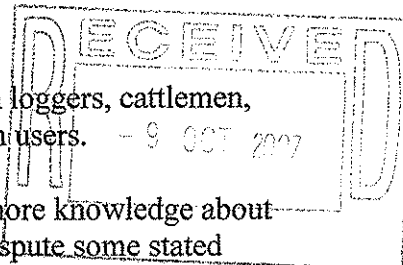


VEAC needs to go away and forget their idiotic idea of making the Barmah redgum forest a National Park.

The creation of National Parks destroys the lives and livelihoods of the local people and endangers the millions of native animals and plants.

The current national parks are overgrown and neglected; they are disasters waiting to happen. If you want proof, you only have to look at the devastating fires of 2007-07 and 2003.

VEAC wants to put me on the list of threatened species, along with loggers, cattlemen, campers, fisherman, apiarists, horse riders, trail bike riders and bush users.



I have worked in the forest for 50 years, which means I have a bit more knowledge about the bush than most, and I would like to share that knowledge and dispute some stated facts in the process.

River Red Gum

Fact 1. Forest workers are the most green orientated of all forest users and they have used the forest and looked after it for over 150 years.

Sub: 2 3 No:

Fact 2. the red gum forest has more trees now than it did 100 years ago.

Fact 3. Cattle HAVENOT harmed native grasses or wildflowers, as has been reported, they are still in abundance in the forest after 150 years of grazing.

Fact 4. Livestock in the forest DOES control the fuel load. One average steer consumes the equivalent of a small bale of fodder per day. Wild horses consume about the same. Approximately 350 semi loads of fodder are consumed annually.

Fact 5. Removing livestock and loggers from forests and establishing National Parks is inherently dangerous when bushfires break out.

As with the National Park in the Victorian High Country, the state government did not maintain the access roads made by the loggers and the fuel loads were not controlled. When bushfires spread through the area as a result of a controlled burn by Parks Victoria on a total fire ban day, the fire trucks were unable to reach the fires and they burned out of control destroying wildlife, endangers species and native grasses.

*It is interesting to note that the exact cost to taxpayers to put out these fires has never been disclosed. Estimates have put the cost in the tens of millions of dollars. It is also interesting to note that had logging activities, firewood cutting and cattle grazing been allowed to continue, royalties would have been collected and the access roads maintained (at no cost to the Victorian taxpayer)

Matt Ruchel from the Victorian National Parks Association has stated (The Age 09/09/07) that the draft VEAC proposals will preserve "around 400 threatened or near threatened plants and animals".

I challenge Mr Ruchel and VEAC to identify these 400 plant and animals and provide their location.

VEAC has clearly not considered the consequences of a disastrous decision that will ultimately destroy local jobs, and devastate local communities and families.

They want to take away the bush which is an integral part of country life, my life, and at what cost?.

What happens to the workers who lose their jobs as a result? The "adjustment and exit packages" haven't been explained. Stressed farmers are already at breaking point with an average of 4 suicides a week recorded in the past year!

VEAC should be prepared to have timber cutters' blood on their hands as well.

"Support will be available for affected business". What does this mean? Who is eligible?
Where are the details?

The Victorian Government is relying on VEAC for their recommendations!

I have serious concerns about the ability and competence of these public servants who have been charged with the responsibility of recording and compiling environmental figures when they don't know which state Ulupna Island is in, incorrectly call Moira Lakes the Barmah Lakes, and respond with "that's not our problem" when questioned about the loss of wildlife and plants in the High Country fires.

My recommendation, if they are interested, BUGGER OFF!
VEAC – Victorian Environmental Arsonists and Cretins

Doug Rosenow
