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Local Land Services  
NSW Government  
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26 January 2023

Re Native Vegetation Provisions of the Local Land Services Act

I write to LLS on behalf of Nambucca Valley Conservation Association Inc. (NVCA)

NVCA calls for reform in the NSW government's native vegetation provisions of the Local Land Services Act. We appreciate that the State government conceded to an extension of the consultation period for the Native Vegetation Codes until 27 January.

NVCA holds strong concerns about the rollback of strong biodiversity laws. NPA of NSW reports that this rollback has led to a thirteen-fold increase in land clearing, which has translated to incredible devastation of key habitats and EEC's, speeding up the demise of vulnerable wildlife species in NSW.

We believe the LLS needs to be far more transparent, and act to ensure the wider community is made aware of any proposed dilution of conservation legislation, and any weakening of restrictions imposed on land-clearing.

We fully support the recommendations of NPA of NSW, in wanting the current review to be suspended in favour of a more comprehensive review that acknowledges the severe impacts of the current regulations on biodiversity; we request a comprehensive review that would ensure no further species or ecosystems are lost.

NVCA also supports NPA of NSW's call for the NSW government to undertake separate investigations into options for providing greater support for regenerative agricultural practices. Such practices can enhance vegetation biodiversity, soil nutrition and water cycling – all of which can support regeneration of forests, perennial pastures and the health of catchments.

Furthermore, NVCA asks for improved, more effective monitoring systems, and far greater penalties for non-compliance of any kind. We believe the current systems of fines imposed for non-compliance and breaches are merely factored into the overall economics of clear-felling timber harvesting and land-clearing. If our State government, and LLS in particular, continue along the same lines of consistently weakening biodiversity protection legislation, then we shall certainly hasten the extinction rate of Australia's flora and fauna. Australia leads the world in mammal extinctions, and State-sanctioned and taxpayer-subsidised land-clearing is worsening this situation.

Thank you for considering the points raised in this submission to LLS.

Yours sincerely,

Carol Margolis, Secretary, NVCA