

**Submission**

**No 060**

**CONSULTATION ON THE MODERN  
MANAGEMENT OF COMMONS**

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Date: Mon, Feb 20, 2017 at 11:14 AM  
Subject: The Commons of NSW Submission.

I am opposed to the proposed amendments to the Commons Management Act 1989, which amount to the abolition of Commons across NSW. Having grown up in regional NSW, I have very fond memories of the Commons and the important role they played in our community, and I believe continue to play in regional communities.

When the Crown Land Management Bill 2016 was passed in November 2016 amendments were made to retain Commons in this State. Those amendments were supported unanimously in the Parliament. It is a cavalier approach from the bureaucracy to then seek to reverse the Parliamentary outcome through this 'reform' process. That issue was comprehensively decided upon by the NSW Legislative Council in the early hours of 9 November 2016. Nothing has changed which would in any way warrant or justifies a revisitation of that issue.

The proposed legislative framework effectively abolishes the concept of a Common and with it 200 years of NSW history. There is no justification for this.

It is not appropriate to abolish the functions of the Common Roll, the Commoner, nor their right to elect the Trustees who manage the Common and substitute Land Managers appointed by the Minister. This amounts to seizing control of a community asset paid for by the Commoners since its inception. In short the current proposal is to seize all the land in NSW that is held as commons and deliver ownership of the land to the State of NSW as Crown land. The Commoner Trustees are to be abolished in this process. The Government has said it intends to appoint former Commoner Trustees as Land Managers. This kind of process is generally referred to as a land grab.

There are a number of commons across NSW that are VERY well-managed. They are highly valued community assets and provide a common good. While there are some commons where the management has largely lapsed, the land still retains its value to these communities, however decades of indifference to management issues, at both a local and state level, should be addressed.

I believe that St Albans commons, among many others, should be protected. Functioning commons are well run and achieve their purpose. Commons in NSW have historical, social, environmental, cultural and heritage significance.

"A functioning common in good standing under the Commons Management Act whose management and operations are carried on in a manner which is consistent with the purposes of a Common."  
Commons have a proud 200 year history in NSW. A broad cross-section of NSW voters is committed to protecting and enhancing this proud history and to maintaining public and common land. This would not be achieved by the adoption of current Departmental proposal which I strongly urge the government to withdraw. Please respect our history, our public rights and our common public land.... which is NOT FOR SALE.

Miss Sonya Manzalini