

**Senate Standing Committee on Environment and Communications
Legislation Committee
Answers to questions on notice
Environment portfolio**

Question No: 298
Hearing: Additional Estimates
Outcome: Outcome 4
Programme: Commonwealth Environmental Water Office
Topic: Alternatives to red gum forest thinning
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Question Date: 04 March 2016
Question Type: Spoken

Senator Rice asked:

Senator RICE: Maybe you could take on notice whether you were asked for alternatives other than the thinning?

Mr Papps: I am happy to take that on notice. ...

Answer:

The NSW Office of Environment and Heritage report on the ecological thinning trial, *Public Environment Report - Ecological Thinning Trial in New South Wales River Red Gum Forests* (<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/publications/140621-thinning-trial-river-red-gum.htm>) outlines the alternative approaches which were considered to conducting the ecological thinning trial.

This report identifies the ecological thinning trial as optimal because it is the only option that:

- can address the identified knowledge gaps regarding river red gum forest management
- maximises the ability to protect significant ecological features of the stand, such as large, mature hollow-bearing trees
- can be delivered in a safe and cost-effective manner
- could potentially be applied on a broader scale in the event that ecological thinning is found to generate benefits for the health of river red gum forests.