

SUBMISSION TO RATING REVIEW

I would like to make the following submission to the Rating Review that “all land covered by a Trust For Nature covenant be given 100% exemption from council rates across Victoria”

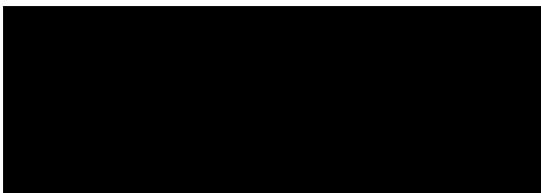
1. Private covenants are increasing conservation land at no cost to the government of Victoria but at sometimes large cost to individuals. Given the amount of land clearing occurring in Victoria covenants are critical to improve conservation in the state.
2. Covenanted land provides much “public good” in the form of carbon sequestration, wildlife corridors, water improvement by erosion control and soil improvement , weed and vermin control at little or no cost to state or local authorities.
3. Other states and some Victorian councils already offer 100% exemptions.

I own 347ha in Loddon Shire, I do not live there (there is no house) and the entire property is protected with a Trust for Nature covenant. This land adjoins part of the [REDACTED] NCR effectively increasing the conservation area and providing a corridor to other bush areas. There are many interesting and threatened species on my land. Probably of most importance is the nationally threatened Malleefowl (V, e, FFG listed) of which there is an isolated population in the area. There are two active nests on my land which is extremely significant. Last year’s monitoring by the Victorian Malleefowl Recovery Group throughout the region only found four nests in total showing any activity. There are also numbers of declining woodland birds such as Diamond Firetail and Hooded Robin. Some of the plants that are protected on my land include Dainty Phebalium, Small-leaf Goodenia and Velvet Daisybush.

My rates are approximately \$2500 pa which I find quite exorbitant. This is more than I pay on my residential property. I spend money on revegetation, erosion control and weed eradication and I get no income from the land so I am really out of pocket probably to the order of \$5000 pa basically for the public good.

Most people I know with covenanted land are, like me, acting for altruistic reasons. We are prepared to work hard and finance our properties but rate relief would be an enormous benefit for us and conservation in general in Victoria.

Yours faithfully

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.