



5 May 2009

Principal Research Officer
Economics and Industry Standing Committee

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Inquiry into the Provision, Use and Regulation of Caravan Parks (and Camping Grounds) in Western Australia

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Bibbulmun Track Foundation I am writing to request that any changes made to the Act relating to the Provision, Use and Regulation of Caravan Parks (and Camping Grounds) in Western Australia does not inadvertently impact on the right of West Australians to camp freely.

The Bibbulmun Track is WA's premier long-distance walking trail stretching almost 1000kms from Kalamunda to Albany, through some of the most beautiful and peaceful coastal, forest and rural areas of Australia's South West.

Along the way, 48 campsites each provide a three-sided wooden sleeping shelter with bunks for 8 to 16, tent sites, pit toilet and picnic table.

This wonderful recreational resource is free – and used by thousands of West Australians and visitors to WA every year. Results from a user survey conducted in 2003 show that over 137,500 walks are undertaken each year generating around \$21million in economic benefit – much of that in regional areas as walkers use local accommodation (including caravan parks and camping grounds), and restaurants when they pass through towns.

In addition to individuals, families and tourists, the Track is used by schools and youth groups. In 2008 a total of 434 nights were spent on the Track by Groups – representing 6333 individual nights (average 15 in a group).

Whilst we recognize the need for caravan parks and camping grounds, it is essential that the freedom for people to camp in less formal environments where they can enjoy the feeling of being in the wilderness or experience a sense of solitude and truly connect with their surroundings, is preserved.

Yours sincerely

Linda Daniels
Executive Director