

## ***Eprapah Creek Catchment Landcare Association Inc.***

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***27April 2016***

Research Director  
Agriculture and Environment Committee  
Parliament House  
BRISBANE QLD 4000  
*Email: [yminquiry@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:yminquiry@parliament.qld.gov.au)*

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

### **Submission to Committee on Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016**

Our group has been active for over 25 years in catchment care, carrying out water testing, vegetation assessment, weeding and revegetation projects. We are well aware of the environmental degradation caused by vegetation clearing and how long it takes to repair this damage. There are many examples of erosion and siltation from inappropriate clearing in our catchment.

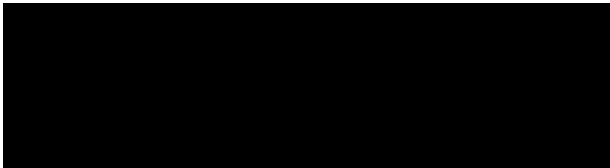
The impact of vegetation clearing has been especially destructive to koalas and other fauna that depend on trees for their food and protection. We have seen the decline of koala numbers in the Redlands by as much as 80% in the last 20 years mostly through habitat loss. Gliders and possums are also affected by losing their den trees which are only found in old growth trees. Birds are also disproportionately affected by vegetation clearing as not only their food resources and nesting sites are lost but most of the smaller species are left more open to predation. This situation is repeated all over Queensland with many different ecosystems being affected by the recent clearing.

We are most supportive of legislation which will rein in the massive clearing that has occurred in Queensland in the last few years. It is good to see the protection of high value regrowth on freehold and indigenous land being reinstated. It is so important to protect riparian vegetation, especially in the Great Barrier Reef catchments of the Burnett, Mary, Eastern Cape York and Fitzroy. The reinstatement of the riverine permit framework to the destruction of vegetation in a watercourse, lake or spring should help to protect these waterbodies.

It is however, disturbing to see that "thinning" may still be carried out without any limits as this is "self-assessable". Another shortcoming is that there are too many exemptions leading to loopholes to avoid the clearing laws. Ecological impact should be pre-eminent - purpose for clearing is irrelevant if endangered ecosystems are being cleared. In addition the definition of High Value Regrowth using the fixed year 1989 baseline does not keep up with the greater age of regrowth that is now over 20 years old.

In conclusion, we strongly support the purposes of the act but would like to see the provisions strengthened so that the act does in fact achieve its stated purpose.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of Lynn Roberts.

Lynn Roberts BSc (President)