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**Sent:** Saturday, 29 August 2020 11:14 PM  
**To:** ecosystems  
**Subject:** New Submission to Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

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Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Ecosystem Decline in Victoria

Ms Lyn Hovey



**SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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It is with much regret that I have witnessed the decline of most ecosystems with which I am familiar over a period of 70 years.

The laws that are meant to protect our wildlife, grasslands and bushland reserves are not working.

I am a volunteer at the riparian reserve Wybejong Park in Riddells Creek which has progressed from a weedy wasteland into a biodiverse creek side wildlife corridor. But we fight weekly to hold back the threats to our progress. Cats from the local neighbourhood kill our resident sugar gliders. Invasive species damage the integrity of our grassland patches. Vandals rip out and cut down our planted indigenous shrubs. Despite the efforts of Melbourne Water subdivision developers have allowed clay and silt run off into our creek. Parks Victoria, the official land manager, forbids chainsawing, burnoff of fallen trees, indigenous management of grassland frass and curtails our ability to manage the land by endless restrictions and endless paperwork, now computer work. The area they have to look after is so big and they have so few staff and resources that areas not managed by volunteers, succumb to weed invasion. Parks Vic seems to be driven by its fear of litigation to the point that volunteers, all grown ups, despair at what they can and can't do.

We live on the urban fringe and have to continually write submissions to local government authorities to caution them about land clearing decisions, about what we could lose as they grant permit applications.

The Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act needs to be non-negotiable. Local governments need to abide by the precautionary rule - that in the first instance DO NO HARM.

Local planning laws are full of motherhood statements that developers can weasel around in their quest to build more and bigger.

In the last subdivision next to our Park, trees were deemed by the local planning department to be kept to honour the prior occupation of Aboriginal people. The developer built a road close to them severing the roots off on one side, then was allowed by the local authorities to cut them down because they were thought to be a safety issue. A whole hill side of remnant vegetation of *Poa labillardieri* was bulldozed by a cowboy before they had their offset

plans in place.

There is no-one to appeal to in these cases of serious disrespect of nature conservation.

Logging in native forests should be stopped now. With so much of Victoria's wildlife destroyed by fire we need to source our timber from plantations.

Ecosystem restoration should be funded and at the centre of our environment laws now as we grapple with the effects of climate change.

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File1:

File2:

File3: