

W E Rankin

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The IFOA Committee

I have been associated in the timber industry since 1950. I am the second generation of three generations of timber workers. The love of the bush, its values and resources are important to my family, as it was to my father and as it is today to me and my son.

I agree that the direction the government is heading is a good one. Changes have been required for some time. Over regulation does very little for anyone involved in the industry. It makes the job of growing timber difficult and ensuring environmental values are looked after.

The scope of the changes talked about at the community information sessions in Lismore where great to here.

I hope some of the regulations are changed dramatically, so as to be helpful, not to be more hindrances to industry.

There are many areas now reserved, some of which I worked in. They are now in Parks or reserves. That makes me proud knowing that others and myself did a great job managing the forests.

I would like to comment on drainage features.

I would like to see fairly big changes to the drainage line buffer systems. It was explained that new ideas were being discussed, but no specific information was given on what exactly might change.

The current system leaves drainage lines in an environmental mess. There is no disturbance in them and it seems that every noxious type of vegetation has moved in to live. There is very little or no native regeneration. You may see some regeneration, but this is probably from earlier disturbance before the increase on drainage line protection.

I understand that it is allowed to harvest some parts of drainage lines buffers under certain guidelines in the current code. I believe that more wood could be harvested from all drainage lines in certain areas. If allowed to be harvested, and the area treated for regeneration, then these current no go zones would have beneficial outcomes for the environment.

The modern day bush machinery, different methods of timber felling and the increased awareness of the environment by bush workers. ALL of these attributes should and could be used to harvest sensitive areas.

Have you seen what a wild fire does to a drainage line protection area that has not been disturbed for a long time? It is far worse environmentally than harvesting could ever be.

I have seen where big trees that were left, because of a rule and have caused major erosion when they have fallen over. The amount of soil that is disturbed is significant. This then allows more feral vegetation in, because there is no young native regeneration able to get through the thick vegetation.

The rules are at present states. In simple terms, the further you travel down a drainage line system, the wider the buffers and no go zones get. It seems farcically that a vast majority of streams enter into private property, with little or no vegetation along its banks after leaving forested areas. These lands are usually associated with intense farming activities.

I have no issue with stream protection that enter water storage systems within its boundaries or borders.

Yes we need to protect the ecology of our waterways. That's important to many. I hope the new code may allow a different approach to drainage line management.

I support the changes outlined and hope a common sense approach is used in the decision-making. Lets make it very workable for all concerned.

Yours sincerely

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Written by Leanne Rankin for William Eric Rankin