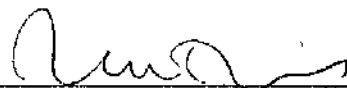


Newsome, Silvana (REPS)



From: Baz [bgumba@ozemail.com.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 23 April 2003 1:33 PM
To: Committee, Bushfires (REPS)
Subject: Re: Submission - Grasslands-Alternative View

Submission No.42

Committee Secretary
Select Committee on the Recent Australian Bushfires
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600 .

I wish to submit an alternative view of bushfires and their causes based on my experiences of watching many summer fires in South Eastern States.

We have a culture of using fire as a tool to manage the bush. From early European settlement graziers killed the forests with ring barking and burning, they controlled the wild life that way too. We consider bushfire as normal now.

I have concluded that Governments and their agencies including fire fighters at all levels ignore the risks of fighting fire with fire after allowing wild fires to wander through the bush for days prior to extreme hot or windy weather.

Our folly is to think we can control bushfire by burning in wilderness areas. I claim that fires established in heavy timber on steep country cannot be stopped by man on a bad day, and National Parks will burn from end to end once lit almost any dry summer

It is the grass lands that link bushfire to our homes, neglected pastures and weedy woodlands everywhere are the wick for wild fire and the fuel which burns our towns. Add some pine plantations to the mix so we have certainty of a big fire, then we have created a new hazard equal to any native forest.

I suggest our land is so changed by recent practice that there is now no normal or natural fires, any bushfire has the potential to be enhanced by our methods of managing the rural landscape where giant forests once stood.

Attached are my photos of damaged lands close to Canberra's Western suburbs, pastures, roadsides, Coppins Crossing, Molonglo River valley Mt Stromlo Plantations in the distance, not a blade of grass or pine tree survived there, however the scattered eucalypts will recover as they usually do after a grass fire.

Please consider my submissions to other current inquiries, I also ask that my observations regarding arson are not published here either.

Thanks.

Gavin Bugg.

Macgregor.

23/04/2003