

Submission

No 061

CONSULTATION ON THE MODERN MANAGEMENT OF COMMONS

Name: Coonamble Common

Date received: 20/02/2017

Coonamble Shire Council

Date: Mon, Feb 20, 2017 at 12:17 PM

Subject: Submission - Coonamble Common Trust

Sir / Madam

At a meeting of Coonamble Common Trustees held on 8 February 2017, it was resolved to provide a submission for consideration in conjunction with the Government's review of NSW Crown land management.

The Coonamble common comprises 805ha of open grazing land, with stock yards with associated infrastructure and consists of two parcels, one either side of a regional road.

1. Does the proposal sufficiently recognise the significance of common?

Yes.

However the Trustees believed that changes are necessary, making the public aware that commons, going forward, are not solely for the grazing of stock. The opinion of this decision is well time, acknowledging that need for depasturing of numbers of stock has, in Coonamble's, dropped significantly.

As an example, when the common was re-opened over 12 months ago following the extremely long and severe drought, only one commoner took the opportunity to agist beasts and, at the present time, six horses are running on the area.

2. Does the proposal sufficiently retain an ongoing role for commons trusts?

Yes.

It is important that the role of common trusts be retained – specifically for proper management of the areas and for the rightful use of those who are entitled to be commoners. Common trusts should be retained to continue to properly maintain the areas so, in reality; they are not useless expanses of open land. The Coonamble Common Trust is responsible for overall maintenance of the area, including control of pests and noxious weeds, adequate fencing and provision of water. Although commoners pay fees, as set from time to time, there is always a shortfall of general maintenance, let alone capital expenditure. The ability for managers to apply to the Public Reserves Management Fund for monies to invest in the areas creates opportunities for significant improvements.

3. Does the proposal sufficiently protect the environmental, social, cultural and economic values of commons?

Refer below.

4. Does the proposal benefit the ability for the people of NSW to experience the environmental, social, cultural and economic values of commons?

Yes

To take advantage of the proposal to benefit the community as a whole, the Trust is intending that the part of Coonamble common located adjacent to the Warrena Creek weir on the southern side of the road be reserved for community recreational use as opposed to grazing only. The Trust believes that the environmental, social and economic value of such land can be enhanced through recreational use.

Currently the weir provides a recreational facility for skiing, fishing and other water sports, which is used extensively by locals. If this small area of the common is reserved for community use, the watercourse could be extended by excavating to provide significantly more recreational usage by increased numbers of community members, with flow of economic and social benefits.

Yours faithfully

Rick Warren

General Manager