

Wednesday, 26 September, 2018

Rita Bentley  
BUGU – Bush Users Groups United  
bushusersgroupsunited@gmail.com

Dear Rita,

I'm responding on behalf on the Liberal Nationals to your letters dated 21 August to myself and The Hon Matthew Guy.

The Liberal Nationals are committed to supporting Victorians who use, access and enjoy our public land. We believe that public land is just that, public land, and it should be managed so that all Victorians can enjoy its natural beauty regardless of whether they are four-wheel driving, horse riding, prospecting, camping or hiking.

A Liberal Nationals Government will:

- Oppose the creation of the a Great Forest National Park
- Oppose the creation of more national parks in Central Victoria
- Oppose any VEAC recommendations that would lock out legitimate users of public land
- Invest in the responsible management of public land
- Encourage community participation in the management and care of our public land
- Back Victoria's native timber industry and the communities the industry supports
- Support the rights of existing public land users, including apiarists and prospectors

The Victorian Government should be focused on looking after the national parks we have, rather than locking you, the bush users, out of more public parks. We have made clear our opposition to the establishment of the proposed Great Forest National Park and can make clear to you our opposition to the creation or expansion of national parks in Central Victoria.

The Liberal Nationals acknowledge BUGU's concern regarding the independence of VEAC. However it is the decisions of the government, not VEAC, that establish or change the classification of parks. Victorians simply cannot trust a Labor or Labor/Greens government to act in the best interests of all Victorians when it comes to the management of public land.

In 2016, the Liberal Nationals supported a motion in Parliament for a five-year moratorium on establishing national parks in the Central Highlands. Unfortunately, the motion was defeated due to Labor teaming up with The Greens. Labor and The Greens are addicted to creating more national parks, the Liberal Nationals are focused on looking after and managing the parks we already have.



We have already made a number of announcements that impact the management of public land. These include Return of the Firestick to boost indigenous 'cool' controlled burn activity in Victoria, and policies to better manage our existing national parks such as fencing Wilsons Promontory National Park in a first step to eradicating pest animals from Wilson's Promontory. Our team will have more to say on responsible public land management as we approach the November election.

The Liberal Nationals are acutely aware of the concerns of Victoria's bush users and we stand ready to support your interests if Victorians choose to elect a Guy-Walsh Government in November.

Yours sincerely



Peter Walsh  
**Member for Murray Plains**  
**Leader of The Nationals (Victoria)**  
**Shadow Minister for Agriculture**  
**Shadow Minister for Decentralisation and Regional Victoria**

**THE NATIONALS**  
*for Regional Victoria*

**Peter WALSH**  
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