



Charles Timma

Dear Sir\Madam

There has to be a serious inquiry into the management of our so- called national, state and conservation parks highlighted by the disastrous bushfires this summer.
The bushfire's devastating impact has been exacerbated by extremely restrictive management practices on 3 main areas:

1. Heavy restrictions on cool fuel reduction burns at the appropriate time of year.
2. Access tracks used and kept open by the above bush user groups closed permanently by bulldozed barriers or revegetation programs so even firefighting vehicles have no access.
3. Restriction on activities. ie. Fire wood collection, 4wd driving, motorcycling, fishing, hunting, gold fossicking, camping away from the beaten track.

Our high country towns are dying. Many have lost their timber related industries due directly to extremely restrictive forest management regulations. Unfortunately they were the major employers. We were told to diversify into tourism but most parts of the parks are closed to everyone except bush walkers.

We desperately need people that will spend time and money in the towns and they are the 4wd and trail bike enthusiasts, hunters, gold fossickers and most importantly the mum, dad and the kids (and faithful family dog) campers. these people have been chased out years ago by park declarations and regulations

All my life I have enjoyed lived, explored and gained inspiration from the natural wonders of the wetlands, upland forests and high country areas in the north east of Victoria.

My earliest memories as a child are of these areas, fishing and hunting with my father. Learning. Not only the skills associated with these activities, but gaining an appreciation of the spirit of the whole area. Exploring every nook and cranny of the myriad waterways and secluded gullies and soaring peaks that make up this magnificent area.

Over the years my solitary experiences in these areas have been an important factor in the formulation of my personal and spiritual philosophy. I do not believe in the myth and stories associated with organised faiths, whether it be Christianity, Eastern Religions or Dreamtime beliefs.

THIS COUNTRY IS MY PERSONAL GOD - MY CHURCH - MY SACRED SITE.

I strongly advocate the opening of ALL parks to multi-use activity.

At the moment our parks are restricted to bush walking which follow well worn, narrow track corridors to various points of interest.

Enormous tracts of land are locked up where the nasties of the bush are free to breed unchecked.

These areas are exactly the places people like myself love to get into, far away from the bush walking tracks, deep into the secluded ridges and gullies, hunting the deer, foxes, wild dogs, feral cats, goats, etc. that thrive in this environment.

The pressure groups vehemently opposed to anything other than bush walking would not have any idea that we were even in the area because of **nil environmental impact**. We follow indistinct animal tracks, far from well defined bush walking trails.

This multi usage approach has proved it can work with some areas of the alpine national park open to deer stalking.

Enlisting the help of our firearm owners has proved an extremely valuable conservation initiative.

The recent fox bounty trial has shown shooting is a valid pest management tool where **tens of thousands of foxes** were destroyed, in turn, saving the lives of countless **HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS of our native fauna** that would have fallen prey to these merciless killers.

Despite conservation groups and the media's efforts to present all firearm owners as bloodthirsty Rambo types, the same time of the fox bounty trial there was no mass slaughter of our native animals. In fact these people have and continue to provide valuable information on illegal and poaching activities to our grossly underresourced fisheries and wildlife officers.

I do not own any of these areas and I did not believe any person or interest group could claim to do so where **all others are excluded**.

I am a native born Australian, I have had a life-long association with this area, its birds, animals and fish. This land holds strong personal spiritual significance.

I am making a strong plea to make National and State parks accesable to the WHOLE NATION by realistic management practices and extended access to this magnificent country - not just for myself - but on behalf of ALL ORDINARY Australians where everyone is free to come and experience the bounty this land has to offer.

Please! Make national and state parks accessible to the quiet achievers of the **WHOLE NATION**. Not just vocal minority pressure groups

Yours sincerely,

Charlie Timma.