graham <[redacted]>
From: Anderson <[redacted]>
Subject: Re: Help save the NSW Western Woodlands
Cc: nationalforests@wild.net.au
Bcc:

Hi Graham
Some thoughts on the woodland campaign;
I most definitely support the protection of open woodland country especially given its history of preferred clearing for settlement. The problem is I do not support a shift to a plantation base in this landscape. The open dry woodlands around the country only naturally supported open forest types, plantations are closed forests, this is a huge structural difference that negatively impacts on all other environmental issues and produces crappy fast grown timber that requires large applications of chemicals to provide product longevity and usefulness.

I am currently providing assistance to land holders (farmers) in East Gippsland who are looking at voluntarily restoring a percentage of their cleared land to the original mix of dry forest. Talk about highly depleted, the box-ironbark of this region appears in a fine belt of dry ridge tops between the high country and the coastal plains, it stretches in a huge arch from Warragul in the west to Nowa Nowa in the East. The most durable species were selected out during early settlement, fencing, sleepers, bridge supports (most still standing).mining timbers etc, and much of the coastal belt was cleared for grazing. The Box ironbark forests we are left with in Gippsland have spatterings of old growth throughout but are highly fragmented and biologically and structurally altered ecosystems. Most people would probably agree that this is a very familiar sad story for woodlands around the Australia

Victoria has just completed a box-ironbark study but this only included the forest north of the divide. The small Box-ironbark forests south of the divide (especially Gippsland) are not given any formal recognition. In East Gippsland this forest is subject to RFAs therefore the federal EPBC & EPIPActs don't stand. The RFA mapping was undertaken at a scale of 1:25000 but presented at a scale of 1:100000, this change in scale effectively wiped box ironbark ridge tops off the map, they became too small (in most cases) to be displayed. In terms of state forest management in East Gippsland the more durable forest types are usually classified as Coastal Mixed Species forest and are considered low yielding in terms of sawlog production. Strange that the most valuable durable timbers were so highly prized during early settlement but current foresters see them as 'low yielding' because they are not fast grown.

I would much rather see the farmers of East Gippsland put back the bush (as much as possible) and manage the regrowth for multiple benefits including timber, catchment and biodiversity benefits and maybe even carbon credits, than move to plantations. Some of these landholders are talking about 30% restoration, they are talking with respected forest ecologists on how this could be logistically undertaken. If only 8% of temperate woodlands remain, lets get some restoration happening.

Stopping logging is not the answer in most of the regrowth forests, changing the current industrial logging practices to fit with a community driven ecological restoration program. When it comes to public (and private) forest management, OF COURSE THERE SHOULD BE NO LOGGING IN ANY OLD GROWTH FOREST ANYWHERE AND THERE ARE STILL HUGE ISSUES WITH OLD GROWTH DEFINITIONS. The problem is huge areas are now highly altered regrowth forests vastly different from the natural forest structure and species diversity and distribution patterns. Industrial logging (clearfelling and its other silvicultural counterparts) is the problem, it is cheap, nasty and profit driven whether it is conducted in plantations or native forest and as a sideline it produces huge volumes of waste (read woodchip).

Also I recently had the opportunity to visit the mallee region in the SW NSW and investigate the implementation of property agreements with graziers in the Western Lease Lands. The Dept. Land and Water are allowing holders of grazing leases to clear mallee for wheat cultivation in exchange for the lease holders setting aside and managing a proportion of their land for conservation. The implementation of Agreements has been underway for about 3yrs and in this time 37388 ha of Belah rosewood, mallee, chenopod (saltbush) shrubland etc.. have been cleared for dryland cultivation (mainly wheat). Land & Water are using the RFA CAR model whereby EVCs are classified and mapped and estimates of pre 1750 vegetation cover is also mapped. L & W benchmark protection of each EVC at 30% of pre-european vegetation cover, some EVCs on more fertile soil types already exceed this whilst EVCs on poorer sites are usually over represented.

As I see it, these stupid land agreements are clearing vegetation down to an unproven benchmark on some of the most easily degradable land systems in the country to keep afloat marginal graziers. How bloody wasteful is this when on average there is only 3 good rainfall years in ten to grow wheat and no-one knows how many crop cycles before the land is exhausted. When similar clearing occurred in the Victorian mallee during the 50s & 60s lands managers noticed the increase in saline effected areas and we eventually (1970's) experienced Victoria's worst ever dust storms and the day Melbourne was covered with a blanket of mallee dust. NSW should learn from Victoria's mistakes the mallee is a very easily degraded land system.

I hope there are people in NSW fighting for the mallee country!!!!!!!!!! We really should be taking a whole of the environment approach preserving areas in National Parks and conserving areas outside National Parks.

Good Luck to the Western Conservation Alliance and the Woodlands campaign.

Loris Duclos

At 06:28 PM 1/10/2002 +1000, you wrote:

Hi all

This is very important as there is an opportunity here to get protection for vital parts of some of the most under-reserved ecosystems in Australia.

The Western Woodlands issue was the subject of a paper presented at both the National and State Forest Summits and circulated in August.

Thanks
Graham Daly
Chairperson
Canopy Native Forest Committee
Total Environment Centre - NSW

-----Original Message-----
From: Andrew Cox NPA [mailto:executiveofficer@npansw.org.au]
Sent: Tuesday, 1 October 2002 12:07 PM
To: wca-info@npansw.org.au
Subject: SUBMISSION TIME FOR BRIGALOW!!!!

Please distribute widely (apologies for any cross postings).

THE WESTERN WOODLANDS IN BRIGALOW BELT SOUTH NEED YOUR HELP NOW!!!

SUBMISSION TIME!!!! Monday 30 September- Friday 25 October 2002

PLEASE support the option of the Western Conservation Alliance WCA by writing a submission!

An IMPORTANT decision is coming near!

In November this year, a decision will be made by State Government on the future of 6.5 % of the state, Brigalow Belt South (BBS).The BBS covers part of the temperate woodland belt of Australia. Temperate woodlands are some of the most extensively cleared and heavily modified ecosystems in Australia.

It is estimated that only 8% (!) of their original extent remains. The Australian
temperate woodlands have international significance; nowhere else in the world
are ecosystems found alike. It is estimated that more than 60% of the woody vegetation of the Brigalow Belt South bioregion has been cleared for agriculture
in the past 200 years.

The biodiversity of the state and Australia is at stake: Brigalow Belt South (BBS) contains 40% of the State's plant species, it is a rich bioregion with the most amazing animals. Many of them are threatened, such as the Black-striped wallaby, Mallee Fowl, Glossy Black Cockatoo, and one of the largest koala populations of NSW. Plants and animals of the BBS have been subject to some of the highest rates of decline and extinction in Australia!

It is believed that 17 mammals are now extinct in the region! Woodland birds are now experiencing waves of extinction. The situation in the bioregion is

critical. Only 2,6% of the bioregion is reserved in National Parks! Firewood practices, unsustainable logging, mining practices and grazing are threatening these last patches of biodiversity!

The bioregion contains the largest remaining temperate woodland patches of Australia, the Pilliga and Goonoo. They, and other vital woodland remnants should be protected.

Please support the proposal of the Western Conservation Alliance!

Please write a letter/submission to support the WCA-option now!

Public exhibition on the options is from Monday 30 September- Friday 25 October 2002

Personal, hand-written letters are the most powerful medium and have proven to make a difference!

Send your submission to:
Resource and Conservation Assessment Council (RACAC)
GPO Box 3927
SYDNEY NSW 2001
FAX: 02 9762 8712

And send a copy to:

Hon. Bob Carr
Premier
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney, NSW 2000
FAX: 02 9228 3935

And your local MP

For your letter, please make a selection of the following dot points:

I support the Western Conservation Alliance option for the Brigalow Belt South Bioregion. (please include this dot point in all your letters!)

I urge your Government to protect the largest remaining temperate woodlands in Australia, the Pilliga, Goonoo, Bebo but also the smaller significant remaining patches in National Parks. Only National Parks give a secure protection for the future as logging, mining, grazing and firewood collection that damage an already critically is not allowed.

State Government should take into account that the WCA proposal can deliver a no net job loss outcome by the implementation of the following approaches:
1) A shift to value-adding strategies in the forest industry - through thinning of cypress regrowth; new timber products (eg laminated cypress); and replacing native forest firewood with less damaging and more sustainable sources. This will deliver at least 50 jobs.
2) A comprehensive National Park system to support new tourism projects and active promotion of the region to maximise longer-term visits to a network of areas and facilities. This will provide construction and maintenance jobs, accommodation and services in local towns. This will deliver approximately 188 National Park jobs and 126 tourism related jobs.

Mining should not be permitted in Pilliga, Goonoo or other areas with native vegetation. Most (80%) of the high potential areas for coal, gas and minerals
occur outside areas currently being considered for new national parks, and future mining should not stop new national parks from being created.

I urge the Government to establish a comprehensive, region-wide fund for

integrated conservation management across tenures for the BBS region.

Therefore the Government should:
1) Increase financial and other targeted incentives available for voluntary, long-term conservation by private land holders
2) Provide for voluntary purchase of high-conservation-value private lands and leasehold land within State Forests in the region proposed for conservation.

The Government should financially support major ecosystem restoration throughout the BBS region.

The State Government should make a very clear choice for a future for endangered species, a genuinely sustainable timber industry, a boost to tourism, and new alternative industry opportunities for the Brigalow Belt South region. If current logging continues, it will further degrade the already critically threatened and damaged woodland ecosystems. A shift to a plantation-based industry in the region is urgent.

The Western Conservation Alliance option is the ONLY option that proposes reserves large enough to protect viable populations of threatened woodland birds. The State Government should protect the many threatened woodland birds, such as the Mallee Fowl, Regent Honeyeater, Glossy Black Cockatoo, Gilbert's Whistler, Turquoise Parrot, Barking Owl, Black-breasted Buzzard, Bush Stone Curlew Masked Owl, and the Square-tailed Kite. Their habitats should be adequately represented in National Parks.

The Western Conservation Alliance option is the ONLY option that proposes reserves large enough to protect viable populations of threatened woodland mammals. The State Government should protect the many threatened woodland mammals, such as the Black-striped Wallaby, the Eastern Pygmy-possum, the Squirrel Glider, the Koala, the Rufous Bettong, the Pilliga Mouse, and the many threatened species of magnificent bats. Their habitats should be adequately represented in National Parks.

View our full option at www.npansw.org.au/wca-bbs

see also for all 8 options on public exhibition
http://www.racac.nsw.gov.au/rfa/wra/brig_ex.shtml

For further information see: www.npansw.org.au/wca-bbs
or email wca-info@npansw.org.au

[redacted]h
Western Woodlands Project Officer
National Parks Association of NSW
PO Box A96, Sydney South NSW 1235
Tel: 02 9299 0000; Fax: 02 9290 2525
Email: woodlands@npansw.org.au
Website: www.npansw.org.au

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For your information, the phone and fax numbers for the Head Office of the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC) have changed.

The new phone number for reception will be 02 8270 2000. The new tty number will be 02 8270 2167.

All old numbers will be diverted to reception for the next six months. Thank you for your patience during this transition