



THE COLONG BULLETIN

Bulletin 152

(02) 241 2702 September, 1995

THE COLONG FOUNDATION FOR WILDERNESS LTD.
GLOUCESTER WALK, 88 CUMBERLAND STREET SYDNEY 2000 (ACN 001 112 143). TELEPHONE (02) 247 4714. FAX: (02) 247 7118.

Nearly every tree, shrub and animal a visitor from abroad sees in the Australian landscape is new, save for a few like the eucalypts which are widely planted across the world. Australia is a continent with a unique collection of plants and animals organised in ecological communities that are found nowhere else. This is a heritage to be saved for all time.

**Professor Charles Birch in
Confronting the Future**

CONTENTS

Warragamba Dam Proposal	1
Lake Pedder Inquiry	3
Environmental Mining ..	4
Bushwalking in Blue Mountains Outlawed ..	5
Aerial Degradation of Parkland	6
Wilderness Photography, an essential campaign tool	7
Protecting the Future ..	8
Early Conservationist ..	8

Risk Engineer Criticises Warragamba Dam Proposal

by Keith Muir

Late last year the Kowmung Committee commissioned Mr Jim Irish, a consulting risk and environmental engineer, to review Sydney Water's proposal for raising the Warragamba Dam wall 23 metres. He found the proposed dam raising ostensibly for flood mitigation could be used to increase the drinking water supply.

The proposal to reduce flooding in the Hawkesbury-Nepean valley will divert the flood waters upstream into the southern Blue Mountains wilderness. The pristine wilderness areas of the southern Blue Mountains are unlikely to recover from the relatively frequent flooding arising from this proposal.

The proposed raising of the dam would be one of the largest of its kind ever attempted, and must be regarded as somewhat hazardous, given that the dam has already been raised. There are major

concerns about the dam's foundations, and there has been significant movement and seepage since the dam was completed.

Mr Irish considers that the Warragamba proposal should be reviewed, and flood mitigation options considered in conjunction with floodplain planning for the Hawkesbury-Nepean valley.

Existing Dam has significant Flood Mitigation Capacity

In 1989, the dam wall was raised five metres in height. The full storage level for drinking water supply is now thirteen metres below the top of the dam. The dam with its existing spillway gates and extra height can now temporarily store one cubic kilometre of flood water in the thirteen metre airspace between full storage

▼ continued on page 2...

Congratulations to the Carr Government

The cancellation of the planned raising of the Warragamba Dam has ended yet another of the threats to the Blue Mountains wilderness which the Colong Foundation has been continually fighting since its inception. The decision has very significant implications. The raising of the dam would have permitted residential subdivision on low lying rural land, which development would inevitably spread under the policy of unlimited population growth followed by all previous governments.

▲ ...continued from page 1

level and the top of the dam. Of course the dam still continues to permanently store 1.9 cubic kilometres of drinking water up to the full storage level. In other words the current dam is kept one third empty and two thirds full.

The existing dam has a 90 metre wide spillway. The gates on the spillway can allow water to be temporarily stored in the dam. For reasons known only to Sydney Water, however, the gates operate "automatically" so as to neither effectively mitigate peak flood levels or give longer flood warnings to the people downstream.

Blunders by Inter-Departmental Committee

In 1990, the Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) examining flooding issues in the Hawkesbury-Nepean valley recommended the further raising of the Warragamba Dam wall. The IDC decision was flawed as it was not made on a consensus basis, did not examine the environmental impacts in detail and was founded on an economic evaluation undertaken by an engineer, instead of an economist familiar with the evaluation of large public sector investment proposals.

The IDC report focused on the future economic benefits of mitigating potential flood damages when flood prone land earmarked for future urban expansion is developed. In other words it appears that the raised dam is to be used to provide land on the Hawkesbury-Nepean floodplain for an ever increasing Sydney population.

Furthermore, many of the assumptions made by the IDC in determining the degree of flooding appear to Mr Irish to be excessive and there was inadequate allowance for the cost blowouts almost invariably incurred in dam construction.

In my view the decision of the NSW Government to rule out further urban development on flood prone land in the Hawkesbury-Nepean valley renders the IDC's economic analysis irrelevant.

Dam will become excuse for urban development

The proposals for the management of the flooding problems in the Hawkesbury-Nepean valley and the means necessary to reduce the risk of the dam failing to a level which is acceptable to the commu-

nity are intertwined.

Despite this, Sydney Water has prepared its flood mitigation dam at Warragamba in isolation from the flood plain management studies being undertaken downstream by the Public Works Department. Accordingly there has been no attempt to seek an optimum combination of engineering and flood management strategies.

The Kowmung Committee agrees with Mr Irish and considers that the optimum balance of permanent water storage and flood control can be achieved by not raising the dam wall thus avoiding the disastrous environmental impacts upstream.

The Kowmung Committee's alternative solution includes a spillway on the eastern side of the existing dam to allow very large floods to safely pass. The proposed spillway would have flood gates to optimise flood mitigation opportunities. The proposal uses the existing dam to mitigate floods, preventing further flooding of the upstream wilderness, national parks, and World Heritage value bushland.

The Kowmung Committee's option also prevents a possible 'hidden agenda' of increasing the permanent water supply storage of the dam and allows for the voluntary re-location of the most severely flood prone properties on the floodplain as they come up for sale.

Sydney Water's proposal on the other hand will place enormous pressure on planning authorities to relax controls on the development of flood-prone lands if Sydney's population continues to increase. In a sense the proposal will exacerbate the flooding problem in the Hawkesbury-Nepean valley. Many urban expansion decisions will be made on the basis that the raised dam will reduce flooding risks to an acceptable level.

The pre-election promises by Labor opposed the raising of Warragamba Dam by 23 metres. Increased water storage and flooding of the Blue Mountains was also opposed. Labor now stand by a promise to prevent any increase to permanent water storage. Sydney Water's proposal would also be contrary to this policy as the raised dam can increase permanent water storage. Labor should implement its policy for Warragamba Dam and provide flood mitigation to people on the Hawkesbury-Nepean valley by implementing the Kowmung Committee's proposal.

Pre-emptive Strike Against Arsonists

Reporting on a six-month study on improving bushfire management for southern NSW, Steve Dovey reports (NPWS Newsletter winter-spring 1995)

Arson was clearly identified as the most frequent cause of bushfire at the urban-bushland interface and was also the cause of the larger fires which naturally have most potential to do most damage. What this means is that urban settlement itself greatly increases the risk of bushfire because of the increased potential for arson.

In order to protect the properties of those who choose to build (with Council approval) in bush fire hazard locations, the Bush Fire Services, given a free hand by the Fahey Government, have, in Mr. Koperberg's words, burned "tens of thousands of hectares of bushlands." For weeks the skies have been filled with smoke and on one day pollution levels were so high that the E.P.A. stopped the burning. This program will ensure that there is little bush left for the illegitimate arsonists to burn.

There are other ways of protecting property. As Michael Housworth writes (S.M.H. Aug 7th.)

In January 1994 we lost much bushland. I cannot see the logic in frantically burning the remainder of our wildlife's food supply.

People like myself live backing bushland at our own risk. I chose to decrease this risk by sensible design and construction, not by destroying the environment I enjoy. The solution is strict design and construction, not needless destruction of bushland.

Come on people, let's settle the hysteria, clear the air, and leave some food for our struggling wildlife.

Meeting Dates

*Meetings will be held
on September 28th,
October 12th and 26th
and November
9th and 23rd.*

Inquiry into the Proposal to Drain and Restore Lake Pedder

by Geoff Mosley

The latest federal attempt to understand the World Heritage values of the environment of South West Tasmania lives up to the tradition of miserable failure set by the Helsham Commission of Inquiry in 1988. The majority of that Commission could not see that large areas, which the following year were inscribed on the World Heritage list had any World Heritage values.

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment, Recreation and the Arts which tabled its report on the proposal to restore Lake Pedder on June 25th did at least recognise that a restored Lake Pedder would "enhance the World Heritage," but it failed badly in its understanding of the nature and importance of the World Heritage values and hence the conservation significance of restoration.

Just why it missed the point is the main question which will exercise people's minds when they read the report. Was it the result of a political judgement on the likelihood of restoration or was it also a case of an inability to understand the real merits of the case for restoration?

The report summarised the Committee's understanding of this crucial matter in this way:

The most compelling reasons for restoring the lake are symbolic. There is no obligation in World Heritage terms to proceed with restoration, nor are there compelling reasons to do so. The proposal does have some World Heritage and conservation merit, but it is the symbolic value which weighs most heavily with those in favour of proceeding."

Where the report most seriously errs is in not realising that the symbolic value is consequential on the primary benefit of restoration. Expert opinion says that Lake Pedder is an unique example of a glacial landform, significant at the world level. The area would almost certainly have been inscribed on the World Heritage list as a separate site if it had been so nominated. In assessing the case for its

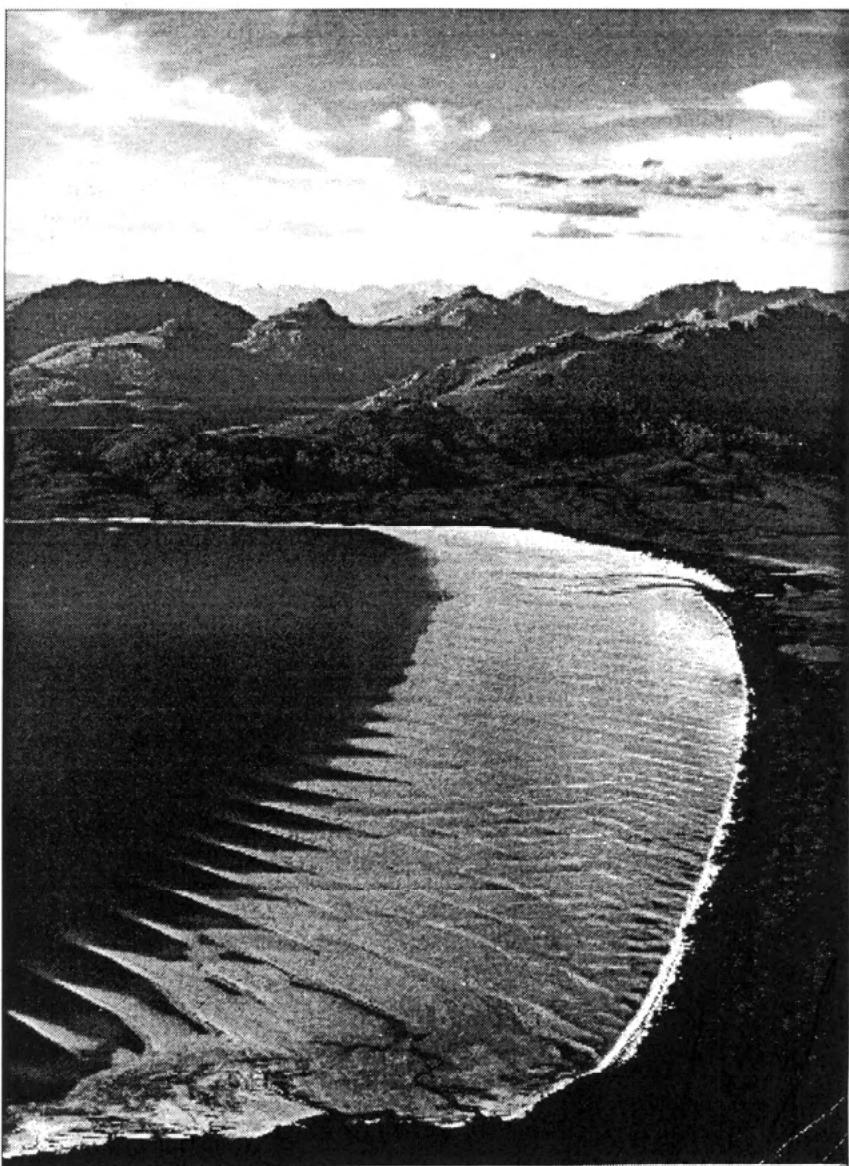
restoration, that is how it should have been viewed by the Inquiry.

Lake Pedder is of course not only a unique set of land forms and associated ecosystems, it is scenically exceptional and its restoration would provide an opportunity to extend the Western Tasmanian Wilderness zone - probably the most important wilderness in the temperate

part of the world.

To understand these facets, including the value for tourists, it is also important to understand how the restored area could take its future place in the World Heritage Area. Remarkably, although the Committee's first term of reference was

▼ continued on next page...



Lake Pedder, as it was and could be again

▲ ...continued from previous page

"the implications of the proposal for the future management of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area," the report makes no reference to the management options or to possible future zoning.

On the question of symbolism, conservationists had made it clear that this was a bonus value. The Lake Pedder Study Group, for instance, explained the relationship in the following way - "It has been said that it will provide a powerful symbol of our determination to tackle the environmental degradation worldwide, but what will make it important in this respect is the intrinsic merit of restoration."

Characterising the main value of restoration as being symbolic was useful to the Committee because they were then able to conveniently counter this with the finding that the retention of the impoundment (also referred to as Lake Pedder) was symbolic to many Tasmanians.

The playing down of the conservation value of restoration also paved the way for the report's section on priorities in which the view was expressed that:

"There are more compelling and urgent priorities and environment goals that the Commonwealth and Tasmanian governments need to achieve. Given these priorities, it is inappropriate to allocate Commonwealth resources to further development or detailed consideration of the Lake Pedder proposal."

Other important findings of the Committee, overshadowed by the misconception of the conservation values, were that "technically it is feasible to drain the present impoundment and restore the geomorphological features of the original lake." and that the Commonwealth "has the power to act if it chooses." The report also states that further research or evaluation of the feasibility of draining would be "inappropriate at this time." The report summary also had the same sentiment of no further consideration "at the present time," but in a loose-leaf corrigenda this wording was changed.

A major conclusion of the report is that because the proposal is opposed by the Tasmanian Government and the Opposition party in Tasmania, it has "no real prospect of proceeding in the foreseeable future." Little reference is made to the strong and growing support for restoration and the views of the Australian Con-

servation Foundation and other national conservation bodies. The report says, in effect, flooding should not have happened, and it would not have happened today, but restoration is not likely to happen now or in the near future. This leads to the question of why the Committee took this view.

When it embarked on the inquiry, the Committee, in its naivety, did not expect strong local opposition and it was this, above all else, that wiped out most of the early sympathy for restoration. The Tasmanian Government called for the Committee to be terminated. It did not get this result, but the effect was strong pressure on the Committee not to say anything which would encourage the pro-restoration forces. Two Tasmanians were added to the Committee to represent the Tasmanian viewpoint. As mentioned above, even "at the present time" had to go in the final wording.

The Tasmanian Government and anti-restoration interests can only be called a campaign of misinformation involving exaggerated claims about the cost of lost energy and rehabilitation and diversion tricks such as the "threat to the platypus" ploy. The Tasmanian Environment Minister even threatened to nominate the impoundment for the World Heritage in Danger list, something which is quite outside Tasmania's power.

Apart from trying to stop the restoration of Lake Pedder, the Tasmanian Government anti-restoration campaign was aimed at dislodging the Tasmanian Greens from their position in Tasmanian politics. To make the charge stick, they were incorrectly credited with having proposed the restoration in the first place.

There is evidence that many Tasmanian citizens believed this anti-conservation propaganda and this also affected the Committee.

The Committee seems to have responded quickly to this bullying. It was then easily influenced by its Tasmanian add-on members. It is likely that it had made up its mind before the ACF presented its evidence at the hearing in Canberra on May 8 (rescheduled from Melbourne after the Tasmanian Government called for the Committee's termination).

In his Parliamentary tabling statement, the Committee Chairperson, John Langmore, said "we must give the highest priority to urgent national tasks such as

establishing a national system of protected areas." Lake Pedder has exceptional World Heritage values which will be lost forever if the impoundment is not drained. It should therefore have the highest priority in a national system of protected areas, along with the continued preservation of places like the Great Barrier Reef and Uluru.

It is for this reason that the Committee's report is unlikely to halt the efforts of conservationists to rescue Lake Pedder. Lake Pedder is so universally outstanding that to give up would be a breach of faith with the people of the world and with future generations.

Geoff Mosley has been involved with the Lake Pedder Study Group since its inception in 1992, and has produced several publications on the restoration proposal. He represented the ACF at the Committee hearing in Canberra on May 8th., 1995.

Environmental Mining

Without mining civilization as we know it would not exist. Nevertheless there have been many clashes between miners and environmentalists. One of the first in Australia was Colong Caves. It has usually been a matter of where the mining took place, rather than the necessity for mineral products, e.g. beach mining, uranium mining in Kakadu, cliff collapses on the upper Wolgan and mining in national parks. It is therefore of interest to note that a Mining and Environment Institute has been formed in Colorado. Kathleen Anderson, the Director, writes in the Newsletter of the American Society of Economic Geologists that a common base about the "true" risks to the environment and human health from mining must begin to evolve if these conflicts are to be successfully managed. Many risks can be evaluated and insured. "However the potential threats to ecosystem and/or human health that mining poses, such as the generation of acid rock drainage, may occur in the far distant future in locations far remote from human contact. Our social and political systems for evaluating, communicating, and distributing this type of risk in an equitable manner are significantly less sophisticated.

Bushwalking in the Blue Mountains Outlawed



On September 1, Sydney Water introduced a new catchment regulation that would exclude all bushwalkers, anglers and other park visitors from about 300,000 hectares of the Blue Mountains, Kanangra Boyd and Nattai National Parks, as well as four adjoining State Recreation Areas (Nattai, Yerranderie, Bargo, Burragorang).

Never used provisions in the old regulation governing the use of Special Area catchments will be implemented in the new law. The regulation outlaws camping, lighting camp fires and swimming in the Warragamba and other catchment areas. Sydney Water's police state, command and control mentality pushes people out of parks and catchment areas.

Emeritus Professor John Burton (foundation professor of the Faculty of Natural Resources at the University of New England) considers this proposal narrow-minded and punitive, and that it cannot be justified in terms of modern catchment management.

Prof Burton considers the impact of a few bushwalkers in a catchment will have negligible effect on water quality in comparison to the other inputs. For Warragamba Dam these include: treated sewage and urban stormwater; licensed discharges from power stations and coal mines; and run-off from agricultural land.

Mr Michael Maack the Tracks and Access Officer of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs is disappointed that Sydney Water has disenfranchised bushwalkers from its catchments. His position is to liaise with organisations like Sydney Water to ensure walking access is maintained.

Mr Maack points out that bushwalkers act as voluntary rangers, identifying such problems as pollutant escapes and feral animals. He considers that the proposed dam raising and subsequent increased flooding are inconsistent with the provisions in the regulations that are supposed to protect wild life. In his submission he reports an increase in policing activities by catchment rangers and the barring of access to the lower Kowmung.

The new regulation is perhaps intended to keep people out of areas that will be permanently scarred by flooding if the proposal to raise the Warragamba Dam wall 23 metres goes ahead. The majestic river oaks along the lower Nattai and Kowmung Rivers will no longer sing with the wind. They will die when the flood waters rise to drown these wild river valleys. Sydney Water wants to stop nature lovers seeing these dead and dying tree stags, or the sheets of lifeless sediment that will smother the lower reaches of the once wild rivers in the southern Blue Mountains.

Dr Peter Macdonald, the independent Member for Manly and chair of last year's Parliamentary Inquiry into the then Water Board considers the regulation premature. It ignores the catchment management provisions of the Water Board Corporatisation Act that conservation and social justice groups brokered with the former Fahey Government last year. The Act requires Sydney Water to prepare joint management plans with the National Parks and Wildlife Service to protect the ecological integrity of the catchments, including private lands within two years. The regulation preempts the catchment management plan-

ning process.

The regulation is also inconsistent as camping, swimming and camp fires will be permitted on all private inholdings in the restricted catchment areas. Exclusion of people from water catchments may simply be a cheap way to manage the Corporation's special area catchments. In any case the proposal will be unenforceable as Sydney Water rangers will be unable to locate keen bushwalkers. The determined bushwalker can also get around the regulations by simply camping on the inholdings within the national parks.

The regulations should be disallowed by Parliament and the current regulatory system reviewed after the plans for catchment management are prepared.

The Foundation entirely agrees with the following views of the Confederation of Bushwalking Club's submission to Sydney Water on the regulations:

"If you (Sydney Water) want the quality of your water to remain high, nominate your land as wilderness, preserve your land as national park and transfer your rangers to the Parks Service." The Foundation would also add that Sydney Water should pay the Parks Service for these management benefits. Such a policy would then be entirely in accord with the conservation policy of the Carr Government.

The Colong Foundation met with Sydney Water but was unable to prevent implementation of these punitive measures. The Colong Foundation will now be meeting with Parliament's Regulatory Review Committee to seek to have the law (or parts of it) disallowed or sent back for amendment.

RECYCLING RHETORIC

Robert Bunning, chair of Whittakers Limited in a recent (and very long) letter to the *Financial Review* outlined the virtues of the Australian timber industry.

"The debate about old-growth and woodchipping has confused the public's knowledge about forest management. The woodchip element of the debate is a nonsense as woodchip - or pulpwood for paper making - is merely one product from the residue from the sawmilling industry or forest management activities.

"The so-called old-growth forests of Australia are, in fact, forests that have been organically managed in the manner described for about 150 years."

According to the Foundation it is public knowledge that woodchipping is a form of intense industrial forestry that is taking place in many old growth forests that till then had remained unlogged because of their limited sawlog potential. Mr Bunning's modest description of this aggressive industry rapidly converting native forests into virtual plantations reveals some telling truths about the timber industry's public relations.

Kanangra Boyd Inholding Acquired

Privately owned inholdings in national parks pose a development threat, as the experience of the Colong Foundation proves. Our congratulations to the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society for contributing \$41,000 towards the acquisition of an inholding of 24 ha in the middle of the Kanangra Boyd National Park. The owner wished to sell the land for tourist development, but the NPWS wanted to keep it undeveloped and, with the Society's help, was able to acquire it.

AERIAL DEGRADATION OF PARKLAND

The wilderness remnants in the Blue Mountains are now islands in a vast developed landscape. These precious national park wilderness areas are still under constant threat of environmental damage from external agencies. The noise from helicopters used for scenic flights, for example, is affecting the amenity of Katoomba residents and bushwalkers in the Blue Mountains National Park, especially in the Wild Dog Mountains area. Resident protest at the voluntary 'Fly Neighbourly' code for aircraft movements has led to commitments by the new NSW Government to promise legislative control of scenic flights.

Yet the establishment of a 24 hour operation airport at Badgerys Creek poses a much greater threat to the natural quiet of the Blue Mountains National Parks and its wilderness areas. So far the Federal Government has been silent on this issue.

House of Representatives Inquiry

The Colong Foundation recently made a submission to the NSW House of Representatives Standing Committee on Public Works inquiry into Sydney West Airport (Badgerys Creek). Regarding aircraft operations at Badgerys Creek, the Foundation believes wilderness areas will be subject to noise from frequent flights by large commercial jet aircraft.

The proposed airport at Badgerys Creek has the potential to severely affect the natural quiet of the Blue Mountains, Kanangra-Boyd and Nattai National Parks, and it may also affect Yengo and Wollemi National Parks.

Impacts of Aircraft on National Parks: Loss of Solitude and Wilderness Quality

In the Blue Mountain wilderness areas natural sounds determine the acoustic environment. The undisturbed background noise in a wilderness area is called natural quiet. It is an essential wilderness quality required for visitors enjoyment of solitude. Aircraft flying over wilderness abolishes solitude and the enjoyment of

wilderness.

A report to the United States Congress dated July 1992 on the *Potential Impacts of Aircraft Overflights on the National Forest System Wilderness* found that a third of park managers considered that aircraft overflights were a problem damaging visitor enjoyment.

Aircraft operations in US wilderness areas, however, are usually more sporadic and fewer in number but may be audible at considerably greater distances than in airport neighbourhoods. The greater proportion of aircraft overflying United States wilderness areas are helicopters and smaller fixed wing piston powered aircraft.

In the Grand Canyon National Park frequent tourist aircraft overflights were damaging natural quiet. Regulatory action was taken to address the issue and focussed directly on the problem.

The Federal Aviation Authority specific regulations in the Grand Canyon for "flight free" zones to an altitude of 14,500 feet msl above the park. Impact mitigation for general aviation was achieved by specifying flight corridors.

Similarly protection of Blue Mountains' natural quiet by the exclusion of aircraft noise should be mandatory, not discretionary through the operation of the voluntary Fly Neighbourly code of practice which may be observed more in the breach than by compliance.

A New Environmental Impact Statement

The Civil Aviation Authority also has not adequately discharged its environmental responsibilities under the *Civil Aviation Act*.

The functions of the Authority include:
(a) carrying out activities to protect the environment from the effects of, and the effects associated with, the operation of Commonwealth jurisdiction aircraft;
and section 9A of that Act requires:

The Authority must endeavour to perform its functions, other than its regula-

▼ continued on next page...

▲ ...continued from previous page

tory functions, in a manner that ensures that, as far as is practicable, the environment is protected from the effects of, and the effects associated with, the operations and use of aircraft (other than state aircraft).

The existing environmental impact statement of the Badgerys Creek Airport fails to adequately examine alternative flight paths and airspace configurations to minimise noise impacts. The EIS must be considered grossly defective given the level of controversy running on the third runway at Mascot.

To discharge its duty of care to the environment, CAA must prepare a new environmental impact statement to regulate aircraft in the airspace so as to protect the acoustic environment. A new environmental impact statement for Badgerys Creek Airport should examine ways to eliminate or minimise the adverse effects of aircraft overflights both in the neighbourhood of the airport and in the Blue Mountains National Parks.

Unless there are practical means of overcoming these adverse effects, the new E.I.S. should examine the feasibility of locating the airport outside the Sydney Region, preferably on the route of an upgraded Sydney - Melbourne railway (see *Enviro* No 4, February 95).

The Colong Foundation has suggested that the Standing Committee for Public Works invite the Civil Aviation Authority to provide details of its actions and intended actions to protect the acoustic environment of the airport neighbourhood, and the natural quiet of the Blue Mountains National Parks system.

The Committee should seek an explanation on what measures CAA will take to consult with other Government Agencies and the public in regard to the regulation of aircraft operations at Badgerys Creek Airport, and in particular whether the CAA will prepare a new environmental impact statement.

Meanwhile the Federal Minister for Transport, Mr Laurie Brereton, has promised "designated flights would be developed to minimise noise disruption, with night flights taking off over Warragamba Dam, and not over residential developments." Clearly residential amenity matters but the aerial degradation of the southern Blue Mountains wilderness areas doesn't.

Wilderness Photography — an essential campaign tool

The following article was taken from notes presented by Henry Gold, the Foundation's Honorary Photographer, to a workshop on wilderness photography at the Wild Agendas Conference on 3 July.

Bush walking as we know it today had its beginnings with the formation of the Mountain Trails Club in Sydney in 1914. This was the first group of people who actually walked and slept in the bush, unlike earlier walking clubs that spent their nights in pre-arranged accommodation along the way. One of the founders of the Mountain Trails Club was Myles Dunphy, who today is recognised as the father of wilderness in Australia.

Among those early bush walkers was Alan Rigby, an artist and a keen photographer. The first recorded use of wilderness photography in NSW for a conservation campaign was in the Blue Gum Forest in 1931 when Alan Rigby produced folios of black and white photographs for publication and fund raising. For the first time, the bush walking movement mobilised when confronted with a threat - clearing of the majestic Blue Gum Forest, one of the scenic gems in the Blue Mountains.

The 1968, campaign against limestone mining at Colong Caves in the Kanangra-Boyd wilderness was the first time a wilderness controversy became a political issue at a State Government level. At the time there was no existing expertise in conducting a major conservation campaign. The campaign led to the consolidation of bush walking and conservation movements as a political force. The Colong Committee was established in that year and campaign methods developed that took advantage of wilderness photography. A library of photographs and slides was built up, copies made available to the press, used in brochures and in 1971 a full page advertisement in the *Sydney Morning Herald* featured one of Henry's photographs of the area.

The conservation groups then moved on to protect the Boyd Plateau from being planted to pines. In 1975, Milton Morris, the Minister for Lands, was presented with a professionally laid out folio of photographs of the area (by Henry Gold). The following Tuesday, after looking over the photographs on the weekend, the Minister rejected the Forestry Commission's proposal for a pine plantation and instead the Boyd was protected.

In the ten year battle for the NSW rainforests from 1972 to 1982 photography also played a vital role in getting the message across to the public. This campaign was fought on a wider front, with local communities living on the edge of the rainforests in northern NSW involved, and as a result a larger and more varied output of photographic material was produced. More colour photographs came into use, mainly in slide presentations. However, black and white photography remained the main medium used for printing, as the cost of colour was a drain on campaign funds. This fact remains to the present day.

In the mid seventies, many threats to Wollemi - the northern Blue Mountains wilderness - erupted. The Electricity Commission, for example, was planning to dam the Colo River. The National Parks Association responded by commissioning a photographic survey in black and white and in colour of this largest and least known part of the Blue Mountains.

This major photographic task required some organisation, if it was to be completed within a reasonable time. Henry was given the opportunity to accompany

▼ continued on next page...

▲ ...continued from previous page

certain bush walkers who had an intimate knowledge of a particular area and who would take him directly to the most scenic spots.

The Greater Blue Mountains National Park, proposal originally proposed by the National Parks and Primitive Areas Council in 1932, was relaunched by the NPA with a special issue of the National Parks Journal in 1976 organised and written by the Colong Foundation, using black and white photographs throughout. This campaign only came to an end three years ago, when the Nattai wilderness was dedicated, although the wilderness areas and the Gardens of Stone on the western edge of the Blue Mountains are yet to be fully protected.

The book, *Colo Wilderness*, richly illustrated and highly informative, also played an important role in the establishment of Wollemi National Park. A rather inexpensive production, it was a great success, mainly because it surprised many Sydneysiders who were oblivious to the spectacular country they had on their door step. The book came to the attention of some influential people including Neville Wran, Premier of the day, who was seen walking into Parliament with a copy of this book under his arm just before the decision to make the national park was announced. By the end of 1976 Wollemi National Park was dedicated, encompassing the largest wilderness in the State.

The old proverb "a picture is worth a thousand words" is alive and well. The present push for the Blue Mountains for listing as a World Heritage property was launched with a highly informative book in 1988. The photographs were drawn from the existing pool of material collected in previous campaigns.

More recently, photographic competitions have been used to promote conservation objectives. The Blue Mountains World Heritage Committee conducted such a competition only last year. The event received contributions from primary and secondary school students, as well as various walking clubs. The entries were exhibited at the Wentworth Falls School of Arts and of course all the parents of the school children competitors and their friends attended, bringing the need for World Heritage listing to the attention of the broad community.

Protecting the Future

In a paper on "The case for intergenerational equity" Joe Friend writes:

Now research has caught up and is proving many resources once thought to be 'renewable' resources; such as soils, minerals, oil and old growth forests, are in fact finite resources or 'non renewables.' We are using our resources faster than they are renewing. If we continue at present rates, they may not be around for the next generation and for the health of the planet.....Soil is the foundation of our society, it is the major medium that plants grow in and is the basic resource for all land use and development. Conserving and managing this resource is critical to survival. Some previous civilisations disappeared because they continued to grow without consideration for soil and other resource limits. Will history repeat itself here, on a continent where the greatest threat to biodiversity and agriculture is land degradation from soil loss and soil salination?

An Early Conservationist

It is not good for man to be kept performe at all times in the presence of his species. A world from which solitude is extirpated is a very poor ideal. Solitude, in the sense of being often alone, is essential to any depth of meditation or of character; and solitude in the presence of natural beauty and grandeur is the cradle of thoughts and aspirations which are not only good for the individual, but which society could ill do without. Nor is there much satisfaction in contemplating the world with nothing left to the spontaneous activity of nature; with every rood of land brought into cultivation which is capable of growing food for human beings; every flowery waste or natural pasture ploughed up, all quadrupeds or birds which are not domesticated for man's use exterminated as his rivals for food, every hedgerow or superfluous tree rooted out, and scarcely a place left where a wild shrub or flower could grow without being eradicated as a weed in the name of improved agriculture. If the earth must lose that great portion of its pleasantness which it owes to things that the unlimited increase of wealth and population would extirpate from it, for the mere purpose of enabling it to support a larger, but not a better or a happier population, I sincerely hope, for the sake of posterity, that they will be content to be stationary, long before necessity compels them to do it.

John Stuart Mill,
Principles of Political Economy, 1848



The Dawn of Conservation

In a letter to Jim Somerville on 31st October 1972, Myles Dunphy wrote:

By the time the Mountain Trails Club was formed in 1914, some of us had been using Garawarra, that lovely place. As time went on members spread into rough scenic country, enjoyed it and gathered impressions; they agreed that more parks in scenic rugged country were necessary: it seemed fairly obvious that other outdoors people would need them in the future: to have more big parks would be a genuine kind of progress.....Pedestrian tourists needed bushland areas in which to hike, bushwalk and camp, to explore away from roads, to admire scenery, to study wildlife and live in its company. Bushland was needed for bushland recreation; this meant the creation of more national parks and primitive or wilderness areas, and those could only be got from residual Crown lands, far too much of which were being deprived of the finest scenic forest growth under the legal machinery of the Forestry Commission.

THE COLONG BULLETIN

SENDER THE COLONG FOUNDATION FOR WILDERNESS

The Gloucester Walk
88 Cumberland St.,
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Publications Available From The Colong Foundation

	Price posted
The Colong Bulletin, bi-monthly, per annum	10.00
Blue Mountains for World Heritage	16.00
The Colong Story	8.00
How the Rainforest Was Saved	8.00
Park or Pines	8.00
Nattai National Park Proposal	20.00
Nattai, Kanangra Boyd, Nadgee, Goodradigbee and Lost World Wilderness Nominations, each	4.00
Barefoot Bushwalker	27.00
The Growth Syndrome	3.00
Wilderness - The Future	25.00
Red Index - complete	100.00
summary brochure	2.00
listing of individual areas	5.00

SUPPORT THE COLOGN FOUNDATION

BULLETIN SUBSCRIPTION

Membership of The Colong Foundation for Wilderness covers Bulletin subscription fee.

Non-members of the Foundation may subscribe to the Bulletin for a fee of \$10.00 (covers all issues of the Bulletin to 31/12/96)

A BEQUEST

Please remember us in your will. The Law Society of NSW recommends the following wording:

'I bequeath the sum of \$..... to the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd. for its general purposes and declare that the receipt of the Treasurer for the time being of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd. shall be complete discharge to my executors in respect of any sum paid to the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd.'

MEMBERSHIP

Membership fee of \$20 covers Bulletin subscription
If you are not personally known to the Foundation, the Secretary will nominate you and ask one of the directors to second your nomination. The signing of this application will be accepted as evidence of your support of the aims of the Foundation.

Return to The Hon. Secretary, Colong Foundation for Wilderness, The Gloucester Walk, 88 Cumberland St, Sydney 2000

The Treasurer
Colong Foundation For Wilderness Ltd.,
The Gloucester Walk, 88 Cumberland Street
Sydney NSW 2000

The enclosed remittance or advice covers the item(s) indicated by a tick.

(One cheque sufficient to cover subscription and donation)

- Membership application (use form below) (N.B. Membership fee covers Bulletin subscription)
- Life Membership (\$500)
- Membership renewal (\$20)
- Colong Bulletin Subscription to 31/12/96 (\$10.00) (Non-members only)
- Tax deductible donation of \$_____ to the Colong Wilderness Fund (cheques to be made payable to the Fund).

NAME (MR, MS, MRS, MISS) _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____

DATE _____

SIGNED _____

AMOUNT \$ _____

I hereby apply for membership of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd.

I am nominated by _____

and seconded by _____

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 _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____

DATE _____

The Colong Foundation originated as the Colong Committee, which was appointed in 1968 by a meeting of conservation societies to prevent quarrying of Colong Caves. Shortly afterwards the Committee extended its objective to cover the saving of the Boyd Plateau from becoming the site of a 15,000 acre pine plantation. Both objectives had been achieved by 1975, when three new objectives were adopted. The first of these was the creation of a Border Ranges National Park, an objective which escalated to become the rainforest campaign. The other objectives were the creation of a Greater Blue Mountains National Park and a Kakadu National Park. The rainforest parks and Kakadu are now World Heritage areas, the Greater Blue Mountains Park is in being in fact, though not in name, and the Foundation is campaigning for World Heritage listing for the Blue Mountains. Recent campaigns for "Gardens of Stone" and Nattai National Park have been successful. The Foundation's proposal for a Wilderness Act was accepted in 1987. It has been supplemented by the Red Index of Wilderness, now being updated and extended to other states. A more detailed history of the Foundation is available in its introductory brochure.

