



Your details

Mrs

Title

First name

Joy

Last name

Georgeson

Submission details

I am making this submission as

A resident in a bushfire-affected area

Submission type

I am making a personal submission

Consent to make submission public

I give my consent for this submission to be made public

Share your experience or tell your story

Your story

I am writing to explain my situation on how I was impacted by the recent bushfires in the Bega Valley Shire.

My husband Bob and I have lived in Beauty Point in the Bega Valley for the past 13 years. This summer we were evacuated 4 times from our property incurring travel and accommodation costs and had damage to our wooden floors around the fridge when a power failure occurred during the mass evacuation on January 3rd. We applied for the Centrelink bushfire relief but were told we were not eligible as it was not our primary residence. We are fortunate to own 2 properties in the shire as besides our suburban residential address, we have owned a 100 acre bush property in Rocky Hall since 1978.

On February 1st 2020 our bush property and 3 buildings at Rocky Hall were destroyed by bushfire. We bought the property in 1978, built a cabin and my ceramic studio (with the help of a grant from the Australia Council) in 1982 and lived there during the 80's. It was declared in the Alternate Housing Amnesty in 1985. During that time we made a significant contribution to the community, for example I began the process to start the Rocky Hall Pre-School and Bob wrote a successful submission to save the Rocky Hall Primary School from being sold, which subsequently became the Community Centre. We also contributed to the community with the establishment of the Rocky Hall Store at Pambula selling local produce. I have given many ceramic workshops in the community as well.

I have viewed our property of 100 acres called [REDACTED] as a conservation sanctuary. The vegetation is predominantly dry sclerophyll forest, many trees over 100 years old. Over the 42 years we have looked after it, I have recorded a large variety of birds, mammals, insects and reptiles. Despite the impact of the bushfires there has been a remarkable recovery in both the vegetation and signs of wildlife. In future I would like to continue caring for the property and monitor feral animals and exotic weeds. As the round trip from Beauty Point is 260km we need to put temporary accommodation such as a caravan and water storage there to enable us to stay for a few days at a time to work on the recovery. We also need tools to be able to repair our destroyed infrastructure.

So my point is that even though we do not live there full time now, and still pay rates on both properties, we feel we have contributed a great deal to the Bega Valley but because it is not a permanent place of residence, we have not been eligible for any recovery funding.

I am explaining this situation as I have not been able to get any help to deal with this natural disaster which I believe is a result of human increase in Greenhouse Gas Emissions, contributing to severe drought and other extreme climate events. I also think there has been mismanagement of natural resources by forestry, corporate groups and individuals contributing to this disaster.

The points I am asking you to consider include;

- assist all people affected by natural disasters such as bushfire regardless of whether it is their primary or secondary dwelling
- assist in recovery of burnt property with weed and feral animal control
- assist in monitoring of regrowth and re-habitation by native species
- assist by directing people to services available to help with funding

I am sure there are other people in this situation.

Thank you for your consideration
Joy Georgeson
21/5/2020

Terms of Reference (optional)

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

Supporting documents or images

Attach files

- Studio cabin Volplana at Rocky Hall Dec 2019.jpg
 - Studio cabin post fires Feb 2020.jpg
 - camping on the block post fire.jpg
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