

A SUBMISSION ON THE PROPOSED NATIVE VEGETATION REGULATION 2012

From

Denis Starrs



22 August 2012

Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to draw your attention to a couple of points under Part 6 of the Public Consultation Draft.

The first is with regard to the allowance for protection of permanent boundary fences as non-rural infrastructure.

Whereas in the Central Region, on properties that are not Small Holdings, we are allowed to clear ten metres either side of a boundary fence (with the consent of the occupier on the other side of the fence)

But if the occupier on the other side of the boundary fence is not using the property for agricultural purposes, the allowance for clearance is only six metres.

We know from day-to-day experience that many people owning land for non-agricultural purposes have no interest in their fences and do not care if they burn down.

For the farmer however who is allowed ten metres on his side, he still needs that fence to be protected from fires coming out of the non-agricultural block.

Also there is always the possibility that the next owner of that non-agricultural block to decide to run sheep by which time the bulldozer may well be one hundred miles away.

I would suggest that the regulation be amended to allow that where a fence line is allowed to be cleared to a width of ten metres on one side, then that same distance, ten metres, be the allowable distance for clearing on the non-agricultural side.

But where both sides of the boundary fence are held as non-agricultural properties, then the allowance be six metres either side.

The other point that I wish to raise is the matter of fire breaks.

Land holders in the Western Division are permitted to clear fire breaks of 30 or 100 metres dependent upon vegetation type.

Here in the Central Region we are not allowed to clear any fire breaks.

I am attaching a photo of my property, taken after a fire came through in December 2009.

The trees are 40 year-old *E. pauciflora* and germinated after the previous bushfire of about 1960.

While I resent being unable to use the land that they occupy, I know that they are part of the goal of the Native Vegetation Act.

Now, following that fire almost three years ago, about half of them are dead and the remainder are shooting from the base, some from the trunk.

An effective fire break might have saved those trees and also the pasture that I lost.

As things are now, everybody has lost out.

So I would suggest that the provision for effective fire breaks be extended to all agricultural properties in the Central Region.

I thank you for taking the time to read my submission.

