

From:
To: [SDNRAIDC](#)
Subject: SDNRAIDC Committee
Date: Wednesday, 21 March 2018 9:04:15 PM

We are providing this submission in respect of the proposed Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 to be included in the SDNRAIDC's detailed consideration.

In providing this submission we refer directly to the Vegetation Management and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, the Introductory Speech of the Hon Dr Anthony Lynham MP, Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, of 8 March 2018, and the Explanatory Notes that encompass the proposed changes to the above Acts and a range of commentary and issues.

We do not in any way support broad scale land clearing or land degradation, however strongly feel that proposed vegetation management laws will negatively impact on the towns and communities within our council area, placing further pressure on farmers and reducing the opportunities for future regional development.

- These proposed changes should not be "lumping together" all types of vegetation management. Fodder harvesting for one should be considered separately and it is this I will talk about as it is what we manage.
- We are the 3rd generation to live on our property in the far south west of the state & we would not be here today operating a successful family business if we and the generations before us had not been sustainably running our enterprise. It is in our best interest to have healthy livestock & healthy country to viably produce what we do best – prime grass fed beef & fine merino wool.
- Because we live in an area with low rainfall it makes it doubly important to manage our mulga lands so that we have an alternative source of fodder for our stock in dry/drought times. Mulga is a true renewable resource – it regenerates twice as thick as it was to begin with after pushing for fodder. Areas where the mulga has grown higher than the reach of stock quickly become barren of grasses and herbage and with it the native wildlife move to more open areas. We have seen this first hand as when we feed our stock these tall trees there are just no birds or lizards present as there is no ecosystems here for them to find food. Compare this to areas with lower trees and fallen timber where the moisture is encouraged to lie in the lee of branches when leaf litter is trapped there & many different species of herbages & grasses can grow protected from domestic livestock & native grazers such as kangaroos until it has a chance to establish & go to seed. Where vegetation is encouraged to grow erosion is far less likely to occur.
- We feel it is extremely unfair for this issue to be used as a political football. It is so hard to make long term decisions and feel secure in our business when the goal posts keep being shifted. We are being told of advertisements being shown in Brisbane talking about land clearing killing koalas and taking away their habitat. We would suggest there is far more damage done to their habitat with every new highway, suburb or development going in around the eastern seaboard than vegetation management in the rest of the state. People in the cities are being given the incorrect idea that all these changes will help "Save the Great Barrier Reef" – only 5 catchments in Queensland will affect this, not our mulga lands in south west Queensland.
- The changes to the Fodder Harvesting code from March 8th have caused huge unnecessary stress to those producers who are feeding hungry stock in this prolonged drought. Are they supposed to just stop feeding their stock until they get the Notification form of the new code approved? This shows a COMPLETE lack of understanding of animal welfare and husbandry. This drought is impacting on producers mental health and things like this are just an added mental burden. How will this work when the 500 hectare approved area is finished and a new one needs to be submitted after

assessment? Will the stock be left hungry waiting for a feed until the paperwork crosses someone's desk?

- There is no surety for the next generation to be enthusiastic to take over these family enterprises when they cannot be assured they will be able to easily fodder harvest in times of drought. This loss of young people from rural industries is something we cannot afford – there are all too few people willing to take on the family property now without the ability to lock in sustainable development programs (e.g. drought proofing programs) without the worry of the framework changing.
- Local communities & towns depend on the rural industries in our areas, so loss of production on property will lead to a decrease in profits able to be spent in local businesses from grocery stores & newsagents to general merchandise. These are businesses we cannot afford to lose in remote areas.
- We ask that you reconsider many parts of these new Vegetation Management Laws and spend more time consulting with the producers on the ground living this every day rather than someone using a map on a computer to make decisions affecting many people's sustainability on-farm.

Yours sincerely,

Scott & Jo Pegler