

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

On the 23rd February Greens MP, Ian Cohen was quoted, in the Sydney Morning Herald, as saying " It would be a "crushing blow" to Labours chances of re-election, if the Greens (anti community activists) opted to withhold preferences, in more than 10 marginal seats" "Labour will come begging....but if they don't deliver on these forests in a sustainable way, they can go to hell"

The very next day, in State Parliament as many local redgum people rallied outside at the Parliament gates, Premier Kristina Keneally said "We are about rebuilding trust with the community and that is what we're focused on. All I expect is that people of NSW judge us on the services we deliver and the decisions that we make."

Six days later with the knowledge that Deniliquin had lost their abattoirs, the rice industry on its knees and local unemployment running high, her Environment minister, Frank Sartor declared 107,000ha of Redgum state forests become National Parks, securing the very preferences that Cohen had threatened to withhold from the government, seven days previous.

This decision had nothing to do with good transparent science, as the NRC (not responsible commission) had promised but not delivered.

Nothing to do with the terrible outcomes that are about to unfold in our redgum communities and forests, as has happened in Balranald in 2005, when Yanga was declared a National Park.

This was simple horse trading of the Redgum forests and the communities, which have looked after these forests for 150 yrs, for stinking green preferences.

The Natural Resources Commission scientists, Minister Frank Sartor, Premier Kristina Keneally and the people in government should hang their heads in shame.

It makes me sick that state politics has again sacrificed the people of the Riverina on their way to the next election.

But let's not cry in our beer, let's all keep fighting for better outcomes within the Riverina and make it a great place for the future generations and wave any government goodbye who wants to sell us out.

Regards

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