



Submission by the South Australian Farmers' Federation (SAFF)

in response to

The Government of South Australia Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Board

Concept Statement

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ABN: 75 266 051 838

Telephone: (08) 8410 7233

Facsimile: (08) 8211 7303

Level 1 / 67 South Terrace,
Adelaide, SA 5000
Postal Address: PO Box 6014
Halifax Street, SA 5000

Email: info@saff.com.au

Website: www.saff.com.au

SAFF has the following general comments in regard to the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM Region:

- The NRM Board must support the protection of viable farming land. In this NRM region, one of the biggest threats to agriculture is urban development. With the effect of climate change over the next few years and beyond, some areas of farming land within the State will become unproductive, and areas of fertile soil and good rainfall within the Mount Lofty Ranges and Adelaide Plains will become extremely valuable and rare, and highly sought after.

Also, the NRM Board must work with developers so any new developments must not interfere with the 'property rights' of farmers. The shifting of urban boundaries can create conflicts. There must be a rural residential interface or some form of 'buffer' from any new high density housing developments or issues could arise with chemical spray, dust and noise which could impact on production and will impose on these farmers' current way of farming.

From a SAFF perspective, how equitable is it for people or developers to clear nearly whole land systems for housing – this means destruction of all creatures there - whilst primary producers are not allowed to manipulate their landscape to improve productivity? E.g. it seems to be quite acceptable to knock down 250 year old red gums for housing, but not to improve productivity. With the conversion of land to housing, more restrictions will be placed on other agricultural landholders to maintain and improve natural resources; whilst trying to feed a growing population. All NRM Boards need to have very strong links with all regional development planning documents, as a matter of urgency, so to encourage any future development away from good fertile soils onto less productive land.

- From a SAFF perspective, the primary industry community is not recognised or valued highly enough for the contribution it makes to the environment. The NRM Board Plan needs to acknowledge the good work that has been done by the farming community, and in particular highlight the work of some farmers who have achieved environmental success on their property. This will demonstrate the Plan and NRM is not just about conservation groups and biodiversity protection, which is what some landholders believe it to be.

Farmers not only manage over 70% of our natural resources, but they financially support it along with financially supporting crown land by paying for pest control of roadsides. In management, their knowledge must be valued. At the same time, farmers are creating a major economy for this state. In all, they underpin all regional NRM Plans and would probably be the major contributors to NRM. All regional NRM Plans must be less 'green' focused and be seen to support 'productive and sustainable land management'.