

colong bulletin

No. 230 | February 2009

The RTA's billion dollar by-pass

KEITH MUIR

The RTA's five proposals for extending an upgraded Gt. Western Highway down the face of the Blue Mountains' western escarpment are all extravagantly expensive. The Newnes Corridor proposal has an estimated cost of \$900 million, compared with \$480 million for the Hartley Vale options.

The RTA has come up with a steep-grade Newnes corridor option for \$780 million to make the route appear more acceptable. A new steep grade highway would be pointless, however, as the purpose of the scheme is to facilitate truck freight.

The RTA's consultant claims that environmental and social advantages make the Newnes options worthy of further consideration, but there is strong evidence to the contrary. The Newnes options:

- Require construction of 30 kilometres of new road at 1150 metres elevation over rugged terrain that would be subject to snow, black ice and fog issues,

whereas the Hartley Valley proposals are almost half the cost, require 10 kilometres less of road construction and are 300 metres lower in elevation;

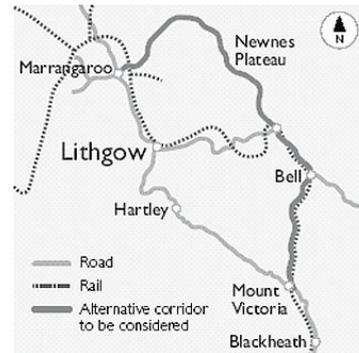
- Would not utilise the 10 kilometres of the existing highway's good quality 4 lane dual carriageway leading to and from Lithgow, unlike the other options;

- Could lead to increased accidents and fatalities as more traffic would divert onto the Bells Line of Road to avoid 32 speed advisory changes and 14 school zones on the highway route over the Mountains;

- Being longer, does not save even 5 minutes in travel time, and does not cater for local Lithgow traffic, which is a large proportion of total current use on the existing route;

- Would cause contamination of Farmer's Creek water storage, Lithgow's main water supply;

- Could cause new traffic impacts and disruptions on the Bell, Dargan, Newnes Junction and Marangaroo communities that, cumulatively, have residential densities at least equal to those in the Hartley



Valley; and

- Critically impacts on the World Heritage Area, the Grose Wild River, nationally endangered shrub swamps, locally unique snow gum communities, and bisects the scenic Gardens of Stone Reserve proposal.

The proposed road only benefits road freight as the travel costs and travel times are essentially unchanged, and road safety is likely to decline due to travelers diverting down the accident prone Bells Line.

Freight proposals for serving the Central West Region should be examined in far more detail rather than blindly pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into an expensive road scheme. Large increases in truck traffic, and especially the lifting of the 26m B-doubles moratorium on the Blue Mountains, is strongly

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General Meetings

Level 2, Fortuna House, 332 Pitt Street, at 2.00pm on Thursday March 12th, April 16th and May 14th. Visitors welcome.



Proposed By-pass could be carved across the spectacular scenery of Farmers Creek (image: K. Muir)

Editorial

LIKE other citizens of NSW and as a regular user of the Great Western Highway throughout my lifetime, I am aware of its historical significance. I am also aware of its scenic value, as it is a transport link, which traverses one of the World's great landscapes namely, the Blue Mountains listed World Heritage Area. It therefore would take a brave planner who would be willing to venture off what one could describe as the existing well-beaten track. After examining all five proposals (see The RTA's Billion-Dollar By-pass in this issue) we find this is the case.

For some decades now we have watched slow progress as widening and straightening of the Great Western Highway proceeds slowly through the Mountains, and now it is proposed to go off tangentially, so to speak. In the worst option it is proposed to traverse much of the Newnes Plateau, across what one might term 'virgin country' marked as it is with valuable upland swamps.

Should this option be built

then it will also invite far greater use of the Bell's Line of Road with impacts that have not even begun to be assessed.

What the Foundation believes is that making a determination at this time will invite a huge public outcry and bring the RTA into sharp conflict - something that I suspect the Government can presently do without. It will pitch practical country people, who live in western districts against city environmentalists as well as people, who can see what is poor and costly planning when it is brought to their attention.

What the RTA has missed here is an opportunity to enhance its reputation and probably save the community money by developing an imaginative plan of road building using perhaps a series of short tunnels and scenic viaducts to overcome the difficulties of Victoria Pass in the same spirit as Governor Macquarie did in the original building of the highway. This would be the environmentally responsible route and one the public would expect to be taken. Amongst the RTA's published proposals this option is not even considered! ❖

RTA's billion dollar by-pass

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opposed by the local community and conservation groups. Rail and road freight options that go around the Mountains instead of over them should be examined.

Consideration of the Mt Victoria by-pass proposals should be deferred until the soon to be released Central West Transport Needs Study is debated by the community. The Study will examine the 'bigger picture' of the region's transport needs over 5-year and 25-year timeframes. Building consensus over the big picture may then permit superior resolution of the detailed on-site issues.

Meanwhile, in the short term, regional road transport needs would best be served by a minimal upgrade of the existing highway. Safety could be greatly enhanced by the use of speed cameras, in addition to the new crash barriers already being installed to prevent head-on collisions.

In the longer term, when and if road traffic levels justify such a substantial road investment on the western escarpment, the Colong Foundation proposes a tunnel, just north of the current road down the

western escarpment. Under this proposal, hazardous goods would still use the existing road over Victoria Pass. The cost of tunneling would be significant, but unless it is more than \$250 million per kilometre, it would still be less than the Newnes option.

The waste from the proposed tunnel could be utilised, in part, in the construction of a viaduct ramp for an elevated bridge over the River Lett. Ramps could permit a reduction in grade of the River Lett Hill and for the escarpment.

As this option largely follows the existing easement, it is contended to be a superior option as far as environmental and social impacts. It would impact on very few new residents unaffected by the existing Highway and avoids Mt Victoria entirely. The option avoids the World Heritage Area and most endangered ecological communities, except at the bottom of the escarpment where it is already fragmented by the existing Highway.

The Colong Foundation's proposal, being on the most direct route, would have the greatest reductions in travel time and travel cost. Only this proposal would avoid loss of traffic to the dangerous Bells Line of Road, and so it is the only option that improves road safety. ❖

Financial meltdown

PATRICK THOMPSON

(This essay is an abridged version of one first published in The New Bush Telegraph)

ONE possible outcome of the present world financial crisis is that it may offer a last chance to save the planet. Some leading world scientist have made the point that if world leaders can come

together with such resolve to solve financial problems then it gives rise to some hope that they maybe able to do the same with meeting the challenge of Climate Change. Frankly, I doubt it. The current financial crisis is a very different kettle of fish. It goes to the very heart of capitalism. Its threat is immediate and like it or not, capitalism is what makes the world go around - the future of the planet is merely of passing

interest to those that rule in Canberra, Washington, Tokyo, Beijing, New York, London, Paris, Hong Kong, etc.

What we have seen in past months may well be the very tip of the iceberg. Unbridled capitalism has ruled now for decades. Commencing in the US under Reagan and Thatcher in the UK and with the end of the Cold War, a new world

order in economics held sway. Around the world money markets were free to expand almost exponentially and with this came the opening up of China and India which has led to boom times. Here in Australia the housing, equities and commodities markets, all took off. History might tell us

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Finalcial meltdown

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this has all happened before, only arguably, it has never occurred on such a grand scale. History also tells us that what inevitably follows great booms are great busts.

Like most I am just an observer as these great events unfold and like most I have trouble understanding what credit default swaps exactly mean or how USD 450 trillion of derivatives came into existence. I do however have a better understanding of debt and what Australia's foreign debt might mean to the nation. I wrote about it a year ago in *The New Bush Telegraph*. I suggested it should have been an election issue, but it was not. For what it is worth, it now stands at around 180% of GDP. This puts us in a league all on our own. Still as any economist will tell you, we are nation that has a tremendous future with all our mineral wealth. It's just a pity that the boom is over and commodity prices are falling through the floor. If you wonder why our dollar has fallen so dramatically, then here is a big part of the reason. Don't let anyone tell you this nation is in good shape and we are going to fair well.

So then our next question maybe how is our government responding to this crisis? Like governments around the world, we are searching for solutions. Some good old Keynesian economics has been called for and 10 billion of the surplus has been allocated to cheer us all up. It won't go far once it is spent and unemployment in the New Year takes hold. The falling tax revenue and the increases in welfare payments will make the ten billion seem like nothing. With the rest of the world going into recession and Australia likely to follow, we are in for a rocky ride. Still we could be worse for they are saying Japan with its export-based economy is facing depression.

THE LONGER TERM VIEW

The present world financial crisis may yet prove to be the

medicine we all need to bring us to our senses and may ultimately save the planet. Capitalism as we know it could be finished. This is still an unlikely scenario this time around, but inevitably one-day it will happen for the problem with capitalism is that it does not suit a finite world. The problem with the free-marketeers is that they see no limits to growth and that is plainly illogical.

In the longer view of human experience, the last two centuries are a mere speck in time. Up until about 1850 humankind had already made its mark on the planet but in the equivalent of two lifetimes since we have squandered a much greater proportion of the earth's resources than in the rest of human history. We have turned much of our planet into desert and reduced fish stocks to a fraction of what they once were. Australia with its low rainfall and poor soils has a dreadful environmental record and what we are witnessing in the Murray-Darling Basin is another example of it. We all know the story but are we willing to face it?

Clearly we are not. Our leaders tell us we need growth. Capitalism as we know it needs growth. Economists are telling us that unless we continue to grow we will all be ruined. Indeed economists are saying if China's growth falls to a mere 8% then it will in effect be in recession. So there we have it. Growth is good, it is what must continue. It is what we all must have.

Now you don't have to be a rocket scientist to be a little concerned with this scenario, when we marry it with the other emerging issue of our times, and that is the little matter of global warming. This is a growing worry for nearly all of us. With the passing of Howard and Bush, there is a new optimism abroad that we may yet be willing to face this issue. Our leaders tell us it is going to be tough but with good will and a determined and coordinated effort, the challenge of global warming can be met. Apparently this can be achieved without undue

economic hardship. Some even say, properly managed reducing our carbon emissions by 90% over the next forty years, which is what is needed, could be economically beneficial.

What then is the nexus between economic growth on the one hand and reducing carbon emissions by 90% on the other? It should be pretty clear. We all need to be put to work reducing our carbon emissions and at the same time we need to keep growing. China and India's economies need to double in size over the next five years and presumably double again in the following five years and this way the rest of the economies of the world should remain healthy. Certainly the Australian economy with its huge foreign debt is depending on it.

Does this all sound 'a little pie in the sky' or does it all seem plausible? Could it be that capitalism or the modern market economy; call it what you will; is in fact on a collision course with global warming? Is there any hope for our planet and our children's future?

We all have a need for optimism, and the way I see it is that the planet will be fine. Although finite its ability to recover is not in question,

sadly, this will not be so for many of the creatures of the earth. Probably humans will make it through to the other side. In our short time on earth we have coped with natural disasters, pestilence and dreadful wars before. It is a reasonable proposition that we will survive climate change but not without cost.

One of the extraordinary things to my mind in the present debate is that no one, and I mean none of our leaders, are suggesting that we could all learn to live more simply. This is not an option. Indeed we are told we must go out and spend our money, we must borrow more, we must get the economy going again.

Of course, most people in the world today still live simply. We talk about ecological footprints and it is safe to say that most of the world's populations still have meagre ecological footprints. They don't own cars, don't fly in aeroplanes and use little or no electricity. They live on a few dollars a day and they live relatively happy lives. It is these people that the market forces want on board. They too can be led to be consumers like the rest of us. They are the future targets for corporate growth. ❖

Review of Federal Environmental Laws

KEITH MUIR

IN *Colong Bulletin* 229, it was explained that the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999* (EPBC Act) is currently being reviewed. This review is the acid test for Environment Minister, Peter Garrett, who has dutifully toed the Party line. Many believe Garrett must insist on the Act being amended so that it actually protects the environment.

The current EPBC Act is a monster and a mongrel. It is a monster because its 500 plus pages of legal complexity are almost entirely regulated

by Ministerial fiat. It is a mongrel because the Act replaced Federal laws regulating endangered species, wildlife export, whaling, Federal national parks, development control over matters like uranium and other Federal resource issues and World Heritage. It is hardly surprising, then, that national parks became a small division of one part of the 23 parts of the Act. By way of contrast, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Act consists of 350 pages of national park protection.

The Act's park management provisions should be strengthened and the great

Review of federal environmental laws

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opportunity to build a true national parks estate out of existing World Heritage Areas and Federal Parks grasped.

There is also a desperate need to repair the damage to Australia's national parks from fragmentation by private tourism facilities and roads.

The Colong Foundation for Wilderness was somewhat encouraged by a recent letter from Minister Garrett that stated that "wilderness still has relevance to the NRS [National Reserve System]. Wilderness areas are one of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) protected area management categories used by the NRS. State and territory protected area management agencies establish Wilderness areas at their discretion. In 2006 there were 71 reserves covering nearly 5.5 million hectares in the NRS with IUCN protected area management category of 1b Wilderness Area, which is about 6 per cent of the total area of the NRS."

New South Wales and Victoria have three million hectares of wilderness protected between them. Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area adds another million hectares somewhat weakly protected, South Australia has another half million (some of that is open to mining operations), leaving Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia with just a mere million hectares of wilderness protected. Since then Kakadu has lost its wilderness zone. Thus more than half the continent has almost no wilderness protection.

A rough estimate identifies about 70 per cent of the NRS as wilderness capable. In other words, nearly all large, essentially intact bits of nature inside Australia's national

parks could be managed as wilderness, but are not.

Something is very wrong with Australia's national park management. To leave wilderness protection entirely to state government discretion means that wilderness inside national parks continues to be degraded by a 'tyranny of small decisions', particularly in the three states with the most wilderness.

If the Federal Government does not ensure the protection of large intact natural areas

inside our national parks, there is little point in it then spending hundreds of millions on off-park conservation. All the development control processes, endangered species law and conservation treaties seem somewhat ridiculous if large intact natural areas inside our wonderful national parks continue to be degraded.

Protecting small fragments of habitat could be a waste of time if the ecological integrity of core national park areas is lost in the meantime. Wildlife

corridors connecting of habitat fragments on private land to national parks could become a hollow exercise, for example.

The case for Federal wilderness protection is strong, and we hope Peter Garrett lays down a revised EPBC Act with a wilderness bottom line for future governments, state and federal, to build upon.

A further round of consultations on the EPBC Act are planned for March and April and interim report is due mid-year. ❖

Discovering Mt Yengo

ELIZABETH ELENIUS

On Thursday 6 November Pat Thompson, Keith Muir, Mark Sceats (my partner) and I visited Yengo National Park, a little publicised park only a short distance west of the highly urbanized Central Coast. Yengo National Park is located east of the Putty Road and extends to Bucketty. It is currently awaiting declaration as a 153,000 hectare Wilderness Area, but minus the jewel in its crown, Mt Yengo.

We arrived at the Mogo campground in the afternoon, giving time to explore the immediate vicinity, including remnants of the heritage Old Great North Road. An impression was also gained that the Simpson Valley directly north of the camp provides

very accessible and relatively easy walking in bush of high quality and variety.

The campground was in very good condition and we enjoyed good food, wine and conversation over the campfire in preparation for the day ahead – the full tour of Mt Yengo in the company of senior representatives of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Camping fees of \$10.00 per person per night were collected via an honesty box.

We arrived in plenty of time at the Service's depot at Bucketty and were met by Jeff Betteridge, the local ranger, who drove us through the park to the former Big Yango Station, accessed through a locked gate, providing very informative commentary along the way.

We gained the impression

that the high impact activities which cause such damage in other districts, such as the 4-wheel drive and trail bike hoons of Newnes Plateau, are not such an issue here, and the areas of good quality of the bush that we were shown bore this out. Extensive flannel flower displays beside the road were flowering like there was no tomorrow.

Big Yango Station, which is only accessed by permit, was purchased by National Parks in March 2001 but at 1,582 hectares was considered too large and degraded to be part of the identified wilderness. The money spent acquiring park land could be wasted, however, if the land is used not for preservation of the natural environment. Off road vehicle use and accommodation feature prominently in the precinct plan for the Big Yango property, and these initiatives could well be located outside the park.

Colong's position has been to insist that Mt Yengo, which became an Aboriginal Place in 2008, be included in the declared wilderness. The encircling road should be closed, with the exception of one access road for park visitors and for Aborigines to conduct ceremonies. We were previously advised that the declaration of the Yengo wilderness area has been delayed because of our insistence on inclusion of the Mountain.

At the station homestead we watched the dramatic arrival

Mt Yengo from Mt Manning (image: Keith Muir)



Discovering Mt Yengo

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by helicopter of the NPWS entourage, led by Director of National Parks and Wildlife Division of DECC, Sally Barnes. She was accompanied by Bob Conroy the Director of Park Management Operations and Greg Dodd, Wilderness Officer, as well as several others. We received the full treatment, including a helicopter tour right around the mountain to inspect the 4WD ring road, followed by a great barbeque lunch. What we saw from the air was somewhat encouraging. A number of minor vehicle tracks which lead on to the ring road are closed and reverting to bush but the two exclusive 4WD camping grounds seemed little used. The valleys below the mountain contain extensive rainforest pockets and it could be expected that the whole area would have an above average species diversity. The Aboriginal community has successfully put the case that there are places they wish to

visit which require the ring road to be kept open, however access to the Aboriginal Place area is by Permit and visitation frequency appears modest.

Following the tour we discussed the issues with Sally and her team. We were advised that the negotiations which resulted in the declaration of Mt Yengo as an Aboriginal Place had been difficult and protracted (over 5 years) and that the matter would not be revisited. However, she did agree that the Service would facilitate us holding discussions with the Aboriginal community to enable us to put our case for possible future inclusion of Mt Yengo within the dedicated wilderness area.

On the return journey to Bucketty works depot, we stopped at the Finchley Aboriginal Area, a rock platform with extensive carvings immediately beside the road, and saw the damage caused by having this site so open and unprotected. The sign installed by the Service asking people to respect this sacred site was removed by the Aborigines themselves. We then stopped at popular Finchley Trig Lookout

from which Mt Yengo and other prominent topographical features could clearly be seen.

The Colong Board subsequently discussed the matter and resolved to:

❑ remove its opposition to dedication of Yengo Wilderness, despite the hole at its heart (Mt Yengo);

❑ initiate discussions with the custodians of the Mt Yengo Aboriginal Place in order to persuade them of the benefits of future wilderness protection

for the Mountain;

❑ Ask the NPWS to continue the Permit System but include a separate section for those intending to drive beyond the homestead, and indicating the purpose of their visit. This would enable the Service to compile statistical data on the number of vehicles which complete the circuit around Mt Yengo.

We look forward to the early declaration of the Yengo Wilderness Area. ❖

Private development of National Parks – a losing strategy

KEITH MUIR

JUST before Christmas, in a bold move, the NSW Government adopted the quite radical pro-development recommendations of its Tourism and National Parks Taskforce.

The NSW Government is now set to remove the legal barriers to national park development, and encourage privately-owned accommodation and other facilities in national parks. These proposals have been dressed up as meeting the tourism and park visitation targets of the 2006 State Plan, but this is incorrect.

National Parks tourism is already outperforming the other tourism sectors and the State Plan's visitor targets will easily be exceeded under the existing park management regime (see below).

Specifically, the proposed changes include a weakening of the laws governing national park leases to permit the building of new eco-resorts, cabins and semi-permanent camps, and changes to wilderness laws that allow for commercial tours.

Also planned is the creation of a land mechanism for private development inside national

Australians are passionate about national parks, and this fast tracking of development plans could become a potential political blunder with highly damaging consequences...

parks that would offer land to the tourism industry in an 'investor-ready' condition. Another, as yet unspecified, mechanism is mooted to fast track development in relation to park management plans.

The community has not been asked if it wants private developments or land mechanisms for private ownership for their national parks. A promised draft report exhibition was dispensed with and instead the Task Force report was adopted by Government upon its release. Australians are passionate about national parks, and this fast tracking of development plans could become a potential political blunder with highly damaging consequences.

This move on national parks also demonstrates that



Finchley Aboriginal Area (Image: K. Muir)

Private development of National Parks

◀ Continued from page 5

the NSW Government has learnt nothing from the major outcry over the weakening of community-based planning and development control laws by centralising planning powers into its own hands.

The NSW Government has been convinced that private development of national parks could be the answer for the tourism industry growth and provide extra funds for park management, but there is no evidence to support these claims. In fact, strong evidence exists that these politically dangerous initiatives are unnecessary and will not provide extra park funds.

Visitor Growth will exceed the State Target

National Park visitor growth will easily exceed the State Plan Target of 20 per cent increase in national park visits by 2016. In 2008 Tourism NSW predicted¹ that under the current park management regime:

■ Domestic overnight visitors visiting national parks will increase by 100 per cent by 2016, from 1.9 million in 2008 to 3.9 million (and in the northern rivers region they will increase by more than 100 per cent);

■ Domestic day trips going to a national park will increase by 35 per cent by 2016, from 1.7 million in 2008 to 2.3 million;

■ International visitors going to a national park will increase by 14 per cent by 2016, from 1.4 million in 2008 to 1.6 million, which is a reflection of the slow growth of this market sector.

National Parks are helping tourism in NSW.

Private tourist accommodation in National Parks is unlikely to contribute significantly towards the 10 million additional visitor night target for 2016.

An additional 10 million visitor nights in national parks would require the construction

of 10,000 cabins or 900 eco-resorts or 750 eco-lodge resorts or 750 standing camp resorts² – and that's with 100 per cent occupancy! Even a small fraction of such development would cause wide-spread community protest.

Opening the gates to private development for exclusive private accommodation is not the answer. Kosciuszko National Park has shown that increased visitor development does not make a national park financially self-sufficient. This is because commercial visitation in national parks is very costly to manage.

The reality is that the State Plan Targets for tourism and national park visitation must be achieved without development of national parks. If the NSW Government has a political response nerve left in its body, then it should stop these unwise proposals from becoming law.

Environment groups want a stronger nature tourism industry in NSW and more people enjoying the national parks, and believe this should be achieved, while private development in our parks is prevented.

A Rally will be held this Thursday February 26 from 6.30pm at the Footbridge Theatre, on Parramatta Road in Sydney University to organise protest against these developments (see flyer insert). Attend the rally and visit the NPA website to take action or contact the Colong office to get involved further in this campaign.

(1. Source: Summary of Tourism NSW presentation to the Tourism and National Parks Taskforce, June 2008 and the predications are understood to be based on straight line extrapolations of the last five years of visitor use data.

2. Facility estimates for meeting 10 million visitor nights:

$365 \text{ days} \times 2.5 \text{ persons/cabin/night} = 913 \text{ visitor nights/cabin/year}$

$365 \text{ days} \times 30 \text{ persons/eco-resort} = 10,950 \text{ visitor nights/eco-resort/year}$

$365 \text{ days} \times 3 \text{ persons/eco-lodge} \times 12 \text{ eco-lodges/resort} = 13,140 \text{ visitor nights/eco-lodge resort/year}$

$365 \text{ days} \times 3 \text{ persons/standing camp} \times 12 \text{ camps/resort} = 13,140 \text{ visitor nights/standing camps/year}$ ♦

Kakadudded

KEITH MUIR

IN *Bulletin 216* Alex Colley said that Kakadu is no longer a park, explaining how 'throughout the complex history of the park its management has acceded to development pressure.' Alex explained that the now adopted fifth plan of management 'does not stipulate what development will be approved'... as this is left entirely to the park's Board of Management.

A draft tourism master plan was required by the park's fifth plan of management. I had hoped this report would regulate tourism development and visitor use of the park, as the plan of management did not. I should have known that the 'absolutist' development ideology of the Northern Territory was only capable of producing a plan for escalating park development.

Tourist numbers to Kakadu

are static, so more developments in more remote parts of the park are proposed as a remedy. The idea is to get visitors who do come to the park to stay longer. So it is apparently necessary to provide additional facilities to strip more money from these tourists.

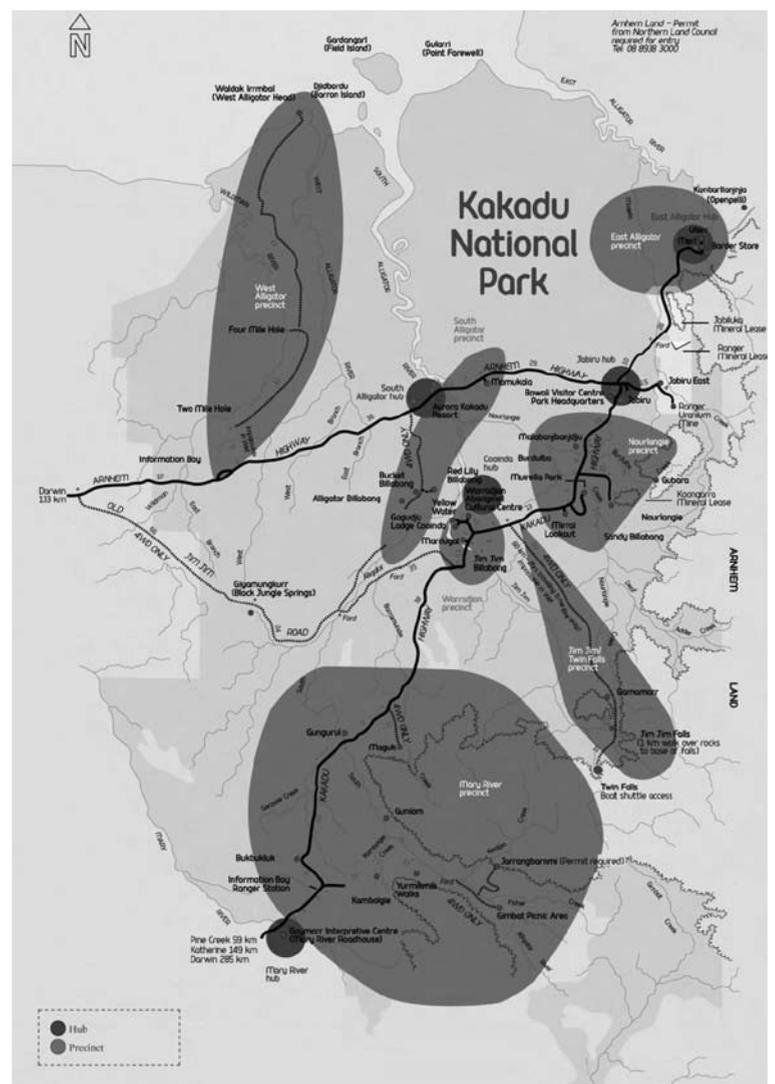
The draft master plan aims to exploit the tourists as well as the national park, and for these reasons this tourist master plan vision creates Kakadudded.

The wilderness attack strategy

The map below, taken from the master plan, illustrates the commercial tourism strategy that appears to displace nature-focused management with visitor-focused tourist exploitation.

The dark 'hubs' on the map are the tourist marshalling

► 7



SUPPORT THE COLONG FOUNDATION!

To: The Treasurer, Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd.
Level 2, 332 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000

The enclosed remittance or advice covers the item(s) indicated by a tick. (One cheque is sufficient to cover subscription and donation.)

- Membership application (\$25) to 31 December 2009
(NB Membership application covers Bulletin subscription)
- Colong Bulletin Subscription (\$11) to 31 December 2009 (non members only)
- Membership renewal to 31 December 2009 (\$25) Life Membership (\$550)
- Tax deductible donation of \$____ to the Colong Wilderness Fund
- PLUS \$____ being for publications as indicated on the reverse side of this form.

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SIGNED AMOUNT

Payment by credit card. Mastercard Visa Bankcard Expiry date ____ ____

Card # _____

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION Why not join or invite a friend to join?

- Yes, I wish to become a member of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd. I subscribe to the Foundation's aim of preserving Australia's wilderness remnants. I accept the liability provided in the Colong Foundation's Articles of Association to guarantee \$20 should it be needed in the event of the winding up of the Foundation. Signed

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Kakadudded ◀Continued from page 6

areas where commercial interests are in control, and the brown 'precincts' are for visitor-focused park development.

The lighter 'precinct' areas smother the Broken Stone Country Wilderness. The tourist development motive for removal of the wilderness management zone from the 2007-2014 plan of management is now revealed.

The Master Plan proposes an 'Ironic Walk' "ideally designed to include overnight visitor facilities to provide a quality experience and minimise the impact of overnight use on the park. This also lessens the need for carrying food, cooking gear and overnight and survival equipment." But development of the park's wilderness is not restricted to luxury cabins on the ironic walk.

New safari style camps, exclusive vehicle-based or helicopter-supported day use and camp sites are proposed, as are nature lodges and five star eco-lodge facilities.

It is impossible from the master plan to tell where these proposals are going.

National Parks are set aside from development and commercial exploitation, and it is not right to redefine national parks as profit zones. Tourism roads, 4WD vehicles and resort facilities in national parks do not float on little clouds above the ground, and are not immune from causing significant environmental impacts.

The 'master plan' is not culturally appropriate. Its implementation could expose Board members to increased sectional interest pressures from clans and tourism interests. The proposed expansion of public-private-Aboriginal-partnerships for this wonderful park could be a formula for 'cronyism'. ❖

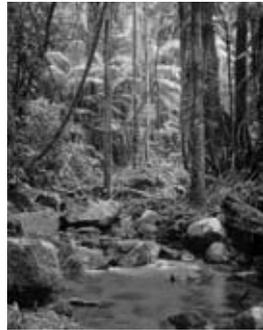
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** Posters available for \$5.00 each when collected from our office. See our website for colour copies of these posters.*





Clockwise from top left:

- Kosciuszko 640mm x 513mm
- Namadgi 640mm x 513mm
- Dorrigo National Park 640mm x 500mm
- Terania Creek 630 x 485mm
- Broken Head 640mm x 518mm
- Wollomombi Falls 640mm x 500mm

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