



The Convenor
Bushfire Enquiry
Parliament House - A.C.T.

Dear Sir,

I hope I am not too late to express my thoughts on the bush fires that raged through N.S.W in 2002. The fires in northern N.S.W are the ones I relate to. I feel the severity of these fires was due to the lack of accessibility.

In the years when the Forestry Dept. was in control of the majority of northern N.S.W they very successfully managed a very sustainable Timber Industry - profit wise and environmentally - once these vast areas were turned into National Parks, access roads were closed, bridges demolished and it was turned into an inaccessible mass even to the extent that it wasn't safe for control burning to be done as the fires could easily get out of control.

Woodchipping was stopped which meant that the floors of the National Parks were never cleared of timber lying around.

Grazing was stopped - Lease country that was managed by farmers, who grazed cattle, was turned into National Parks. - This meant that ~~the~~ instead of this land being cared for by farmers, noxious weeds and feral animals took over and the undergrowth grew uncontrollably (Cattle grazing also keeps access to waterways clear)

As well as all of this - Pony camps, horse riding, 4WD vehicles used by fishermen were all kept out.

Locking vast areas up is definitely NOT the right way to go! The loss of vegetation and the

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out of ALL the animals who were burnt to death is
inexcusable. Changes MUST be made.

Another factor in the severity of the fires
was that Bushfire Control was organised from Sydney
and not enough notice was taken of the advice given
by the LOCAL bushfire brigade. City firefighters
didn't know that you could cut fences and let
cattle out - they didn't know that you could get
water from springs - they didn't know the importance
of saving fences and pasture grasses on properties -
only houses - farmers who built fire breaks
to protect their properties have been charged with
cutting down trees in National Parks.

I realize that the loss of homes in the
A.C.T. might not be the same as the fires in
northern NSW. but it boils down to the fact that
it is time sanity and commonsense come into the
management of National Parks and the fact that people
should be allowed to remove trees from their
properties that are a worry to them and a danger
and not be told by Councils that trees are not
allowed to be cut down. PEOPLE are more
important than trees and it is time that this was
realized.

I hope that this enquiry that you are
conducting leads to great changes in the future.

Yours sincerely,

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(Mrs.) Rachel Miller.