

# Submission Guide

## Travelling Stock Routes



The travelling stock route (TSR) network comprises some of NSW's best remaining native vegetation and provides important connectivity for native species. The environmental, cultural and social values of the TSR network have been well documented. The NSW Government is beginning to assess the value of the TSR network and it's vital that the conservation and heritage values of TSRs are identified by community members across NSW.

**It is critically important that the NSW government keeps this important asset in public ownership and implements appropriate action to preserve the many values of the TSR network into the future.**

We urge that members lodge a submission to the review and use the online map provided to make sure valuable TSRs in your local area are identified and protected within viable habitat corridors. These important conservation assets will only be preserved if the people of NSW argue strongly for the protection of the TSR network as a whole.

A public consultation paper on the future use/conservation of NSW's Travelling Stock Reserves is on exhibition until July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

The exhibition includes the consultation paper, with more information and on line map available at <http://open.ils.nsw.gov.au/TSR-review>

### **Submissions will be accepted until 5pm on 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2017**

Responses can be submitted in a number of ways including:

Online: [www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au](http://www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au)

Email: [tsr.feedback@ils.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tsr.feedback@ils.nsw.gov.au)

Post: Local Land Services, State Operations

PO Box 2105, Dubbo NSW 2830.

Please also consider sending a copy of your submission to Premier Berejilkian, Environment Minister Gabrielle Upton, and your local MP.

The following points are provided to help you make a submission. Please remember that it is important to identify the specific reasons why the travelling stock routes in your community are important.

### **1. The well recognised values of the TSR network.**

- The TSR network of NSW, if effectively managed, has the potential to be a globally unique, continental-scale corridor of publicly owned remnant vegetation with great environmental, economic, cultural, Indigenous heritage and social benefits to NSW and Australia.
- Because TSRs have remained publicly owned and generally have not been cleared they have protected woodland vegetation corridors across the highly-cleared wheat and sheep farming belt of NSW.
- TSRs support a wide range of woodland-dependent species that are typically rare or threatened due to the extensive clearing of woodland habitat since European settlement. This includes critically endangered species like swift parrot and regent honeyeater and iconic species like bush stone-curlew, malleefowl and superb parrot.
- The remnant vegetation within the TSR network often provides the best example of ecosystems and communities that are not well represented in National Parks and other NPWS estate with approximately 80% of TSRs containing vegetation communities of high or very high conservation status.<sup>1</sup>

### **2. Feedback on Review Paper.**

- The TSR network should be assessed beyond an individual and regional basis. The connectivity across regions is an important value for multiple uses.
- The four categories do not identify opportunities for natural resource management works such as revegetation projects, erosion control, carbon sinks and reconnecting gaps in landscape linkages.
- The criteria for assessing impacts on TSRs should include no impact on landscape scale conservation values. The term 'not significantly deteriorate' is not an acceptable criteria.
- The emphasis on economic benefits of state significant development (SSD) and state significant infrastructure (SSI) projects will cause an imbalance against social and environmental values.
- TSRs should not be removed for mining and gas projects.

### **3. The failure by Department of Industry - Lands to work at a whole of government level to develop a framework of strategic management principles for the shared and sustainable use of the TSR network.**

- It remains unclear what advice the Department of Industry - Lands has taken from other government agencies which have compiled a significant amount of important data on the value of the TSR network.
- Most notably this includes the Department of Environment and Heritage. There is no information on the exhibited map from the Office of the Environment and Heritage.
- The current consultation represents the first opportunity for community input into the management of the TSR network but its focus is limited by:
  - 1) an assumption that the TSR network will fit into four defined landuse categories (no data supports these);

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<sup>1</sup> NSW State of Environment Report 2006 Chapter 6.2 [http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/soe/soe2006/chapter6/chp\\_6.2.htm](http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/soe/soe2006/chapter6/chp_6.2.htm)

2) data compilation for the values of individual reserves rather than the values of TSR network as a network containing some of the highest quality, connected remnants of vegetation in Eastern Australia.

- It is unclear when, or if, the community will have an opportunity to comment on the important environmental values of the TSR network or provide input into an assessment of their value as State significant land under the new Crown Land Management Act 2016.
- Balanced information about the wide ranging values of the TSR network to the people of NSW must be available to ensure a proper process in the decision making regards the future ownership and management of the TSR network.

## **BACKGROUND**

There has been limited opportunity for community input into how the values of the TSR network, as a network of public land, will be managed into the future.

- The TSR network is Crown land owned by the people of NSW. The government commenced its review into a new management regime for all of NSW's Crown Land with an internal review commenced in 2012 by merchant banker Michael Carapiet. This set the direction for the preparation of the Crown Lands Legislation White Paper.
- The government's response to release of the White Paper Summary Report included its acknowledgement that submissions had stated the importance of the TSR network to a wide range of users, interest groups and the public, with many advocating that the linear, connected nature of TSRs be maintained and that they should not be broken up and sold off. These submissions raised these matters even though the future ownership and management of the TSR network had not been included for discussion in the White Paper.
- Originally, the Local Land Services had been given the main responsibility to undertake the community consultation necessary to consider the future management of the TSR network even though only 25% of the network is under LLS care and control.
- In 2016, the Auditor-General, assessed how the Department of Industry - Lands was managing the sale and leasing of Crown land overall. It concluded that Lands did not always allow for meaningful opportunities for input by stakeholders. Lands agreed to improve consultation with stakeholders, especially when there were proposed land use changes. The current review suggests that there may be changes in the future ownership and management of the TSR network.
- The current review provides no opportunity for community input on the significant environmental values of the TSR network as a whole.