

SUBMISSION TO:

Submission No. 627

**Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation
Amendment Bill 2016****SUBMISSION COVER SHEET****Closing date for submissions is 29 April 2016.**

Please complete and submit this form with your submission to:

Email:
vminquiry@parliament.qld.gov.au**Post:** **Fax:** 07 3553 6699Research Director
Agriculture and Environment
Committee
Parliament House
BRISBANE QLD 4000**Organisation or individual:** Mountain Cottage Pastoral Pty Ltd**Principal contact:** Huxley Allen/Helen Allen**Position:****Telephone:****Fax:****Mobile:****Email address:****Street address:****Suburb/City:**

Roma

State:

Qld

Postcode:

4455

Postal address:

As above

Suburb/City:**State:****Postcode:****Is all or part of your
submission confidential?**

Yes, all

☐

Yes, part

☐

No

☒**If part, please identify
which sections are
confidential:****Reason for confidentiality:**

SUBMISSION

We provide our submission in support of the continuation of the Current Vegetation Management Act 1999 and rejection of the changes proposed in the Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 ("the Bill").

Our family lives on a 10,000 acre property North-West of Roma. Of that 10,000 acres approximately 1300 acres is Category B remnant vegetation. This Category B remnant vegetation is thickening and where it is there is very little palatable grass for livestock and native fauna and quite a lot of scalded and bare earth.



Figure 1. – Timber that can be thinned

We have found the current legislation to be workable and fairer than previous versions. Currently with the self-assessable codes we are able to legally thin the timber to such an extent that we establish improved pasture in between the timber whilst retaining hollowed logs for native fauna. If this is achieved this land is worth approximately \$40,000 per annum to us at the cost of \$130,000.

Positive outcomes for us as landholders is increased productivity so that we can pay for things such as boarding school fees, more money to spend on other improvements and drought proofing. Positive outcomes for the environment and government are soil carbon sequestration, more money available for environmental works, more feed available for sustainable numbers of livestock and native fauna, increased shelter for native fauna, better water infiltration, less erosion, better water quality and more taxes paid.



Figure 2. Timber to be thinned

If the legislation were to change in such a way that self-assessable codes were altered and thinning rates changed to increase the amount of retained immature trees then this would severely restrict our ability to manage timbered land, making the land next to worthless for us.

One of the proposed ways of thinning by the government is to use fire. However, we do not favour this method as the burnt area is completely defoliated and eaten bare by kangaroos living on the new green pick from which it never recovers. We had an instance of this with a lightning strike and had to plant a whole paddock back to pasture.

Managing vegetation under the current Act is workable but it is still technical enough that mistakes can be made. Accessing maps, converting GPS points through different programs to load on the GPS, calculating the density of the trees, communicating instructions to machinery operators, these are all things that are triple checked in the office and/or on the ground but still there can be honest human error that needs to be taken into account. The continual change in government policy creates confusion, leads to mistakes and also leads to financial uncertainty for the landholder and the banking institutions that support the landholders.

Our land has been purchased as a business and as business owners we have a right to manage and improve our business. We are a business which provides work for other Australians, supports local communities, provides for our families and feeds a nation.



Figure 3. Eroded gully that we have re-shaped and put to pasture

We value our diverse community of native fauna and flora on our property and we are very particular about how we manage our property with respect to their continued presence on our land. The legislation as it stands now is workable and is a good balance between environmental and agricultural outcomes. For the sake of all landholders across this state do not pass the Vegetation Management (Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016.



Figure 4. New pasture improvements on the right of road.