

Your details

Submission details

I am making this submission as

A member of the general public

Submission type

I am making a personal submission

Consent to make submission public

I would like this submission to remain anonymous

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story

My family had approximately 70/80 acres at [REDACTED] burnt out during the 19/20 bushfire event (Tianjara /Currowan fires). The only area not burnt was the creek flats.

The property was burnt over three separate days. The Fires-near-me app was invaluable, particularly the mapping of the fire extent, which appeared to be updated regularly.

We also have property in the Yass area (beef cattle) which was not fire impacted during this period (other than ongoing smoke coming from the east /south coast or the Batlow/Gundagai depending on the wind). From this property I can comment on the extreme ongoing dry period and high ambient temperatures.

Terms of Reference (optional)

The Inquiry welcomes submissions that address the particular matters identified in its [Terms of Reference](#).

1.1 Causes and contributing factors

Drought - ongoing for several years, with very little pasture growth in either spring or autumn for approximately three years in our region (Yass), combined with high temperature starting very early in spring, and reaching extreme temperatures greater than 45degC. Runs of days at 37deg and above. The role of climate change needs to be examined extensively in this enquiry.

There is an aspect that I would appreciate the inquiry investigating thoroughly. That is whether forestry practices over the last 30 to 40 years (State Forests) contributed to the intensity of the 2018/19 fires, particularly in those areas supplying logs to the Eden Woodchip Mill. In particular the clearfelling of large coupes which then allowed/promoted the establishment of thick regrowth of native vegetation. The inquiry should investigate whether the vegetative/physical structure and compact fuel loads of these regrowing coupes increased the intensity of fire into adjacent forest regions, and ultimately into open farmland.

This should involve the input of independent forest ecologists, as well as opinions of Forestry Commission and NPWS foresters/ecologists/fire experts.

Ecologists should also be consulted on the issue of the loss of animals which in the past may have been present in sufficient numbers to have an impact on composting/turning over the forest litter eg. koalas (which were in large numbers in the Bega Valley area as evidenced by the dray loads of koala pelts shown in old photos) which obviously turn leaves into faecal matter, potoroos, bettongs etc.

1.2 Preparation and planning

The role of over frequent hazard reduction burning, at an excessive intensity, on changes to forest characteristics, and whether this makes them more prone to burning, should be considered.

Tree species (both native and exotic) which appear to have contributed to a reduction in damage around buildings etc should be listed so people can choose wisely when planting windbreaks etc.

1.4 Any other matters

Duplication of the Princes highway would have facilitated more rapid evacuation in many instances.

Supporting documents or images
