

HAMILTON FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB

October 9, 1972

Hamilton Field Naturalist Club
D. McKenzie, Secretary
45 French St.
Hamilton, Victoria

The Chairman
Land Conservation Council Victoria
464 St. Kilda Road
Melbourne, Victoria

Dear Sir:

The Hamilton Field Naturalists Club wishes to make the following submissions regarding the public lands of the South Western Study Area.

DISCOVERY BAY: We support the Western Victorian Conservation Committee's submissions for this block.

We also submit that if beach buggies are to be allowed on the dunes, they should be restricted to certain areas, away from places of scenic interest, and where they cannot add to any erosion problem.

LOWER GLENELG: We support the W.V.C.C. in their submission for parts of this block to be added to the Lower Glenelg National Park.

Additionally, if the North-Western section of this block on the South Australian border, is to be given over to softwood production, we submit that at least two areas should be retained in their natural state as native fauna habitat.

MT. RICHMOND: We support the submissions of the W.V.C.C..

KENTBRUCH HEATH: We support the submissions of the W.V.C.C..

COBBOBOONEC: We support the submissions of the W.V.C.C..

NARRAWONG: We support the submissions of the W.V.C.C..

ANNYA: We submit that river frontages should be reserved for flora and fauna conservation and recreation.

While this block as a whole has a high agricultural potential and would also be suitable for softwoods, it's

Importance as a major source of hardwood timber; while at the same time, conserving some of our better stands of natural forest in South-Western Victoria, suggest that present usage should continue.

HOMERTON; We support the submissions of the W.V.C.C.,

HOTSPUR; Although there are conflicting capabilities in this block, we submit that it would best be left as natural hardwood forest.

The areas of messmate--peppermint gum forests are of special significance, being the last remaining stands of this type of forest.

While some areas may be suitable for softwoods, the area as a whole is important for hardwood timber production which usage has the least effect on flora conservation.

The area bordering the Stokes River should be reserved for flora and fauna conservation and recreation.

Because of the special significance of the Crawford River valley in this block and part of the Anya block we include a more detailed submission for this area.

(Submission prepared by Mr. Ellis Tucker are enclosed)

STRATHDOWNIE; We submit that the areas in this block, although small, should be retained for water-fowl conservation and as interesting natural areas throughout pastoral land.

WECCURRA; Because of the scarcity of public land fronting the Glenelg River in this area, we submit that all such areas should be permanently reserved for flora and fauna and recreation.

Regarding the Eastern section, we submit that this area should be kept free from softwoods; remaining as hardwood forest, with the South-Eastern portions, permanently reserved, because of its interesting flora.

Because the Western section forms part of the line of natural forest running North-Northwest from Portland it is important that an adequate corridor of this vegetation be retained between the two existing areas of softwoods. If more pines are to be planted here, the preservation of such a corridor becomes all the more important.

WILKIN; Because of the botanical interest of the Western section, we submit that consideration be given to proclaiming the area a national park. If this is impractical because of the size of the area, it should become a state park or flora and fauna reserve with the same security of tenure as a national park.

If more softwoods are to be planted in the North-Eastern region an adequate corridor should be retained

and this should include the frontages to the Glenelg River.

DRAJURK: Although this area does not appear as interesting with regard to flora and fauna as the surrounding blocks, it is important that the woodland areas be retained.

Important aspects in favour of retaining the whole block as hardwood forest are it's position in the chain of natural bushland running North-NorthWest of Portland, a chain almost certainly used by many species of migrating and nomadic birds, and it's low potential for agricultural and softwood purposes.

TOOLOY: If conflict is to arise between conservation, agriculture and softwood production, we submit that wetlands should be retained because of their importance to waterfowl, and that representative areas of nanna gum and other woodland, as well as areas of tall brown stringybark should be permanently reserved.

Land doubtful for agriculture and softwood production should be left as reserved public land.

ROSENBATH: We submit that the Northern woodland areas are important to retain because of the scarcity of this vegetation type on the public land of the study area, even though these areas are suitable for agriculture.

If forestry and grazing are to continue in these areas, the most diversified habitats should exclude these activities and be designated permanent flora reserves.

The swamplands and surrounds warrant security as reserves for waterfowl and other wildlife, while the remaining areas should be left as reserved public land as they do not appear suitable for agriculture or softwood production at this stage.

YOUPAYYANG: Because of the diversity of flora and the position of this block, we submit that the area should be declared a national park. If this submission is viewed favourably, consideration should be given to future purchase of the freehold blocks within the area, and of freehold land between this and the Bogalara block to form a corridor to link the two areas. (See Bogalara)

BOGALARA: We submit that consideration be given to declaring this and the Youpayyang block a national park.

Bogalara is important because of the different types of woodland areas, particularly round Bailey's Rocks, which are themselves important.

The fact that the block contains possibly the last areas of wombat habitat makes it even more important.

KANAWINKA: As there appears to be little conflict with softwoods or agriculture we submit that the area be retained as reserved public land.

The small block should be reserved as waterfowl habitat and for its geological interest.

With regard to the study area as a whole we mention again the importance of the corridor of bushland running nearly continuously from the Portland area to Bogalara, a corridor we believe to be used by many migrating and nomadic birds.

We regard wetlands and the vegetation along river frontages throughout the area to be of special importance and their preservation essential.

We submit that special provision is needed to ensure that land kept as reserved forest for hardwood production should not later be given over to softwood production, or be cleared for the chipboard industry.

As it is impractical for various reasons to create national parks of all areas that deserve permanent reservation and if no other form of reservation has the same security of tenure, we submit that action should be taken by the L. C. C. and the Government to assure such security. These areas could be called state or forest parks, flora and fauna reserves, or wildlife refuges. Most of which terms are already in use.

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HOTSPUR: (Referring to page 2, this is a more detailed submission for this particular area.)

We believe that all that portion of the HOTSPUR block fronting the Crawford River, together with the drainage area to the North, plus that portion of the AMBYA block fronting the Crawford River on the South, should be preserved as a FOREST PARK.

The association of Tree Ferns, Blackwood, Pomaderris and Woolly Tea Tree, together with the wealth of smaller vegetation makes the valley of the Crawford River a place of unusual interest in this part of Western Victoria.

This area forms an ideal habitat for many forms of wild life. With its permanent water, dense undergrowth and tall timber, it is a nesting area for many birds, including the Rufous Fantail, a bird which has few areas of suitable habitat left in Western Victoria. The area also provides food and a breeding area for many Honeyeaters during the Spring and Summer. White throated Tree Creepers, Grey Fantails, Grey Thrushs and Wrens are among many other birds using this as a breeding area.

The river itself provides an ideal habitat for the Platypus, also for the native fish, Blackfish, Toupong and the Gudgeon, all of which are becoming rare in Victoria.

The river is also a popular fishing spot, and many fishermen use it during the fishing season.

Despite the distance from the larger populated areas of Portland, Hamilton, and Casterton, since the ~~hedges road~~ road put in by the Forest Commission, on the north bank of the river, a growing number of people are using this area for picnicing and general forest recreation.