

## Cattle

# Cattle banned from National Parks as National Parks Act amended

- by: *KATH SULLIVAN*
- From: *The Weekly Times*

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

**UPDATE: IT'S permanent, cattle will not be allowed into Victoria's Alpine National Park and the River Red Gum national parks ever again.**

Legislation passed in the Victorian Parliament's Upper House late yesterday to amend The National Parks Act so that no cattle grazing can take place, for any reason, in a Victorian National Park.

The Victorian Government moved to make the ban on cattle grazing permanent, after cancelling a grazing trial in the Victoria's High Country that began under the former Coalition Government.

The Government said cattle grazing was bad for the environment and did not prevent bushfires.

"We have ensured that Victoria's Alpine National Park and the River Red Gum national parks are free of cattle, preserving them for future generations" Environment Minister Lisa Neville said.

It's a move that has saddened high country cattle graziers.

"They have won the battle, but they haven't won the war," said Mountain Cattlemens Association president Charlie Lovick.

He described the change of law as 'pretty hard to take,' but said it wasn't completely unexpected.

"We've been in the firing line for many years now," he said.

"It's like payback because they think we tipped them (Labor) out of office in 2010. But we're not the enemy," Mr Lovick said.

“We put our case to the cross benches and we had a good hearing. I’m not sure if somebody changed their vote right at the death, but that’s politics,” he said.

The legislation was passed 21 votes to 19 and was not supported by the Shooters and Fishers Party.

In a statement the Shooters and Fishers Party said “no one knows or loves the High Country better than mountain cattlemen”.

The Party’s Daniel Young and Jeff Bourman described cattle grazing in national parks as the cornerstone of country living in alpine areas and said cattle grazing should be permitted as a form of bushfire mitigation and heritage preservation,

“This is yet another example of rural community’s voices being shouted down by inner city politicians,” Mr Bourman said.

Mr Lovick said the decision by the Government to permanently ban cattle grazing was arrogant.

“They’ve locked the gate, busted the key off, picked up the ball and gone home,” he said.

“They’ve tied the hands of any future governments, (who might consider cattle grazing) for science or fuel management,” he said.

Mr Lovick said the Mountain Cattlemen would discuss the its next move before committing to any plans.

“We’ve had a belting, we need time,” he said.

“We’ll go back to our families and reassess. But we won’t take this lying down,” he said.

The Government said it would continue to work with mountain cattlemen, among other park users, to manage the national parks and it would continue to mitigate fire risk through measures like planned burns.