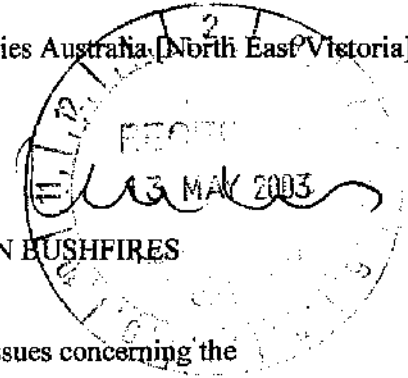


Committee Secretary
House Select Committee on the recent Australian bushfires

Submitted by Peter Panozzo representative for Timber Communities Australia [North East Victoria]

Date 8/05/03



INQUIRY INTO THE RECENT AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRES

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to bring to the attention of the committee a couple of issues concerning the recent bushfires in Victoria.

There has been a massive build up of fuel in the form of forest litter in the National Parks, which contributed enormously to the severity of the fires. The towns and communities of the North East of Victoria found it a bit hard to swallow when they saw all that timber resource go up in smoke. The same resource that had been taken out of forestry and put into National Parks on the pretext of protecting it, while at the same time having their government forcing their mills to shutdown thus creating unemployment, which in turn is quite detrimental to their survival

There needs to be more effort put into fuel reduction burns.

Why wasn't local knowledge and persons utilised in the fighting of the fires.

The salvaging of fire killed Alpine Ash should be allowed in the Alpine National Park, as the country cannot afford to waste such a precious resource.

Our National Parks need their Management Plans overhauled and that the local communities need to have more say in their management.

If it wasn't for the expertise of the forestry employees of Southern Hydro [a private company in Mount Beauty] the fires in that area would have been much worse and they should be commended for their efforts. May be government departments could learn something from them as they have to protect their assets all the time eg; fire, flood, wind.

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Peter Panozzo
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