

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Agriculture and Environment Committee](#)
Subject: SUBMISSION - Environmental Protection (Chain of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2016
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SUBMISSION

Environmental Protection (Chain of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2016
from - Richard B Howard, [REDACTED] Swan Creek, Queensland 4370

Background - Education /Experience

- My education was gained at University of Queensland in the Faculty of Agriculture.
- I have been a Water Equipment Engineer for almost 50 years now, mostly self-employed.
- For the past 30 years, I have also owned and operated a small farm raising fat lambs, and growing fodder crops on the Darling Downs.

RECLAMATION PROJECT HISTORY

When first I bought this farm land, it was a bare paddock, with Swan Creek along one boundary - it is on a flood plain

The banks were bare, eroded, treeless, and the stream was dry and silted.....it was no more than an neglected drain.

This was the result of Government removal of river bank trees over previous decades, in the name of "flood prevention".

I had to fight the "authorities" to stop this constant clearing.

I gained permission to lease the creek bank along my side.

I fenced it to prevent access by stock and wildlife to the extent I was able.

I gained permission from local Council, Water Resources, and Lands Department to plant trees along the banks, and to install a water supply pipeline.

I was forced by various Departments to pay fees to attempt to to repair damage done by them to this 400metre section of Swan Creek .

The grasses were planted by hand, to establish close ground cover over the flatter areas of the banks, Native & selected exotic trees were planted along the creek bank extreme edge for stabilisation of the almost vertical banks.

Both trees & grass plantings were watered by hand daily initially, and later by irrigation sprinkler lines weekly They also acted as wind and view breaks, and improved the local enviroment with reduced temperature fluctuations

Later, ground cover was able to be established along the steep banks once they had stabilised.

My side of the creek no longer erodes, and the banks are gradually building to lesser angles due to the ground cover established.

The Creek is unrecognisable from 30 years ago, with shaded waterholes, clean beds, grassed banks, and no erosion.

Fences have long since been destroyed by successive floods, but they did the initial job.

Governmental excesses (and my own financial limitations) prevented me from doing earth work to cut banks down to produce a wider stream valley

That work helps keep floodwaters within banks, slows velocities, lowers flood levels, reduces damage to trees and banks, reduces debris, etc.

The Creek banks could have been improved much more rapidly by lowering the angles of eroded banks prior to planting grasses and trees.

CONCLUSIONS

The whole point I am making by this example, is that it is ***ground cover*** which is needed to prevent erosion.

The trees are only the first stage, and they need to be placed selectively, not allowed to run wild over a broad

area choking down grasses.

Prevention of tree clearing will do little to reduce run-off, which is the cause of erosion, silting, and pollution of river systems and coastal waters.

Establishment of grasses (ground cover) will reduce run-off and thus erosion and its adverse effects.

Selected farming practices & earthworks such as keylining and contour systems will assist as well by reducing run-off rates.

The retained water enters the river systems more slowly

That is because the earth holds some of the excess water for long enough to reduce flood levels, volumes, and velocities, taking the edge off flood dimensions.

Rainwater infiltrating the soil will improve the country, prevent erosion, and so be beneficial to landholders.

What is needed is a carrot to encourage landholders to adopt these practices.

That carrot is that it is to their benefit to do so

Of course, Government intervention & imposed costs, such as I encountered, should be removed to speed up the adoption of land-saving methods..

A big stick to force the growing of trees willy-nilly, such as this proposed legislation, may very well result in abject failure of its stated objectives..

I speak with the experience of my piece of Swan Creek behind me.

Please do not do the same thing to the Eastern Australia land mass.

INVITATION

Should the Committee wish to inspect the results I have achieved, I would be delighted to escort and explain to delegates.

My small project is barely a two-hour drive from Brisbane.

In such an event, please contact me by E-mail to make arrangements..

Richard B Howard