

Dear....

I write as one of the 14,500 members of the Bush Users Group United (*BUGU*) and as one of your constituents, to express my concern about the disappointing state of public land management.

BUGU held a Rally at Parliament recently where over 1,000 people from across Victoria, came to let the Government know of our concerns. Thank you if you were one of the many politicians who attended the Rally.

Several motions were put to those gathered and they were wholeheartedly supported. These are the motions:

1. **We demand a Parliamentary inquiry into public land management. – as detailed in our petition**
2. **We also demand a moratorium on the creation of any new parks and reserves until they can be based on the recommendations of the Parliamentary Inquiry.**
3. **This rally will not accept Victoria Environmental Assessment Council recommendations in the Central West Forest Investigation, that will restrict or ban any commercial or recreational user and their activities in any way.**
4. **That VEAC be disbanded and a new advisory body be formed that will represent ALL recreational and commercial stakeholders of public land including the CFA**
5. **This rally will not accept any more State, National or Conservation Parks that will restrict or ban people from enjoying their chosen activities.**
6. **That the Victorian Government stops giving full control to Aboriginal organisations to make rules and regulations that restrict or ban other people and their activities.**
7. **That this rally has 'No Confidence' in the Victorian Environment Minister, Lily D'Ambrosio.**

Our petition, which has over 5,000 signatures reads as follows:

The Petition of certain citizens of the State of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council the need to establish a Parliamentary inquiry into public land management.

The inquiry should investigate —

(1) why the policy of changing public land into parks and reserves has failed to deliver the promised environmental improvement, economic benefits and social outcomes; and

(2) why several recommendations of the Bushfires Royal Commission and the Environment and Natural Resources Committee's Inquiry into Public Land Management Practices on Bushfires in Victoria have not been implemented, especially those that relate to the lack of adequate fuel reduction burning; and

(3) the effects of current public land management policies on the extent and severity of bushfires, on the environment and adjoining private property.

The Committee should make recommendations to the Government, which should include the:

(1) establishment of a new public land advisory body to replace the narrow focus of the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council. The new advisory body would include representation of recreational and commercial users of public land and the Country Fire Authority; and

(2) the creation of a modern management system that allows for recreational and resource use of public land whilst maintaining environmental safeguards.

Action

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Council establish an inquiry into public land management and provide recommendations to the Government in a final report.

You will see from the Petition that our concerns are not limited to 'access' but a true concern and care for the environment. What is happening at the moment is just not working.

Changing areas into National Parks and Conservation Areas is not achieving the desired environmental improvements.

We believe there is a better way and BUGU is happy to work with Parliament to investigate possibilities where a broader section of the public can be satisfied.

The establishment of an Inquiry should not be seen as controversial as the environmental movement should also be keen to look for a way to achieve better social, economic and environmental outcomes for our shared Public Land and Waters.

I look forward to your considered response. Thank you,