

Massive Assault on the Murray River, Communities and Users by the VEAC Information Sheet

River Red Gum Forest Investigation Draft Report

Overview

The VEAC is a body appointed by government to investigate the Murray River system, public land use, and to make recommendations to government on any change required.

The draft report on recommendations was tabled in late July and it is a **shocker**.

Effective consultation with communities and user groups has been virtually non-existent, with the exception of indigenous groups. A précis of the situation is as follows.

1. Recommendations

The draft report recommends establishment of 5 new parks along the Murray, the extension of many others and the establishment of a plethora of reserves. About 90% of existing forest is to become National Park.

Cattle grazing will end, timber harvesting will be reduced by 60% and a massive flood is to be sent down the river every 5 years (apparently regardless of practicality or consequences). Water alone (if available) will cost above \$5 billion.

2. Consequences

That all sounds fine, but these National Parks, Reserves etc. will mean a massive reduction in the useability for most sectors of the (real) community. In practice, this means a massive curtailment of hunting, forestry, grazing, horse riding, apiaries, fishing, four wheel driving, camping, dog walking, bird watching, etc. (these latter, because of restrictions to river access, camping, etc., and the outlawing of most open fires).

These restrictions will see the loss of some 23 game reserves (many purchased by hunters).

All National Parks and most reserves will exclude hunting. This region (particularly Kerang) is the very cradle of Duck Hunting in Australia.

All up, these restriction could amount to the loss of some 1,500kms of water frontage.

Estimates are that the cost to the local community (employment, camping, tourism, grazing etc.) could be in the vicinity of \$100 million plus per annum.

The document cautions that some residents may suffer negative impacts including unemployment, poverty, relationship stress and welfare dependency.

Indigenous communities are to be deeply involved (majority representation on committees) in the management of some of the National Parks. Although we welcome their inclusion, we see their involvement to date, in consultation and proposed management as vastly disproportionate compared to other groups.

Further, once National Parks are declared, Aboriginals are to get exclusive rights to hunt and fish etc. using modern equipment.

All should be shocked and astounded at the extent of these recommendations and the outrageous arrogance with which users and local communities along the rivers have been treated by the consultation process and how they will be treated if these proposals are in fact implemented.

The Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA), which is in large measure funded by your taxpayer dollars, has a campaign running in affected communities supporting the VEAC recommendations. **DO NOT BE FOOLED**. This organisation, and those connected to it are committed ideologues, they want to lock away National Parks at any cost but at your expense, without proper regard to the equally relevant rights of local communities (and their pioneering ancestors).

Much of this leaves us just speechless. It cannot be allowed to proceed no matter the ideology or any perceived notion of "Political Correctness".



IF IT'S NOT BROKEN WHY FIX IT

Why turn these forests into National Parks? Yes, it's all "stressed" because of drought, otherwise everything works fine at the moment as "State Forest". Current management plans can be amended and DSE officers could be increased to overcome local problems.

**THIS IS REAL, IT IS ACTUALLY HAPPENING. DO NOT REMAIN PART OF THE SILENT MAJORITY!
DO NOT LEAVE YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN THE LEGACY OF A "LOCKED-UP" BROKEN, MURRAY RIVER SOCIETY.
REMEMBER, PUBLIC LAND IS YOUR LAND, NOT VEAC'S, DSE'S NOR THE GOVERNMENT'S.**

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

As yet, this is not government policy, and it may only become policy if the Government approves it.

Spread the word and encourage others to do the same.

**IF YOU DO NOTHING, THIS WHOLE NIGHTMARE WILL ACTUALLY HAPPEN.
PLEASE ACT NOW.**

- Contact your local politician at: **Parliament House, Spring Street,
Melbourne 3000**
Phone: (03) 9651 8911
- Contact the **VEAC** by writing to: **VEAC, 8 Nicholson St
East Melbourne 3002**
E-mail: veac@dse.vic.gov.au
Phone: (03) 9637 9902



CLOSING DATE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS 21ST SEPT 2007

- Write to the **The Hon. Gavin Jennings, Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Innovation** at: **Level 22, 50 Lonsdale St,
Melbourne 3002**
 - Write to the Premier **The Hon. John Brumby** at:
**1 Treasury Place
Melbourne 3000**
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- If you would like to help our efforts with *funding ,donations or other activities* please contact us at riversforuse@ssaavic.com.au *or* at:
**Unit 3, 26 Ellingworth Parade, Box Hill,
Victoria 3128
Ph: (03) 8892 2777**