



THE COLONG BULLETIN

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The Green Exploits of Our Legislators

by Keith Muir

THIS review, based on the Parliamentary Reports by the Environmental Liaison Office, is to assist Bulletin readers who are wondering who to vote for in the state election on March 27th. The Colong Foundation does not indicate a voter preferences but provides the following analysis to assist those who want to base their vote on environmental considerations. This performance assessment is mainly based on legislation, as the main tasks of a politician is the passage of laws, to implement government policy through these laws, and to ensure the views of their constituents are reflected in Parliamentary debates, reviews and legislative processes. It extends beyond the field of the Colong Foundation because many voters will be influenced by other environmental issues.

One of the first laws introduced by Carr Government was the Olympic Co-ordination Authority Act 1995. Its weak environmental and social provisions (e.g. no environmental impact

reports for major development and removal of third party rights for Olympic developments) suggested that the Carr administration would not be as green as hoped. However, subsequent legislation and administrative reviews have produced positive reform of fire, waste, threatened species, parks, energy, water and native vegetation laws. In summary, the Carr Government has been dynamic and reformist but politically pragmatic because it rests on such small electoral margins. As a result, very significant legislative amendment, via the minor parties in the Upper House, was necessary.

The introduction of threatened species, waste minimisation and energy legislation in 1995 were ground breaking events but on closer inspection were almost useless without amendment. In the case of energy and threatened species, a combination of the Coalition and green minor parties saved the day. The early days of the government were also marked by the

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The largest cheers came when Mr Souris promised to scrap the Government's Native Vegetation Conservation Act.

(S.M.H. report on National Party campaign speech in the Clarence electorate on the 21.2.99).

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passage of Richard Jones' 'Duck Bill' which has ended open season duck shooting in this State. This Act, along with native vegetation and water reform legislation, will be targeted by the Coalition parties if returned to power next March.

The Coalition

Initially in 1995 and on rare occasions in the next three years, the Coalition were supportive of green amendments. But in general they embraced highly conservative positions and bolstered disgraceful ALP legislation on forests and planning.

Successful threatened species legislation followed Upper House rejection of Government efforts to extend the Endangered Fauna (Interim Protection) Amendment Act, instead of introducing a comprehensive law.

The Coalition's pressure was followed up by model threatened species legislation introduced by Dr Peter Macdonald in the Lower House. This bill aimed to benchmark the Government's legislation, provide a template for amendments and to act as a backup if the Government to not introduce their bill. The Government's Bill was then introduced and subjected to key amendments by the Coalition. These amendments set dates for publication of species recovery plans that were subsequently funded, mandatory threat abatement plans and, surprisingly, NPWS concurrence procedures for activities that could threaten both endangered and vulnerable species.

Coalition support was also critical to securing amendments to the Catchment Management Regulation in 1995. The Coalition threat of disallowance enabled amendment of the Regulation to permit walkers to camp and swim in the outer catchment, ending 30 years of controversy. The Opposition continued to cooperate with the Upper House cross benches to improve drinking water supply legislation and in late 1998 amended the Sydney Catchment Management Act by requiring greater accountability for the Minister, the Sydney Water Authority Board and its CEO, and to require independent auditing of the Authority.

SOME ENVIRONMENT HOT SPOTS

Parks

In 1996, major problems arose in the development of an appropriate model for Aboriginal ownership of national parks. The Aboriginal ownership legislation was the most important amendment to the National Parks and Wildlife Act to be introduced since the NPWS was established 30 years ago. It established processes for the transfer of freehold ownership and management of parks to Aborigines.

Both the Government and the Opposition ignored primary concerns of environment groups including, that the national parks estate should be kept in public ownership, with the exception of specific areas of Aboriginal cultural significance. Park

lease back arrangements, while ensuring Aboriginal management, are only for thirty years, placing at risk the long term security of the transferred park areas. Environment groups were also concerned that rental payments may adversely impact upon the NPWS budget and provisions that allowed wildlife to be killed by Aborigines weakening the role of national parks as wildlife sanctuaries.

Marine park legislation was created in 1997 but was marred by allowing for fishing in these reserves. The legislation did not create no-take sanctuary areas or buffer habitat zones. Park zoning is to be determined by more easily varied regulations. Even ocean outfalls, mining and dredging are not prohibited in marine parks.

Forest preservation

A major transfer of state forest to national parks occurred under the Carr Government. A total area of 946,372 hectares of new parks were created, including 692,938 hectares of former state forests.

By way of comparison, the Carr Government has reserved nearly three times the amount of parks and thirteen times the amount of state forest in four years as the previous Coalition governments had in seven. The area of state forest reservation is almost equal to the total of Wran forest decisions that include Deua-Wadbilliga National Park (150,000 ha), the Wollemi (500,000 ha), southern Blue Mountain national park additions (10,000 ha) and the rainforest decisions (118,000 ha) achieved over his ten year term in office.

The Carr Government, at the very last minute, has reserved a total of over 880,000 hectares of wilderness and only two of sixteen wilderness policy areas are yet to be protected. Labor's achievement now compares favourably with the Coalition's effort of 651,895 hectares.

However, the north-east forest assessment process found 235,000 hectares of NPWS recognised wilderness outside the existing park estate. About 203,000 hectares of that wilderness is now available to the loggers, mainly on Crown leasehold lands. The

Exploiter Speak

John Sinclair has written a paper on the Language of Exploitation. He quotes value laden words such as "growth, development, selective, retention, reclamation, sustainable and production." Another such term is "renewable" resource, about which David Suzuki's mentor, David Livingstone, writes "Once a thing is perceived as having some utility - any utility - and is thus perceived as a 'resource,' its depletion is only a matter of time." John advises conservationists to purge their language of any words or phrases that tend to give unwarranted legitimacy or validity to indefensible exploitation. He appends a glossary which advises the use of the terms "canopy reduction" instead of "canopy retention," "demand logging" instead of "sustained yield," "euphemisers and propagandists" for "public relations," "timber felling" instead of "timber harvesting," and "repair destruction" instead of "rehabilitation."

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Forestry and National Park Estate Act, 1998 prevents the NPWS Director-General from identifying wilderness outside park areas. On the other hand, the Wollemi wilderness, the State's largest, is reasonably well protected.

The Carr Government has acted to protect the Kanangra-Boyd, the coastal Nadgee wilderness and Wollemi without huge concessions to 4WD user groups. But in other areas both major parties have demonstrated a cynical attitude to wilderness reservation, allowing generous concessions for existing uses governed by only one abiding principle: if there is any competing interest, wilderness protection has the lowest priority.

The Forestry and National Park Estate Act 1998 received bipartisan support. This draconian law provides twenty year resource security to the timber industry despite the inadequacy of timber resources to deliver such high levels of supply protection, removes environmental impact statement requirements, third party rights, emergency powers to protect threatened species and introduces a secret forestry management regime.

Regressive Planning Measures

The Carr Government's integrated development legislation has curtailed public input into developments in residential neighbourhoods. It is a pervasive attack on community rights and local environmental amenity. A broad coalition of local government, social welfare, Aboriginal groups, professional associations joined with environment groups to oppose this legislation. The legislation that was passed unamended with bipartisan support, abolishes the mandatory environmental check list review of developments and denies effective notification of neighbours about building developments. This developers Act infringes on threatened species protections, prevents court appeals and allows certain categories of development in council parklands and environmental protection zones without public consultation. It shifts the balance of power to the

developer and his environmental assessments.

On a more positive note, the Local Government (Community Land Management) Amendment Act was introduced in 1998 to protect park land managed by local government from inappropriate use or disposal. Other amendments to the Local Government Act provides rate relief for conservation agreements made under the NPWS Act that will greatly encourage these protection measures on private lands.

Mining

The bipartisan support for mining at the expense of the environment was demonstrated by the passage of legislation allowing a broad range of works related with mining, as well as the actual winning of minerals, to be exempt from the enforcement of planning laws. Moves by the Upper House cross bench members to protect rivers and lakes from mine damage were rejected.

Several pieces of special mining legislation were passed to allow the Cadia Gold Mine to proceed, the Bengalla coal mine to operate overriding a court decision and threatening certain Hunter Valley wineries and for a Tomago mineral sand mine to destroy (another court decision extinguished) a key koala habitat.

Biodiversity protection and management

The Native Vegetation Conservation Act was introduced to control land clearing and prevent the rapid loss of natural areas and associated greenhouse gas emissions. The legislation empowers local community committees to undertake the vegetation plan development. Plans produced by these committees are submitted to the Dept. of Land & Water Conservation and the Minister for the Environment. Plans specify areas where clearing is allowed, prevented or subject to specific controls. It creates a system of property plans and allows access to financial incentives for retaining native vegetation. Unfortunately the Coalition has promised to "tear up" the Native Vegetation Conservation Act if elected in 1999, and replace it with a weaker law.

The Companion Animal Act

brought cats under legislative control and was passed following substantial amendment, mostly due to the efforts of the Hon. Richard Jones, and the Hon Arthur Chesterfield-Evans, Dr Peter Macdonald and Ms Clover Moore. The Act has a number of provisions that make it harder to dump pets and enables councils to create cat and dog-exclusion zones for "wildlife protection areas". Arthur Chesterfield-Evans (Democrat) succeeded in making wildlife protection a primary objective of animal welfare policy.

The Rural Fires Act was one of the most visionary legislative reforms of the Carr administration. The Act provides better environmental management of the Rural Fire Services but the Act fails to require adequate consideration of the natural environment of even remote park areas, such as the protection of wilderness values, during fire emergencies. The legislation provides exemption from control burning to protect key environments such as endangered species, appeals to the Court, environmental representation on fire committees and use of ESD principles.

Water reform

Water legislation was introduced that seeks to improve environmental flows from major water storages, community involvement in water resource management, regulate ground water and certain major irrigators previously subject to ad hoc arrangements. The legislation allows for environmental conditions on water licences, allows the Court to consider government policy and agreements, permits charges for water used, including that used by Sydney Water and Hunter Water Corporations. But the promised legislation to protect Wild Rivers failed to materialise despite the Colong Foundation producing model guidelines to assist in the development of the legislation.

The Nationals have promised "to zap the Murray-Darling cap" on water usage and to increase coastal water diversion by damming the Clarence River, that would drown parts of the Guy Fawkes wilderness and decimate coastal fisheries.

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The passage of legislation to protect endangered fish in 1997 and the commencement of Snowy Hydro Corporatisation processes that could see environmental flows for the Snowy River, are further elements of environmental reform in the water policy area. The public inquiry and review of environmental flows for the Snowy River were supported by the Coalition and the Upper House cross bench members. To its credit, the Coalition resisted the NSW Government's push for immediate passage of the Snowy Hydro Corporatisation legislation, despite pressure to do so from their Victorian and Commonwealth counterparts.

Transport

While bipartisan support for transport legislation was secured for light rail, freeway development was also strongly supported by the major parties. The Government's promised reform legislation to curb the power of the Roads and Traffic Authority did not materialise and so growth in road traffic, the major factor in decline of metropolitan air quality, remains unchecked. At the request of Parliament, the Government was obliged to subject the controversial Eastern Distributor freeway to an Auditor-General's Inquiry.

(The National's intention to drive a 'Superhighway' over the Blue Mountains, threatening the Grose wilderness and the amenity of local village communities, indicates that a Coalition Government would certainly be no better in handling this sensitive portfolio.)

Pollution control

In a move contrary to key ALP policy commitments, the Protection of the Environment (Operations) Act repealed existing pollution controls and limited community input to pollution licences. The legislation grants industries a virtual right to perpetually pollute. The subsequent repeal of the Clean Waters regulations to be replaced by unenforceable policies could prevent the EPA from taking action to stop pollution of water supplies.

The coast

The most significant measure protecting the coast remains the Government's State Environmental Planning Policy on banning canal estates in NSW. The Coastal Protection Amendment Act lacked powers to create the much needed "environmental watchdog" for the coast. By defining the coastal zone and environmentally sustainable management it improved the reporting framework of the Coastal Council that now cannot be varied by Ministerial whim. The legislation also ensured that the Council's report is made public through being tabled in Parliament.

Significant administrative actions

The raising of the Warragamba Dam wall threatened the upstream wilderness areas with flood inundation and productive downstream floodplain areas with excessive urban sprawl. While the Coalition remains firmly committed to this damaging proposal, threatening the World Heritage value bushlands of the Southern Blue Mountains, the dam wall project is now very unlikely as the Carr Government has let the contract for spillway construction.

NPWS park plans of management during 1997/98 were produced at a greater rate than ever before and for the first time pest species controllers have been employed marking an increased emphasis in nature-based park management.

Park access and tourism policies were reviewed by the Carr Government which led to a review of park management in general. These processes have yet to reach completion but indicate that national parks could be further opened up for high impact recreation, such as off road vehicle and horseriding use of management tracks. The Opposition Leader, Ms Kerry Chikarovski, apparently has less reticence about overturning current park management. She has already indicated that she supports traditional (i.e. off road) access for horseriders and 4WD users. Her \$500 million environment and park vision will no doubt lead to a rash of excessive park roading and development projects.

The Carr Government has been a keen supporter of certain park resort

developments, allowing consideration of a apartment-real estate and retail development called the Perisher Resort that has little to do with skiing and cabins development in the heart of the Warrumbungle National Park. However, in the Blue Mountains, through the efforts of the local member, the Hon Bob Debus, a resort at the top of the Grose Valley has been rejected and horseriding curtailed in the Wild Dog Mountains - an icon of wilderness bushwalking in NSW.

Foxes have been listed as a threatening process under the Threatened Species Conservation Act but cats should also be singled out for priority action, although control programs have been undertaken in some parks.

In retrospect, it is clear that the Carr Government has considerably advanced the conservation agenda in rural NSW but attacked legislation that protects urban environmental quality and public participation rights. The NSW Greens, usually supported by the Democrats and Richard Jones, demonstrated a determination to improve by amendment nearly every bit of legislation that entered the Parliament. The Coalition sometimes assisted, (the anti-conservation policies of the National Party notwithstanding) and the Upper House cross benches played a key part through their hold on the balance of power. The Lower House independents, Ms Clover Moore and Dr Peter Macdonald, also acted to strengthen the Government's hand and put the media spotlight on irresponsible developments like the M5 east freeway and the Eastern Distributor. ■

Meeting Dates
Meetings will be held at 6 p.m. on March 11th and 25th, April 8th and 22nd (ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING) May 6th and 20th.

PARTY

On February 2nd we wrote to state political party leaders saying we would be pleased to publish their election policies on seven matters of concern to the Colong Foundation in this *Bulletin* if they could furnish their policies before the end of the month. Only the Democrats replied in time, but we hope to include other replies in a "Stop Press" addition to the *Bulletin*.

ELECTION

The Hon. Dr Arthur Chesterfield-Evans MLC replied on behalf of the Democrats:

The Australian Democrats support the addition of the nominated wilderness areas enclosed with your letter.

Off road vehicle access for vehicles and horses in National parks

National parks will experience different impacts depending on climate, soil type, rainfall and frequency of usage. Some areas will experience high traffic, high rainfall and severe erosion, depending on soil type. The potential for erosion and weed infestation should be considered in light of these factors.

The Australian Democrats would consider advice from both National Parks and Wildlife, the NSW Scientific Committee and affected community groups before deciding on any issue involving access on horseback. Management of feral horses in national parks is another issue to be considered.

Vehicular access

There is scope for limited access to national parks by off road vehicles, qualified by realising that people with disabilities are entitled to experience passive recreation in wilderness areas along with the able bodied. Limited access upon old and recovering fire trails or logging tracks would be considered for people with disabilities and subject to strict guidelines.

National Parks and Wildlife would be responsible for determining areas suitable for such limited access by issuing permits to the disabled requiring access. The diverse nature of

national parks in NSW makes the definition of off road access a controversial issue.

Further discussion with various disability groups would assist us in coming to a workable and equitable policy.

Retention of existing national parks

Support retention of existing boundaries.

Second Airport

The Democrats advocate a second airport at Williamstown. 60 per cent of Greater Metropolitan Sydney's population live north of the Harbour Bridge.

The Sydney airshed cannot cope with added pollution. Williamstown is the logical second site for any airport servicing the greater metropolitan Sydney region.

The Central Coast and Newcastle make up the bulk of this population. Such a proposal would bring a vital Very Fast rail link to Sydney. Goulburn should not be considered due to fogging. Canberra has an airport of military and civilian capacity which experiences similar problems. Badgery's Creek as an option should be dismissed.

The Sydney airshed cannot cope with added pollution. Williamstown is the logical second site for any airport servicing the greater metropolitan Sydney region. Arguments from the military as to the incompatibility of shared space with civilian are not

POLICIES

supportable. Internationally, military and civilian aircraft already co-exist. Military and civilian aircraft share airspace in Canberra, Darwin and other regional areas already.

A VFT could have international travellers in Sydney's CBD within an hour of picking up their baggage. The existing F3 freeway corridor and rail easements should be considered for such a project.

Development within national parks

Generally opposed. There is an undoubted commitment on the part of the Australian Democrats to preserving wilderness. Further expansion of accommodation in the alpine country of NSW is opposed.

Further development must take place outside national park boundaries. In some areas that are being 'loved to death' by people, consideration would be given to the construction of duckboards if determined necessary. Construction of private resorts or cabins within national parks will not be supported. There will be individual instances where development or human modification of the environment is judged to be essential.

Hypothetically, is it better to remove five trees near a water source to allow helicopter fighting equipment bushfire to extinguish a fire threatening to wipe out the Wollemi Pines? Or do we let nature take its course and the Pines take their chances? In such a case, the Australian

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Border Ranges Revisited

by Jim Somerville A.M.

IN June 1975, having saved Colong and the Boyd, the Colong Committee adopted the preservation of the border Ranges rainforest as its first priority. Five years and four months later, in October 1982, the Wran Government announced a 33,000 ha. Border Ranges National Park to protect the area within NSW opposite Queensland's Lamington National Park. The Coalition declared that when it regained power the decision would be reversed and the area logged.

By the time the Coalition became the Government, the Border Ranges National Park, together with a further 75,000 ha. of rainforest in northern NSW had been listed by UNESCO on the World Heritage register so it very wisely forgot about the threat to log.

In 1994, following the election of the Goss Labor Government in Queensland, the rainforest on their side of the border was also placed on the Register as well as additional areas in NSW.

CERRA - Central Eastern Rainforests of Australia - now consists of 59,000 ha. on the Scenic Rim in Queensland and 307,000 ha. between Barrington Tops and the border - a very impressive 366,000 ha. The tourist attraction of these parks is now strongly promoted by the local councils which bitterly opposed their creation.

Of all nature's achievements on the

planet, rainforest is by far the most ecologically diverse environment. Its sheer beauty, luxuriance and scientific importance made it the centre of the most bitter and lengthy conservation battle in NSW (1973 to 1982). Australia now has a global responsibility to protect its remaining rainforest, particularly when it is being destroyed at an alarming rate in South America and Asia. It was gratifying to find that the local councils are now proud of these parks.

CERRA now consists of over 50 individual reserves, mostly in national parks and nature reserves, but also in flora reserves and State Forests. The eight major groupings are:

1. Main Range Group - from Mistake National Park to Qld/NSW border.
2. Focal Peak group - on the Border and Richmond Ranges.
3. Shield Volcano Group - Border Ranges, Lamington, Nightcap.
4. Iluka Nature Reserve - Mouth of Clarence River (136 ha of littoral rainforest).
5. Washpool and Gibraltar Range National Parks.
6. New England Group - New England and Dorrigo National Parks.
7. Hastings Macleay Group - Werrikimbe and Oxley Wild Rivers national parks.
8. Barrington Tops Group - Barrington Tops National Park and Kerpit Flora Reserve. ■

Parks Recovering From Fires

At the beginning of last year most of the 84,000 ha. Pilliga Nature Reserve was burnt and had it not been for the efforts of the fire fighters and rain the fire would not have gone out. NPWS News reports that, even in the worst hit areas the Pilliga forests were alive and growing: "Cycads had fronds half a metre long and wattle seeds were germinating in the rich moist bed of ash. Scorched trees were showing the first signs of new foliage. Frogs were busy singing, and making tadpoles, in the grey ashen water... Where the fire burnt the hottest the colors were at their most brilliant. Boronias, guinea flowers, wedding bushes, grass trees, heaths and native blue bells had reshot from their root stocks and underground stems... The eucalypt saplings are already a metre high... While the rain continues to fall down life will continue to spring from the Pilliga's ashes."

In the Royal National Park many species have not been seen since the 1994 fires, but the 200 volunteers who took part in biodiversity surveys made many surprising discoveries, the most exciting being a platypus burrow. It has been more than two decades since a platypus has been sighted in the park.

The Service's advice on protection from bushfires stresses the measures recommended by the Colong Foundation: Build your home in the right place. Find out if an area is dangerous before you buy land. Design your house for self-protection, using fire proof materials and clear inflammable material from your property.

Party Election Policies

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Democrats would undoubtedly agree to the protection of the Wollemi Pines at the expense of a relative handful of other species not at risk.

Land clearing

The Australian Democrats support the recommendations and objectives of

the Western Conservation Project as prepared by WWF/National Parks Association of NSW.

Preservation of Old Growth Forests

The Australian Democrats have a sound track record of action both inside Parliament and directly. The Democrats have consistently raised conservation issues regarding forest

protection in both State and Federal Parliaments. We have held government departments accountable in Estimates Committees and asked countless questions of responsible Ministers over the years.

The Colong Foundation can be assured that we will continue to use our influence where possible to continue working for the protection of old growth forests. ■

CAPTURING THE *high* ground

AT the Colong meeting on January 14th, 1999, it was resolved to nominate a Jagungal wilderness addition to include the Main Range "as a counter to the spread of development into this area".

The area nominated is approximately 35,000 hectares in size. The nomination area was previously a Primitive Area in the former Kosciuszko State Park in 1964 (see map). The primitive area was pro-

claimed in 1964 comprised 100 square miles. The Primitive Area was used by the State Government of the day as justification for refusing further hydro-electric development works in the park. A Kosciuszko aqueduct and reservoir were proposed as part of the Snowy scheme but rejected to protect outstanding natural values of the area.

The former primitive area was incorporated into the 1974 Kosciuszko National Park Plan of Man-

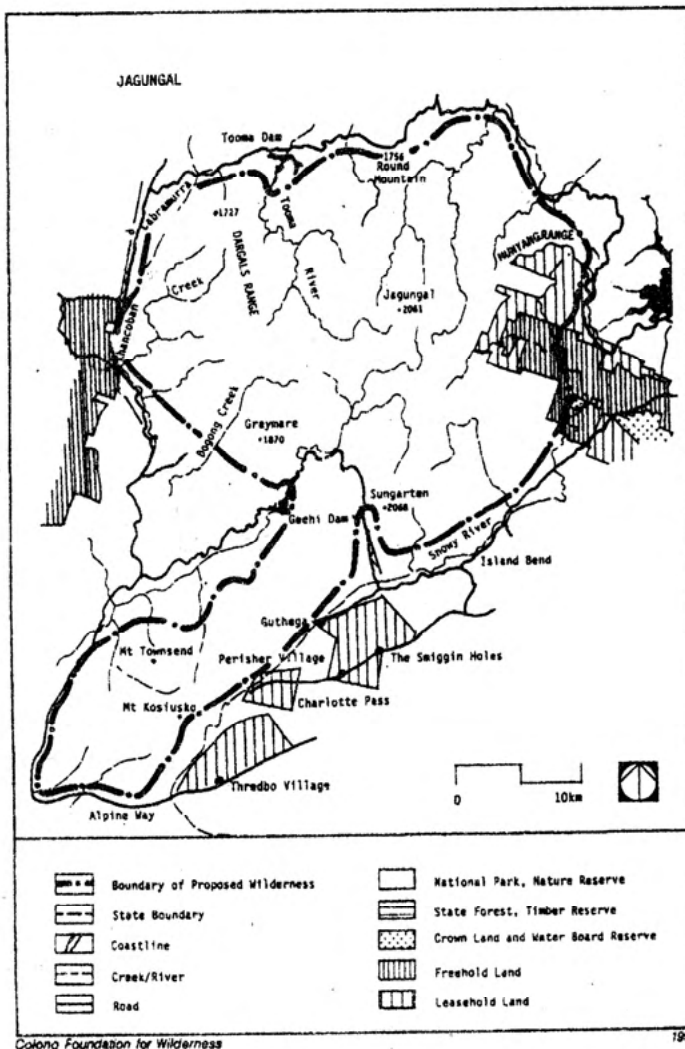
agement as the Jagungal wilderness zone. The subsequent 1982 plan removed 31,000 hectares of southern section of the wilderness, but recognised its high conservation value in the "Kosciuszko (sic) Management Unit" under an "Outstanding Natural Resources" zoning.

The nomination seeks to reinstate the Main Range section of the original wilderness zone. The wilderness extension would effectively control visitor use of the alpine sod tussock grasslands, sphagnum bog and other sensitive environments. The proximity of the resorts to these sensitive alpine and subalpine ecosystems places these resources at risk of being overused and degraded. This is especially true if the draft amendment plan for the park is approved. This plan seeks to permit a broader range of resort-focused park activities and is in conflict with the National Parks Visions Report (1998) that recommends nature-centred park use.

The Gungahlin lands that were previously recommended for wilderness reservation by the Wilderness Working Group (1986) and Helman et. al. (1976) were also nominated. These lands should be acquired by the NPWS not only to secure these wilderness values but also to limit the potential for illegal grazing, off road vehicles and over-snow vehicles access within the park.

The 132 kV power line from Guthega power station to Geehi Dam and the associated Schlink Pass Road obstruct the reinstatement of the original wilderness as one area. The Transgrid and Snowy Hydro Corporation leases should provide to the removal of the above structures from the wilderness. The powerlines and road should be removed upon obsolescence of the power lines or when the design life of these structures is reached. Any relocated structures should avoid wilderness areas or proposed wilderness areas in the park.

The strategic importance of this nomination cannot be underestimated as many of the nearby Perisher Range resorts are now year round concerns offering a broad range of outdoor activities. Wilderness management would help to limit the visitor damage to this precious alpine area. ■



UPPER MOUNTAINS sewage disappointment

SYDNEY Water proposes to upgrade the local sewage treatment plants at Blackheath and Mount Victoria, ignoring the Foundation's preferred option of connecting to the sewage tunnel. The effluent from the proposed upgraded sewage plants, however, will not meet the Protected Waters Class P or the ANZECC water quality standards. The proposal marks a strategic U-turn in the midst of multi-million dollar waste transfer scheme, developed to remove sewage effluent pollution from headwater streams in the Blue Mountains.

Upgrading the plant at Blackheath has the following disadvantages:

- It would unnecessarily continue to pollute the wild Grose River with treated sewage effluent and thereby fail to adequately protect the river's aquatic ecosystems (as with the Winmallee plant there can be no guarantee that the effluent from the new plant at Blackheath will meet design specifications);

Preserving The Promontory

In terms of the problems we see in the management plan for the Prom, there is a very simple solution - keep the park for conservation and let commercial demands for accommodation and other facilities drive development outside its boundaries. Both the Canadian and American governments are now spending many millions of dollars to pull commercial operators out of parks in an attempt to reverse the environmental destruction caused by poor decision making in the past

Victorian NPA Newsletter,
December 1998

- The upgraded plants in the upper Mountains will not effectively limit urban expansion as urban growth areas are provided for and history reveals that development has not been limited by the provision of sewage services (e.g. the existing unserviced urban areas and the growth of Medlow Bath);

- The need for a new rising sewage main from Medlow Bath to Blackheath will cost more in energy to pump the sewage uphill (it is self evident that the energy costs of sewage transfer uphill is more than to pass it downhill); and

- Sewage effluent is no substitute for natural stream flows that in sandstone terrain are controlled by groundwater.

The Blackheath plant's total nitrogen and phosphorous design "targets" will not meet the appropriate ANZECC standards. According to the environmental impact report, for example, the discharge from the current Blackheath plant has increased total phosphorous in Hat Hill Creek to 30 times the upper ANZECC (1992) guideline. The report states that phosphorous loads are "predicted" to decrease to less than 20 per cent of current levels. Yet to meet the upper ANZECC (1992) guideline for total phosphorous, a reduction of six times that projected for the proposed plant is necessary.

The achievement of modelled water quality outcomes, based on past experience and the uncertainties involved with plant performance, is doubtful. What is certain is that the plant is twice the size of the existing one and the Grose will receive twice the effluent flows.

Instead of the above scheme, the Colong Foundation has recommended closure of the Blackheath sewage treatment plant and the diver-

sion of sewage to Winmallee by a gravity pipeline. A gravity pipeline should be achievable, given that Blackheath is higher than Katoomba. It is further proposed that this pipeline be located as close as possible to the existing railway easement to achieve the most gradual grades and reduce tunnelling.

The Foundation's proposed extension of sewage waste transfer scheme reduces the number of sewage treatment plants by two. In other words, environmental damage is greatly reduced, as the point sources of sewage pollution would be reduced by two thirds. It would also save money by reducing plant facility maintenance (by removing two sewage plants) and by the use of a gravity sewer pipeline.

This approach could provide reticulated sewerage to 1,281 lots in unsewered areas but need not provide excess capacity for urban expansion, alleviating the concerns of local conservation groups regarding a tunnel option.

Water standards compromised

The Upper Mountains sewerage scheme environmental report specifies a "need to be designed to reduce potential uncontrolled discharges to the catchment of Class 'P' streams" (emphasis added). This recommendation is not consistent with the Class P classification water quality standards that prohibit sewage overflows to receiving waters.

The receiving waters flow into the Grose wilderness and the Blue Mountains National Park has been nominated for inscription on the World Heritage list of properties. For these reasons the sewage reticulation system should have no overflows.

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WILDERNESS *whiplash*

THE Department Land and Water Conservation, in a sudden crack at wilderness mismanagement, recently appointed a Bicentennial National Trail (BNT) coordinator to assist in the development of the track's commercial opportunities and facilities. This tri-state horse trail frag-

ments and limits the extent of the Washpool, Guy Fawkes, Macleay Gorges, Werrikimbe, Barrington and Wollemi wilderness areas. It also cuts through the Bald Rock, Gibraltar Range, Guy Fawkes River, New England, Cathedral Rocks, Oxley Wild Rivers, Werrikimbe, Woko, Barrington

Tops, Goulburn River, Blue Mountains, Kanangra Boyd, Namadgi (in the ACT) and Kosciuszko national parks, as well as the Mann River Nature Reserve.

The future of the above wilderness and park areas effectively now rests with the Commercial Services section of the Department of Land and Water Conservation. By adopting the development agenda of the Bicentennial National Trail Board of Management, the Government has threatened the ecological integrity of these

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THE MAP ABOVE SHOWS WHAT THE B.N.T. TRAIL ORGANISERS CLAIM TO BE A MINIMAL IMPACT OF THE TRAIL ON WILDERNESS AREAS IN NORTHERN N.S.W. (Tracks, Aug. 92).

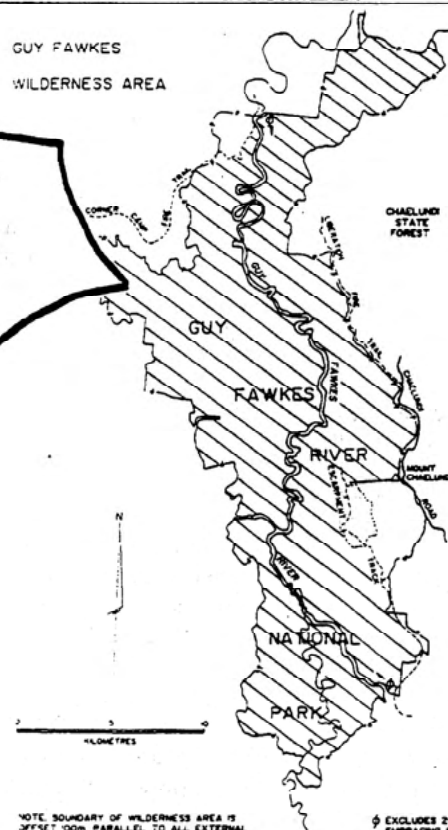
B. N. T. - THE REAL IMPACT

5744

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

14 September 1994

GUY FAWKES
WILDERNESS AREA



NEW SOUTH WALES GOVERNMENT GAZETTE No. 118

THE GAZETAL NOTICE CLEARLY SHOWS HOW THE BICENTENNIAL NATIONAL TRAIL BISECTS THE GUY FAWKES WILDERNESS AREA.

Wilderness Whiplash

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icon park areas with commercial development, soil erosion, disturbance to native vegetation and weed dispersal.

Initial correspondence received by the Colong Foundation from the BNT organisation pledging that "in all cases where the Trail passes through or near national parks, the route has been determined through consultation with National Parks and Wildlife Service staff to ensure that the Trail does not encroach on any existing or future Wilderness Areas". We understand this undertaking was given in the full knowledge of the wilderness areas contained in the 1986 Wilderness Working Group report. The BNT organisers then published a guide for route that traversed key areas identified as wilderness by the Wilderness Working Group.

The wilderness areas affected by the BNT route were then gazetted exclusive of the BNT, except for Washpool where a short section of the Trail traverses the gazetted wilderness. Attempts by the NPWS to assist the BNT organisation in relocation of the Trail around wilderness resulted in a report justifying the existing route.

Horseriding conflicts with wilderness management that permits all

forms of self reliant recreation but prevents recreation reliant on animals. However, repeated requests to have a note placed in the National Parks Horse Riding Code pamphlet to the effect that horseriding is prohibited in wilderness areas have been ignored.

The BNT Board of Management has had it all their own way. The BNT organisers have tried to establish the case that the Trail is broken by wilderness reservations when in fact it is the BNT that has bisected wilderness and core areas of national parks. The Bicentennial National Trail passes through about 85 km of wilderness, equivalent to 1.6 per cent of the trail's length. To fragment core wilderness areas to ensure continuity of a tri-state Trail that few would ever traverse in its entirety is unreasonable given the enduring values of wilderness.

The BNT has been imposed upon the national parks estate without public comment and review. The wilderness areas which the BNT organisers complain so bitterly about were, on the other hand, subject to several public exhibitions and extensive review. In no circumstances should the Department of Land and Water Conservation control national parks through the narrowly-based back door mechanism of horse trail development. ■

elevation. Farmers and rate payers may not be willing to pay for grey water reuse.

It is more viable to examine grey water reuse for the turf farms and vegetable farms around the Hawkesbury floodplain than in the Hartley Valley where such high water demanding intensive agriculture does not exist. In any case such use is inappropriate for the upper catchment of Sydney's main water supply.

Water reuse from the Winmallee sewage plant is much more viable than from the sewage treatment plants next to the Grose wilderness in the Upper Mountains. The Hawkesbury floodplain will never be subject to closer subdivision. If, however, grey water is reused by farmers on the floodplain, then pumping from the Hawkesbury-Nepean can be eliminated, reducing stress on the river. No such advantage can be gained at Hartley. ■

Upper Mountains Sewage Disappointment

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Sydney Water should withdraw its proposal and apologise for attempting to justify continued pollution of World Heritage value parklands by seeking to downgrade water standards. To amend water pollution legislation to enable lower water quality standards so as to make the preferred scheme lawful should be rejected as a solution by conservationists. Sydney Water is well aware that the proposal as it stands is illegal, otherwise it would not be proposing to amend the pollution control laws.

Reuse Hartley or Hawkesbury?

Sydney Water proposed reuse of treated sewage at Hartley Valley, a proposition that may prove difficult given the 1,000 metre difference in

The NPWS produced a vision. Visions are contagious and my attempt is below. It may be a mirage but it does not suffer from the tyrannies of self interest.

Keith Muir, Director

WILDERNESS Y2K

As we approach the year 2000, western civilisation remains fully committed to its urban-industrial culture.

We see ourselves as aliens living in an eco-machine and we risk becoming captive of the technological splendour of our civilisation. Hence it is not surprising that many people in industrial society have little environmental awareness. We abandoned Terra nullius in Australia, always a fiction, only to arrive back at Terra incognita.

Yet we are biped creatures living in nature and our society is supported by its easily damaged organic fabric. That being the case it is not just trees, rivers but entire forests and other natural landscapes that should have legal rights, for we must recognise that culture is tied to the natural world.

As for national parks, these must remain places for nature conservation, where beauty and ecological integrity are valued above profit and use. They are the very last places on earth where nature-centred values prevail over use-centred perspectives.

Without wilderness, culture becomes an inescapable prison.

Freedom resides in the wild, self-contained, self-informing ecosystems, that are an oasis free of the ills of civilisation. It neutralises fanaticism and despair by immersing the visitor in greatness and beauty.

In 21st century these wild places will be deeply respected, and transformation by technology or high impact use will be a crime.

RESTRUCTURING THE N.P.W.S.

In Bulletin 169, the Environment Minister's initiative to renew and reform the NPWS was described. The cornerstone of this process was to develop a vision for conservation in NSW.

The NPWS has since then convened a major conference examining the trends in nature conservation and park management, and its participants have suggested strategies to improve the performance of the NPWS. These trends and suggestions were then digested by a government appointed committee of community representatives and NPWS staff. That committee has now produced a report of its findings and recommendations - **THE VISION**.

As expected, the report recommends more input from community groups interested in using the parks. The Service was also recommended to "take an active role in regional community development through putting in place strategies to optimise the economic and social benefits of reserves to communities." These recommendations, if implemented, will cause park management to be more influenced by profit, rural land owners (usually hostile to conservation), and by high impact park users and less by nature conservation imperatives.

Currently the Service is not required to demonstrate economic or social relevance, nor should it. Parks are the last bastions of nature in our environmentally destructive urban-industrial culture. They should not be profit orientated and heavy tourist use should be limited to park edges where impacts are best controlled.

Pigeon holing NSW parks into internationally agreed categories is also recommended. This will enable parks to be reclassified, and provide an opportunity to downgrade the protection of parks threatened by devel-

opment, allowing for exploitation, occupation and consumptive use of park resources (e.g. mining, grazing and resorts). Threatened parks should not be downgraded, rather park management should be improved so that these reserves achieve standards specified by existing legislation.

Creating Clayton's park categories is foreshadowed, allowing multiple use. Such parks will relieve future State governments from the duty of making hard decisions between development, resource extraction or nature conservation. This regime, when combined with whole-of-government regional resource assessments, is described as leading to "more balanced outcomes, consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development". The "balance" is achieved by more regional development, albeit sustainable development (always an oxymoron). However, no kind of development in a national park can ever be ecologically sustainable.

The Third Revision

The vision-making process, follows the access and tourism strategies, and is the third major process thrown at the NPWS. These review processes have been a successful Government ploy that has deferred controversial decisions regarding access to parks by horse riders, off road vehicle users and commercial tourism developers. More talk is much safer than making decisions on politically dangerous issues.

The down side of the above strategy is that **THE VISION** gives the next administration a mandate for reform of the NPWS but its motherhood statements do not clearly spell out what should be done. There is also a risk of a negative bidding war over park management policy, in the run

up to the next election, where conservation is traded against increased use and development by the major political parties. The Opposition Leader, Ms Kerry Chikarovski, has already promised so-called "traditional access" to national parks for horseriders and off road vehicles.

Legislative reform

THE VISION recommends legislative reform to define what are appropriate uses of parks, but offers no clear definition (this was left to the superior wisdom of bureaucrats and politicians). The Vision report does, however, recommend that alien uses, such as pipelines, transmission lines and communication towers, be subject to Parliamentary approval.

Barry Oliver for *Weekend Australian* (19/12/98, pg 41) has inadvertently described the problems park use definition in his article titled "Cool summer high peddled". Mr Oliver explains that after a disappointing winter Australia's top skiing resorts are launching marketing campaigns to attract visitors to these huge operations, with millions of dollars of infrastructure, that can't afford to stand idle for two-thirds of the year. In an effort to woo Aussies to higher ground in summer, resorts have organised special events. At Mt Buller in Victoria a country festival, picnic races, rodeo, Irish comedy and music festival, bush market, romantic weekends and mountain bike races attract a lot of interest. Unfortunately none of these activities are nature-focused recreation activities appropriate to a national park. They can all be established in population centres and rural districts outside national parks where the development would be of more benefit to local business interests.

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Restructuring the NPWS

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In Thredbo a program of music festivals, a Shakespeare weekend, sculpture symposium, trout fishing, horse riding, bobsledding (on a stainless steel track), plus pool, gymnasium and other sport facilities have developed. These are the activities that the well funded marketing campaigns will seek to define as appropriate use in national parks.

A further amendment of the National Parks and Wildlife Act was proposed to "allow a wider range of uses of formally designated heritage precincts within the reserve system." This no doubt will mean heritage building complexes like the Quarantine Station in Sydney Harbour National Park will be exploited by some sort of exclusive commercial purpose, such as a conference centre/educational facility. The huts in Kosciuszko and Royal National Parks may be used by tour companies in exchange for rebuilding them (not necessarily with heritage conservation in mind).

Administrative reform

To make the NPWS more responsive to the issues of rural and regional NSW, four regional 'directors' have been appointed. The Service is to become an "adaptive organisation" that will develop "innovative resourcing strategies". This means that the Service will "adapt" to increased commercial tourism and inappropriate recreation opportunities in core park areas. As always local self interest will act to adversely influence nature conservation outcomes and new regional directors will be under greater pressure to bend broadly-based, environmentally sound park management to accommodate parochial economic and social objectives. The restructuring may also require regional park office staff to upgrade their customer service, business and marketing skills, at the expense of wildlife and conservation management.

A broader role of the Advisory committee is also envisioned. This will no doubt encompass commercial and high impact recreation interests, and cultural heritage advocates, thereby diluting its nature conservation bal-

ance. This means that controversial park management decisions will be adversely influenced by commercial and high impact recreational interests, allowing more development.

The best aspect of **THE VISION** is the recommendations for facilities and concessions. Development in parks is not opposed, but construction of facilities within a reserve "should only be permitted where there is a clear nexus between the facility and a permitted activity and where the facility could not practically be provided outside the reserve." Facilities should be located, "wherever practicable", close to reserve boundaries and existing access routes.

Any lease for a park development or use concession is recommended to be subject to public review. The National Parks and Wildlife Act should be amended to ensure commercial concessions receive no subsidy, be linked to the park's purpose, and not be for private (exclusive?) purpose or for residential use, such as real estate development. It was recommended that park management should "make the maximum use of visitor accommodation and related facilities situated off-reserve". There is no reason why all overnight accommodation and related facilities cannot be provided outside parks.

The recommendation to discourage amalgamation of concessional interests in reserves would prevent any "head lease", as proposed for the Perisher Range resorts. It was considered that such arrangements "may exert excessive influence in their management".

Role of the Parks Service

THE VISION sets out eight recommendations that seek to modify the role of the Service in heritage conservation and management. The committee that compiled the vision report were happy with the status quo management of nature conservation, with the Service retaining its off-reserve, and reserve establishment and management responsibilities. The majority of the recommendations that change the role of the Service focus on cultural heritage. This is odd as cultural heritage is expensive to manage and forms only a minority of the NPWS estate.

These recommendations herald a change in park management based on a cultural landscape approach. Such approaches are human-centred and move away from seeing parks as places set aside for nature, to one where park management is a form of 'nature gardening'. If this outlook is embraced by the community there will be less qualms about disturbing nature for human-centred purposes, be they taking wildlife or development commercial tourism concessions.

Clearly **THE VISION** is more about addressing the primary criticisms of anti-conservationists who seek to constantly burn-off, drive and ride everywhere, and stay in resorts within them regardless of damage to these 'protected' natural environments. ■

Parks Worth Funding

Preliminary work by Sally Drimyl of Kinhill Economics has estimated that Qld NPs return some 1.2 billion of the State's economy annually and that this is forty times the expenditure. Preliminary work has also shown that at least 6,000 jobs are generated by our NPs. Tourism studies have shown that NPs are the premium drawcard for visitors and that Queensland (because of our range of biodiversity attractions, our rainforests and our reef) is one of the most favoured destinations.

Yet tourism and recreation themselves pose threats to our NPs, not currently equipped to meet tourism and recreation requirements, nor, more importantly, sufficiently staffed and resourced to manage visitor impacts. The degradation of World Heritage Fraser Island is a prime example of the result of unmanaged visitation. A large injection of funding for management is an absolute imperative.

Rae Lindgren, NPA of
Queensland News, February 1999

The Green Belt City

by Keith Muir

AT the end of the 20th century, Sydney, a metropolis of nearly 4 million people is lucky enough to be surrounded by over 1.6 million hectares of undeveloped bushland, over half a million hectares of which are wilderness. These areas, initially regarded as worthless, unproductive and neglected, are now much loved and mainly reserved in national parks. Worldwide, Sydney is exceptional as a large city surrounded by a belt of wilderness-quality national parks and reserves.

Part of this outstanding heritage contains the water catchments, which supply the city's drinking water. These catchments should be included within the parks estate to upgrade wildlife management and complete the green belt of parks around Sydney.

Sydney's vast park estate is afforded a statutory protection from logging and mining but are at risk of being loved to death by park visitors. As we approach the year 2000, park management is beginning to suffer from the dual tyrannies of self interest from park user groups and commercial tour operators.

Some Sydney siders now see park areas, like the Port Hacking estuary south of the city, not as a sanctuary for quiet recreation and to commune with nature but as their "motor sport playground". Their speed boats and jet skis plough through sea grass beds of the Port, scaring off swimmers and families with young children who once enjoyed the quiet, clean sandy beaches of the northern side of Royal National Park.

The damaging effects of ever-increasing tracts of poorly regulated urban sprawl that adjoin these 'lungs of Sydney' are also degrading parklands.

Most residents, however, still value Sydney's national parks for their beauty and ecological integrity above damaging use. For them the traditional low impact use is the most practical form of recreation management for the 4 million neighbours of

parks. To let national parks be opened up to horseriders and 4WD vehicle users who don't tread lightly is to guarantee their overuse and degradation.

Regulating use

Already 2.5 million people visit the Blue Mountains and a further two million visit the Royal National Park. World Heritage listing of the Greater Blue Mountains national parks would accelerate these visitor pressures. By the year 2005, projected visitor use for Sydney's parks is estimated at over 16 million visits.

So far, by virtue of the size and the declared wilderness areas within them, many of the large parks of Sydney's hinterland have been well protected from the impacts of development and tourism. But this trend will not continue into the next century without effective visitor management.

Fortunately most park visitors congregate at the accessible locations with good visitor facilities and nearby services (e.g. Echo Point, Katoomba and Jenolan Caves, Royal and Kuring-gai National Parks). This behaviour can be encouraged to effectively control use. Visitor facilities must continue to be concentrated at the edges of parks. Facilities should be limited to car parks, toilets and basic camping facilities, and for some suitable parks a visitor centre appropriately located on park boundaries. International destination quality products that provide hot showers, soft seats, cafes and hard top accommodation can be adequately provided by resorts outside park boundaries.

Wilderness reservation in the larger parks, as at Nattai, Wollemi and Kanangra-Boyd, and as proposed for Grose and Yengo areas will also help to control use levels. Even small parks, like Heathcote National Park, can be managed to exclude motor vehicles and horseriders and thereby help to prevent over use. Where user pressure remains a problem in popular wilderness parks, over-used camp

sites and picnic grounds should be closed to allow recovery.

Habitat fragmentation is a main cause of species extinction. Developing roads and tourist facilities in parks will accelerate that trend. Limiting public roads in Sydney's parks also lessens fire danger, as access for irresponsible persons is reduced. Access management also helps to reduce rubbish dumping, bush rock and plant theft.

The key threat from visitors to Sydney's parks is not the only damage caused by excessive use. It is also the cultural undermining of the community's understanding of the main purpose of parks: to set aside important bushlands from development. Long-standing nature conservation policies risk being trivialised when parks are mainly seen as products and park visitors as customers.

Development control

The proximity to employment centres and good road links make Sydney's fringing parks subject to urban expansion pressures. Urban development on ridges tends to damage the downstream park areas by increasing:

- damage to scenery by urban clutter;
- weed invasion;
- soil fertility from garden fertilisers, urban runoff and in some places sewage effluent;
- number of domestic and feral cats and dogs preying on native animals;
- erosion of sandstone soils and sedimentation of streams;
- the number of deliberate fires.

Planning controls should minimise these impacts on park values for future development. For example, the clearing of significant or visually prominent bushland, stream side vegetation and steep land should be prohibited and park buffers created for fire management and pest species control. More effort, however, is required to limit these impacts arising from existing urban areas. Sewerage reticulation and treatment (with discharge away from park catchments), control of stormwater overflows and urban runoff management programs are essential to long term maintenance of park values.

The integrity of the parks' natural,

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The Green Belt City

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scenic, wilderness and cultural values should be annually assessed and publicly reported upon, especially for those parks under high visitor pressure. Surveys of those plants and insects sensitive to pollution should be conducted. These surveys can be undertaken by community groups (e.g. Stream Watch) to monitor the effects of use and disturbance arising from adjoining areas within a park's catchment. Park management and community action should adapt and respond to when degradation accelerates so as to protect parks from damage.

Sydney's nutrient-poor sandstone soils and wild fires naturally limit most weed occurrences, provided water pollution and soil erosion are controlled. Bush care networks and environment groups can assist these natural controls by identifying threats to a park's natural values, and in seek-

ing funds to control environmental impacts and undertaking bushland recovery programs. Bush care networks and environmental weed control programs, for example, should aim to keep weed infestations within manageable levels within park buffer areas (e.g. Scotch broom in the Blue Mountains).

Introduced predators such as fox and cat do the most harm to native animals. Most feral predators are dependent upon urban areas to support large populations. Community-supported feral animal control programs should focus on park buffer areas.

Overburning

Frequent wild fire is the most significant natural disaster that in the long term threatens the conservation values of Sydney's parklands. Eucalypt forests and sclerophyll heathlands around Sydney lie in one of the most hazardous fire regions of the world. Paradoxically many of these plants

require a fire-free period of up to 20 years to reach maturity. It is imperative that deliberate fire frequencies are reduced if Sydney's national parks are to retain current wildlife and wild plant diversity.

Effective control of fire is dependent upon early detection through aerial, radar or satellite surveillance in the fire season and rapid response by fire fighters in the identification and extinguishing these fires.

Wild fire risk to life and property must be managed, so that natural and cultural values of parklands are also protected. Fire risk should be managed in the park buffer areas while more 'natural' fire regimes are allowed in core park areas. Since most artificial fires start on developed land, and where life and property are threatened, that is also where control measures should be located. However such risk reduction will remain a theory whilst park neighbours retain combustible materials and shrubbery around their homes. ■

REVIEW

Two Great Conservation Pioneers

Myles And Milo

by Peter Meredith

Published by Allen & Unwin, pb \$24.95

PETER Meredith's book is the life stories of those two pioneers of the conservation movement - Myles Joseph Dunphy OBE and Milo Kanangra Dunphy AM Dsc. They inspired today's movement for the preservation of what is left of the natural environment which, in Myles' words had been "plundered and outraged for personal profit."

Myles came to conservation by an unusual route. He carried firearms on his walks - not just a pea rifle (.22 gauge) but a heavy .32 or a repeater shot gun. In his early days he would shoot any kind of wildlife. Later he shot for food only and by 1930 was disgusted to meet a party of kangaroo

shooters. Soon it was love of the bush, not shooting, which brought him to conservation. Milo too loved guns - a natural interest for a boy in the war years of the 'forties. His interest extended to military planning and strategy, which he adapted to his campaigning.

Myles was a great advocate and he imparted to Milo his zeal for conservation and his commitment to architecture. Father and son adopted very different methods, each appropriate to their times. Myles mapped national park proposals with a "wilderness core." In

the days before small scale contoured maps he had to start by filling in the blank spaces on parish maps. Peter writes that "Myles the cartographer was a composite of Myles the explorer, the artist, the calligrapher, the writer, the photographer, the historian and the assidu-

ous chronicler of his age." His maps were essential material for his proposals and were focused on the needs of walkers, many of whom still use them. He promoted his park proposals by representations to the Lands Department, rather than organizing campaigns, which was a difficult undertaking when conservation organisations were few.

Milo carried forward his father's proposals, but it was the Colong campaign which, in Peter's words, "would propel him from minor skirmishes into major battles." He also followed his father in other ways, such as carrying 25-30 kg. packs in order to provide for all contingencies. The outstanding difference between them was in their family lives. Whereas Myles was devoted to his family, Milo sacrificed his profession and family life to his obsession with the environment.

Peter describes his book as a "popular personal history and not a scholarly account." Some environmentalists believe the book should have been devoted to conservation, but such books are read mainly by the converted. For the Dunphy's numerous friends and admirers it is a fascinating description. But, more importantly, even for those who did not know them, it is an absorbing story of two talented, inspired and far sighted idealists. ■



SUPPORT THE COLONG FOUNDATION!

To: The Treasurer, Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd.
Level 2, 362 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000

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

- ☐ Membership application (see below) (NB Membership application covers Bulletin subscription)
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- ☐ Colong Bulletin Subscription to 31/12/99 (\$10) (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)
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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



PROGRESS OF THE FOUNDATION

The Colong Foundation is the longest-serving community advocate for wilderness in Australia. It has initiated or been part of Campaigns that have secured over a million hectares of national parkland, most of which is wilderness. But a further million hectares of wilderness in eastern NSW is still not reserved under the Wilderness Act, although much of the area is now in national parks.

Now more than ever the Colong Foundation needs your support. Well financed anti-conservation lobbies, representing resource development, 4WD enthusiasts, equestrian and commercial tourism interests, have greatly increased development pressures on wild places.

The 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 parts and Kakadu are now World Heritage Areas. The Greater Blue Mountains Park is in being in fact, though not in name. Recent campaigns for the 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. It has successfully campaigned for the nomination of the Blue Mountains for World Heritage listing.

It is at present working for the protection of threatened wilderness in NSW, for the preservation of national parks from commercial development and damaging use, and for the preservation of old growth forests.

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 (covers all issues of the Bulletin for a calendar year.



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 of Wilderness Ltd. shall be complete discharge to my executors in respect of any sum paid to the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd."

THE COLONG FOUNDATION

SENDER: THE COLONG FOUNDATION FOR WILDERNESS
Level 2, 362 Kent Street, Sydney NSW 2000



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