

# HAMILTON FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB



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To:

4 May 2009

## Victorian Environmental Assessment Council

Level 6, 8 Nicholson St,  
East Melbourne, Victoria 3002

### Re. Remnant Native Vegetation Investigation

#### DERGHOLM-CHETWYND REGION

The areas in question are shown in attached DSE map *Dergholm-Brimboal FM areas*.

Much of the forest is *E. baxteri* with a heath-bracken understorey. *Banksia marginata* and *A. mearnsii* are also prominent, with a few patches of *Banksia ornata* where the frequent fires that have been imposed on this area have missed them. The area is well-used by the endangered sub-species of Red-tailed Black-cockatoo, with *E. baxteri* providing seed and the odd large *E. camaldulensis* on adjacent cleared land and within the eastern part of the forest providing nest sites. The hot summer-autumn prescribed burns have generally destroyed the short-term seed-bearing capacity of the Stringybarks so the conservation value of this forest for RTBC is less than its potential.

The Dergholm-Brimboal block west of the Chetwynd-Casterton Rd is presently designated a mix of land-zones – State Park, SPZ and State Forest. HFNC contend that there is little basis for this situation. The attached DSE map *Dergholm-Brimboal EVCs* hints of the River Red Gum flats that occur in the NE section adjacent to the Chetwynd Rd and extending westward, but little indication that the area is quite extensive. Virtually none of that EVC is in this block of the Dergholm State Park. That is a serious omission and there has been no justification given for that during the West RFA meetings or subsequent recommendations.

The attached DSE map *Dergholm-Brimboal bioreg status* shows substantial areas as “depleted”, “endangered” or “vulnerable”. Many are within the State Forest area, including the entire area west of Nolans Creek on the southern boundary. That block should also be in the adjacent State Park.

The River Red Gums occur mainly in the designated State Forest. Powerful Owls have been observed in the forest and have a requirement for large hollows, as do the Red-tailed Black-cockatoos that also frequent the forest area. There are few areas reserved for River Red Gum – most have been set aside for logging.

HFNC recommends that the area designated as SPZ, and that of State Forest, should be added to the State Park to give it an adequate size, diversity and permanence. This SP should be re-named **Brimboal State Park** to avoid confusion with the other area (the Bogalara Block that has Bailey Rocks as a focal point) that would retain the name Dergholm State Park.

The **Kadnook State Forest** has been degraded by the action of **West Wimmera Shire**. They have used a substantial part for gravel extraction but have made no attempt over the years to rip the stripped sites and push back the piles of topsoil. The result is a huge area of degraded land with no regrowth of Stringybark.

The small **Connewirrecoo Bushland Reserve** has also been degraded by the bulldozing of a 40-m strip along the north side – cultivated sand with logs piled nearby. A senseless exercise opening the reserve to weeds and reducing its effective size. This type of mis-management seems typical of far SW Victoria. Such action does little to encourage effective connectivity between blocks.

Yours faithfully

Dr PR Bird  
Secretary,  
Hamilton Field Naturalists Club