

**From:** 1  
**To:** [SDNRAIDC](#)  
**Cc:** [Julie Sheehan - Agforce CO](#)  
**Subject:** Objection to Changes to the Vegetation Management Act  
**Date:** Thursday, 22 March 2018 9:13:44 AM

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Committee Secretary,  
State Development, Natural Resources and Agriculture Industry Development Committee,  
Parliament House,  
George Street,  
BRISBANE. QLD. 4000

Dear Sirs,

SUBMISSION TO:  
VEGETATION MANAGEMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL  
2018

We hereby provide our submission on rejection of the changes proposed in the Vegetation Management ( Reinstatement) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 ( "The Bill").

This constant change in legislation severely impacts on the ability of farm managers to plan and implement effective long-term property and business management decisions, and we provide details on how the added restrictions could, and would, largely destroy our ability to operate our property in an efficient and productive manner.

Ecological processes work in much longer timeframes and can be severely compromised when mismatching regulations are enforced. Farmers and graziers have long called for certainty with the vegetation management regulatory framework. We are totally opposed to continued uncertainty and attacks on our viability, the long term sustainability of our business, as well as attacks on fellow landowners.

The impacts of the proposed changes to the Vegetation Management Act include the following which, we believe, could and would impact on our operations:-

1. Thinning would require a Development Application to be lodged for approval.
2. The extension of Category B ( remnant vegetation ) and Category C ( regrowth vegetation ) areas to freehold land, and to water course buffers to all reef catchment areas, will deny us the right to maintain our land in a productive capacity.
3. The purpose for High Value Agricultural land will be removed, denying the ability to improve our productivity.
4. The ability to effectively maintain the productivity of the land by control of feral weeds, grasses and pests, will be compromised by the inability to control remnant vegetation and regrowth.

We quote a specific example of the possible damage to our property and to the environmental conditions applying to that Property.

We purchased some 1,050 acres of Queensland Government land adjoining the Gladstone Awoonga Dam buffer strip in December 2015. At the time of our purchase, the land had been locked away under the control of the Gladstone Area Water Board for some 50 years, during which time no effective or practical control of weeds and feral plants had been carried out. The land was covered with rubber vine and lantana, and giant rats tail grass existed in the lower portions and was prevalent through the fence in the buffer lands adjoining the dam area.

We had extreme difficulty in accessing many of the areas of infestation due to the thickets which had developed during the period of ownership by the Government Authorities. However, we were able to go through the process of obtaining a PMAV which allowed us to clear these thickets to more effectively control the weed and regrowth problem and, as a result, are returning the land to a much more productive capacity. If it had not been for the PMAV, the land would have remained in its degraded condition resulting from decades of neglect.

It should be noted that, as well as improving the viability of the land for grazing purposes, we have significantly improved the environmental aspects of the land. In addition, we now have a much better chance of controlling the wild dog and feral pig problems which emanate from the Government controlled lands – and bring with them the ever increasing risk of transportation of Giant Rats Tail grass which abounds along the edge of the dam area, having been washed down the Boyne River from State owned lands and reserves where no control is carried out by the Government Authorities.

We have not “cleared” the land, merely “cleaned it up”, and in doing so have left standing most of the iron bark, blue gum and spotted gum trees and saplings, which will become a very valuable resource in the future. We started this process with our D7G dozer in the heavier areas and then changed to a D4D which had a smaller stick rake which could work between the standing timber to remove the lantana and rubber vine, and we will continue this process as weather conditions permit.

It is our understanding that, had we been subject to the changes you are proposing, the land would have remained in its degraded state as a result of 50 years of Government neglect and would have been a useless mass of rubber vine, lantana and giant rats tail grass.

Please, do not deny anyone else the ability to improve the viability, the ecology and the environmental aspects of their land, as we have done and are continuing to do.

We should be applauded for our efforts, not treated as if we are vandals.

The greatest vandalism in our area is by the Government because of the failure to control feral weeds and animals as all private landowners are required to do.

Jim and Jenny Elliot