

To Whom it may concern

### **VNI West Option 5 submission**

The Wedderburn Conservation Management Network (WCMN) is a network of interested people, including individuals and both public and private land managers whose aim is to work with the community in general to promote profitable, productive, and sustainable human enterprises while conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Wedderburn area.

The WCMN has several projects based on threatened species in the district. With a focus on the declining Malleefowl (*Leipoa ocellata*) in the district. Malleefowl is an isolated population on the Wychitella Nature Conservation Reserve - managed by Parks Victoria in conjunction with Wedderburn Conservation Management Network.

In the semi-arid zone, where Malleefowl densities are highest, the clearing of habitat has been the major cause of the marked decline in the distribution of the species. Apart from removing much of the habitat supporting high densities of the species, this clearing has fragmented the distribution of Malleefowl, and over much of its range the species now persists in small patches of habitat that are inadequate for its long-term conservation without careful planning and management.

The WCMN undertake informal nest mound counts, to be recorded in accordance with VMRG monitoring protocols, have plans to re-introduce birds from other sources to boost genetic pool once threats have been managed and to revegetate areas adjacent to known Malleefowl habitat and connect areas of habitat.

#### Impact of the VNI West Option 5

The WCMN is concerned by

The consultation process and inclusion of local community. Insufficient time to consult with members. D'Ambrosio's Ministerial order in Feb to fast-track this transmission line, will have a big impact on the environment.

Habitat degradation and species loss for locally listed EPBC listed species.

Increased threat of weeds and feral species.

Variation of compliance between the VNI and recently completed Water Pipeline, - the recent extension to the water pipeline through our district had to comply with underground boring (no trenches), due to there being EPBC listed species and ecosystems.

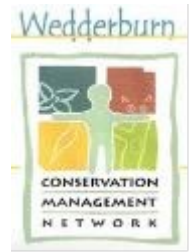
Increased threat of fires, - personally experienced wildfires and habitat loss from transmission terminals in Back Saturday fires, Fire is a key threat to Malleefowl Habitat.

The intrinsic value of our landscape and ecosystems being detrimentally damaged with long term infrastructure.

Decreased land value and loss of productive capacity.

Inability to utilize emerging technologies such as drones and LiDAR

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## Recommendations

Allow for a consultative study for the long-term renewable electricity grid for Victoria, (not adhoc) or utilising the least line of resistance from community (due to population base)

Feature and include the intrinsic advantage and value of cultural knowledge and biodiversity in the district for “positive net market benefit” analysis.

Conduct extensive flora and fauna surveys and determine the long term impacts of the VNI West Project (Option 5) on biodiversity loss.

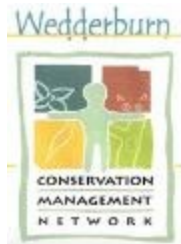
Prioritise for underground transmission lines.

Please contact Trudy Nelsson via return email [trudynelssonwcmn@gmail.com](mailto:trudynelssonwcmn@gmail.com) or ph 0419800980 if you any further queries.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Trudy Nelsson'.

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🇺🇦 I acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal owners of Country throughout Victoria and pay my respects to them, their culture and their Elders past, present and future.