



Dear Premier,

I strongly support the establishment of new national parks and reserves in Victoria’s central west. Please protect our forests, wildlife and rivers in these new national parks.

I congratulate you and your government on the announcement to immediately protect threatened species habitat from logging and immediately cease logging of old growth native forest in Victoria’s east. Thank you for this leadership.

However, we need to ensure our forests are protected right across the state. A decision on protecting the special forests of the central west in new parks and reserves is yet to be made, leaving these important areas still open for logging, mining and other threats.

Premier, I urge you and your government to accept and implement the final recommendations of the Central West Investigation, undertaken by the well-respected Victorian Environmental Assessment Council (VEAC), for an increase of almost 60,000 hectares in protected areas and 20,000 hectares of new regional parks, for the Wombat, Wellsford, Pyrenees, Mount Cole forests and surrounding areas.

These new parks have been carefully planned, with a mix of park types to protect critical natural values, such as habitat for the 380 threatened species (including the Powerful Owl and the Greater Glider), whilst allowing for most recreational activities and firewood collection in new and expanded regional parks.

National Parks are great for both people and nature. The Victorian parks estate contributes \$2.1 billion annually to the Victorian economy through parks tourism, and supports 20,000 jobs.

New parks will protect the headwaters of seven significant rivers, including the Moorabool, Werribee, Lerderderg, Maribyrnong, and Wimmera rivers – which provide water supply for Geelong, and large areas of western and northern Victoria.

New national parks would be a further drawcard for recreation and tourism to the central west of the state, servicing the recreation needs of Melbourne’s growing western and northern suburbs. Most recreational activities are actively encouraged in national parks, and generally the rules regarding activities such as 4×4 driving are the same in national parks as in state forests.

It has been almost a decade since the last major additions to our national parks system in Victoria – but creating these new parks would be an impressive legacy for your government to leave for future generations of Victorians, and show real leadership on nature conservation.

I strongly encourage you and your government to move forward with creating and implementing VEAC’s final recommendations for new parks in Victoria’s central west as soon as possible, including appropriate resources for park establishment and management.

Yours sincerely,

FIRST AND LAST NAMES

FULL STREET ADDRESS

EMAIL ADDRESS AND/OR PHONE NUMBER

