

colong bulletin

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Last Chance for River Red Gum

BY CARMEL FLINT

RIVER Red Gum wetlands line the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers and their tributaries and extend across the floodplains of south-western NSW. River Red Gum occupies a unique ecological

niche – a forested wetland that requires frequent inundation to survive and thrive.

Many of these River Red Gum forests occur on public lands – mostly State Forests that are subject to intensive logging and grazing, but also Travelling Stock Routes and Western Lands Leases.

There are a total of 150,000 hectares of Red Gum State Forests in the Riverina region of NSW. They extend from just east of Albury, all the way along the Murray River, to the border with South Australia. On the Murrumbidgee, they extend from near Wagga Wagga southwest to the junction with the Murray.

After untold decades of neglect, the future of these forests is finally being assessed by the NSW Natural Resources Commission. This assessment – a regional assessment under the NSW Forestry and National Parks Estate Act 1998 - will determine which areas will be protected as National Parks in the region and which will not. It will have a huge impact on the future of River Red Gum ecosystems in NSW.

The Natural Resources Commission will make its final recommendations to the NSW Government at the end of November. This is likely to include recommendations about National Parks and provision of environmental water, including how much water is required and how it should be delivered. This will be a truly do or die moment for the Red Gum forests of the southern Murray-Darling.

The Forests...

The areas at issue include the two largest stands of Red Gum forest left in the

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General Meetings

will be held at our office on level 2, Fortuna House, 332 Pitt Street, at 2.00pm on Thursday October 8th, November 12th, December 10th and February 11th. Visitors welcome.

HILDA MAKES A NEW FRIEND

Hilda Ngo has been Colong's Administrative Officer for two and half years – a part time position which she has filled while she has been studying. We thank Hilda for her past work and wish her well in the future. Happily, we are not losing Hilda altogether, as she will continue to work for us as a volunteer, updating our website.



River Red Gum

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world - the Barmah-Millewa and Koondrook-Perricoota-Gunbower forests which straddle the border south of Deniliquin. They are both Significant Ecological Assets under the Living Murray program and internationally significant wetlands listed under the Ramsar convention.

Red Gum forests in the region represent a major nesting site for migratory birds and regularly support more than 20,000 waterbirds, including 19 migratory bird species listed for protection under international agreements. They also play a crucial role in native fish migration, spawning and recruitment during flood events and provide habitat for 4 globally threatened fish species.

Most important, River Red Gum forests are absolutely crucial in providing opportunities for animals to move in response to human-induced climate change and other threats – they are the best, and in many cases the only, remaining vegetation corridors between the Australian Alps and South Australia. They also represent a vital refuge for many species due to their function as moist riverine forests in a predominantly semi-arid environment.

River Red Gum forests are the largest remnants of vegetation left in one of the most heavily cleared and intensively cultivated landscapes in Australia. As a result, biodiversity in the region has already been subject to very high rates of extinction, with at least 16 vertebrate fauna already considered to be

regionally extinct. A further 63 vertebrate fauna species in the region are now threatened with extinction.

The forests are particularly important for hollow-using species and declining woodland birds. Threatened species in the region which need hollows for nesting or roosting include the Squirrel Glider, Regent Parrot, Fishing Bat, Powerful Owl, Yellow-bellied Sheath-tail Bat, Inland Forest Bat and Superb Parrot. Declining woodland birds for which the forests are particularly important include the Grey-crowned Babbler, Diamond Firetail, Black-chinned Honeyeater, Speckled Warbler, White-browed Babbler, Crested Shrike-tit and Varied Sittella.

Needless to say, the fauna and flora of the region are facing severe and widespread negative impacts on populations. For example, the Barking Owl, considered a common resident in the 1960s, is now declining at a rapid rate. Recent targeted surveys recorded only a single pair of birds.

The threats...

Due to river regulation, the frequency of floods has declined dramatically and so has the health of the River Red Gum. Studies show that 75% of Red Gum trees are stressed or dying, rising to up to 99% of trees in some areas. It is an ecosystem in crisis – one faced with immediate, extensive and irreversible collapse.

This crisis is set to escalate – recent research work by CSIRO and the Bureau of Meteorology has concluded that the recent ravaging dry spell is actually climate change in action. Global warming has permanently changed the weather patterns in the southern Murray-



High conservation value River Red Gum at Barooga State Forest on the Murray River, stronghold for threatened Squirrel Gliders and Koalas. Image: Rob Jung

Darling and they predict that pre-drought rainfall profiles will not return while the temperatures continue to rise.

The best scientific information on building resilience to climate change stresses the fundamental importance of building and maintaining a large protected area network. CSIRO (2008), states that:

“Under the changes and uncertainties of climate change, especially in combination with other human pressures, protecting large areas of habitat and a diversity of habitats both become even more important for conserving species.... Species in areas facing greater levels of change (e.g. significant changes in seasonal growth patterns or landscape hydrology) may be in greater need of additional habitat protection”.

However, in the River Red Gum forests, far from having the best protected area network possible, there is, in fact, the worst. Less than 2% of the Riverina region is protected in

reserves, and there is only one tiny nature reserve along the entire length of the Murray River in NSW.

Red Gum areas are subject to widespread industrial logging, patch-clearfelling and intensive grazing. More than 140,000 tonnes of timber are hauled out annually from these fragile ecosystems, including more than 80,000 tonnes a year of firewood which is trucked to Melbourne. More than 95% of timber from Red Gum forests goes to low value products such as firewood and fenceposts. And that is just the haul from public land. Almost the same volume is logged each year on private land – in just two years since the Private Native Forestry Code of Practice was introduced, more than 74,000 hectares has been approved for Red Gum logging operations on freehold land.

The conditions on River Red Gum logging are by far the weakest in the state. There

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is only a 20m buffer on the Murray River – the largest and most important river in the country. Patch-clearfelling in gaps up to almost 1 hectare is used, destroying everything within each gap. Pre-logging surveys are required for only two species, and only 2 habitat trees are retained in each hectare, compared with 5 in other parts of the state.

Despite the rapid and well-recognised decline of this ecosystem for the last 15 years, Forests NSW has not reviewed its sustained yield estimates for timber since 1985. Even though growth rate data has shown a decline over that period of 75%, logging is still continuing at exactly the same rate that it was set at in the 1980s. This is an extraordinary abrogation of the most basic tenets of sustainability. Forests NSW are so captured by the logging industry that they have administered arguably the most appalling over-logging that has ever occurred in this state – the wilful on-going destruction of an ecosystem that is dying.

The future...

The Victorian Government has decided to preserve its Red Gum forests for future generations. It has shown that it is possible to deliver a major conservation outcome without impacting on regional economies. The end result is the protection of 95,000 hectares of Red Gum and associated ecosystems south of the border.

In NSW, the future of River Red Gum forests is in our hands now. Yours and mine. If we all take powerful, concerted action to push for their protection at this critical moment, then I have no doubt that strong conservation outcomes are possible. If we decide to leave it for somebody else to do, then the River Red Gum will undoubtedly continue their irreversible decline – until all that is left are a few ‘museum pieces’ that are watered occasionally.

The NSW Government needs to hear from you, today, that the River Red Gum require the strongest protection measures as soon as possible. Its time to demand some real and lasting conservation outcomes from them. Do more than just write a letter – get on the phone to ministerial offices, get letters in to the newspapers, and go out and collect submissions.

In letters and submissions, ask for the following outcomes:

- ❑ The creation of extensive new National Parks along the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers;
- ❑ Recognition that Red Gum forests are vital refuges for plants and animals in a rapidly warming world;
- ❑ Provision of Aboriginal ownership of new National Parks wherever sought by Traditional Owners;
- ❑ Delivery of much improved environmental water flows to ensure the health of Red Gums into the future;
- ❑ Provision of a fair business exit package for individuals and businesses affected by the changes.

Ministerial addresses:

- Mr Nathan Rees
Premier of NSW
Level 40 Governor
Macquarie Tower,
1 Farrer Place,
Sydney NSW 2000
Email: thepremier@www.nsw.gov.au
- Mr John Robertson
Minister for Environment
and Climate Change &
Water
Level 35, Governor
Macquarie Tower,
1 Farrer Place,
Sydney NSW 2000
Email: office@robertson.minister.nsw.gov.au

For submissions to the Natural Resources Commission:

- Forests Assessment
Natural Resources
Commission
GPO Box 4206,
Sydney NSW 2001
Facsimile: 02 8227 4399
Email: forests@nrc.nsw.gov.au

Wood-fired power plants are not green

BY HARRIET SWIFT

JUST as Eden is home to Australia's first native forest woodchip mill, it is now proposed to become the site of our first 100% wood-fired power station. This has been made possible by a new Rudd Government law which classifies burning native forest wood ‘waste’ as renewable energy.

South East Fibre Exports (SEFE) is currently seeking a Part 3A approval from the NSW Minister for Planning for a 5MW wood-fired power station. Conservationists have little confidence that the State Government planning process will be rigorous or even honest.

Both the National Association of Forest Industries (NAFI) and SEFE have been misrepresenting WWF Europe support for biomass burning there, as implicit support for the Eden generator and have even handed out WWF brochures at local conservation events.

The fuel for the SEFE plant, which would power woodchipping operations and feed surplus power into the grid, would be the ‘waste’ of the ‘waste’: the leftovers from the million tonnes of native forest woodchips that SEFE currently exports (71%) as well as some plantation pine residues (29%).

The vote in the Senate in August to include some forms of native forest wood in the Mandatory Renewable Energy Target (MRET) signaled that conservationists have a big fight ahead of them to stop industrial scale burning of native forest wood for energy.

In spite of its lobbying victory with MRET, NAFI is not satisfied. The industry wants more. It wants to be able to burn the 90%+ of the forest that is currently woodchipped as well as any trees that are “below sawlog or pulplog quality.”

On the far south coast, this means burning those species



Gnupa State Forests after recent logging and burning. Destructive as this is, at least it returns nutrients to the soil. Industry plans would leave nothing in the forest after logging. Image: H.Swift

that are too hard or too red to chip (and are not suitable as sawlogs). In other words: the redgums, ironbarks, woollybutts, grey boxes, bloodwoods and angophoras that are currently considered useless by the industry.

It is hard to reconcile this with industry claims that “not one single extra tree will be cut down” for burning.

One preliminary estimate puts the greenhouse impacts of native forest wood fired power at 6.4 times those from coal fired power. When trees are felled and the wood is burned, it takes 80 years for the emissions from the wood burning to be neutralized by the regrowth forest.

It is more than twice as long when all logging impacts, such as, loss of soil carbon are taken into account.

Wood ‘waste’ continues to store greenhouse gases for decades if left in the forest. As woodchips/paper it has a likely life of about 3 years. When burned for power it becomes instant carbon dioxide.

Ironically, the Eden chipmill is located in one of the best wind power sites in Australia. A handful of turbines would generate the same amount of electricity for less money! ■

Yengo Vegetation Survey

IT'S an ironic situation that our largest reserves, which potentially contribute the most to biodiversity conservation, are also the most poorly understood. The Native Vegetation Survey report of the Yengo National Park published late last year by the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water is one of a series seeking to address this imbalance by upgrading our knowledge of on-park biodiversity values.

As the report explains, inscription of the Greater Blue Mountains on the World Heritage register has reinforced the need for comprehensive and consistent information that describes the composition and distribution of vegetation communities. It was after all floral diversity and eucalypt diversity in particular, that formed the basis for the listing.

The survey provides data for fire management, Endangered Ecological Communities, flora and fauna species mapping, cultural heritage studies, pest and weed management and land acquisitions, as well as setting a foundation for education programs.

Yengo, situated in a large rainshadow zone between the coast and the Blue Mountains-Wollemi ranges, contains nine floristically diverse types of dry sclerophyll woodland. In the gullies taller, moist forests are found but surprisingly these are of a lower diversity. These forests do however contain extensive stands of two rare eucalypts the Hillgrove Gum and a box (*E. hypostomatica*).

Small areas of dry rainforest with stinging trees will greet the unwary bushwalker on basalt caps and, as elsewhere in the Mountains, northern Warm Temperate Forest can be discovered in the deepest sandstone gullies. Coastal grassy forests are located on shale, basalt and river flats, and as these grassy forests have often been disturbed by grazing they require active management.

The western side of Yengo has its own perched sand deposits on the Mellong Plateau on the characteristic monocline that formed when Australia separated from New Zealand. These deep sands support their own unique vegetation type – the Sydney



Scribbly Gum (Eucalyptus sclerophylla) characterise the Mellong Plateau on the western side of the Yengo Wilderness. Image: H. Gold

Sand Flats Dry Sclerophyll Forest that completes the vegetation picture for the area, apart from some small elements of western woodland on the Hunter escarpment and one or two wetlands and

riverine forests.

This world class floral diversity received additional protection with the declaration of the 120,000 hectare Yengo wilderness on 14 August, 2009. ■

The Golden Gumtree Postal Run

This spring 'the Golden Gum Tree Postal Run', a 19 day educational and celebratory activity was the second important event held to mark the 50th anniversary of the Blue Mountains National Park (gazetted 25 September 1959).

The event recognises the 100 Eucalypt species that occur in the World Heritage Area, which distinguish the park worldwide. It also honours the Aboriginal people who, for thousands of years have walked and cared for this area.

In keeping with the spirit of the on-going Earth Journeys environmental education program, this event aims to use art to engender in children a positive relationship with the natural and cultural values of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

Students and teachers from the

16 participating Blue Mountains' schools were encouraged to set up a 'Bush Room' where the children observed the natural world and monitored weather patterns. They were also encouraged to walk in National Park areas with Discovery Rangers and engage with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage practitioners.

Their stories, experiences and bush studies were recorded through data collection, creative writing and drawing and uploaded onto the Internet. These recordings in turn, inspired artistic interpretations by the children who created 'sense of place' postcards. These postcards had a drawing from the school's 'Bush Room', a story on the back and a postage stamp designed by the children.

The bush postie, Wyn Jones and

party, then conducted a postal run, walking from Penrith to Lithgow during September. Around a celebration campfire held at each school, the postcards were exchanged along the Postal Run.

"Having a city within a National Park is very special but we need a National Park for that and for the lifestyle culture of the Blue Mountains. The Mountains are the third most popular tourist destination in Australia and the attractions are obvious with its walking tracks and accessible locations," said Wyn Jones, ecologist and co-convenor of the Golden Gum Tree Postal Run.

The Golden Gumtree Postal Run arrived at Katoomba High School on Thursday, September 24 and was greeted by the School Principal and the Mayor

of the Blue Mountains. Aboriginal Discovery Ranger Janelle Randall-Court spoke on cultural heritage, Andy MacQueen presented the history of National Parks. Chris Darwin, a direct descendant of Charles Darwin, spoke about his famous ancestor.

The event also neatly linked with two coinciding celebrations: 200 years of the Australian Postal service and the 200th anniversary of the birth of the great evolutionary scientist, Charles Darwin, who visited Australia and the Blue Mountains in 1836.

As Wyn says, "This special project aims to enrich the relationship between schools, the community and the National Park through the combining of art and science. In

Helensburgh - urban sprawl flashpoint

BY KEITH MUIR

HELENSBURGH and its satellite of Otford are small villages situated in the upper Hacking River valley upstream of Royal National Park. In 1995, after a twelve year battle, the land around Helensburgh was secured for environmental protection.

A line in the sand was drawn. The vision of urban sprawl south over Maddens Plains was halted at the Helensburgh line. The bushland that separated Sydney from Wollongong remains as a vital link in the broad green belt from the coast to the Mountains; the bushland that contains Sydney's urban sprawl.

Unfortunately NSW Labor gutted the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act in 2008, and set in process for the entire State a one size fits all zoning scheme that suits developers. Also in 2008 it installed three administrators to replace a corrupt Wollongong City Council and in doing so council's cultural memory was lost, including the critically important decision to protect this all important green belt.

The NSW Government has also suffered a loss cultural memory, as illustrated by Mr R Pearson, Deputy Director General, Development

Assessment and Systems Performance who explained to the NSW Parliament at Budget Estimates in September that "there are a large number of paper subdivisions in [Helensburgh], and that is in large part what the council is trying to wrestle with, the appropriate amount of development that should be located in that area bearing in mind the historic legacy of paper subdivisions."

Wollongong Council has initiated a questionable planning review that ignores the struggle to save these lands zoned Environmental Protection (7d) after a detailed public inquiry and several council votes in favour of further protection that the Minister for Planning finally accepted in 1995. What this review really represents is that environmental protection measures under the new highly centralised planning regime for NSW are not safe from development, particularly when councils are governed by administrators.

Some Environmentally Protected areas are to be re-zoned Residential, Rural or Enterprise Corridor, allowing housing and other uses not currently permitted. Other areas of Environmental Protection 7(d) lands are proposed as Environment

Management (E3) which will grant a building right to allotments currently considered undersize for development on these environmentally important lands.

Wollongong City Council and the 1994 Commission of Inquiry recognised that the lands around Helensburgh, Otford and Stanwell Tops, currently zoned 7(d) Environmental Protection, are important for the continued viability of the Royal National Park and have important conservation values in their own right. In recognition of this, Council implemented zoning changes towards larger lot sizes. The area has been zoned Environment Protection since the 1980s.

Before 1968, the lands in the Hacking River valley were zoned 'Non Urban A' with 5 acres the minimum lot size for the erection of a dwelling. This minimum lot size stayed until 1971 when the minimum lot size for the erection of a dwelling changed to 50 acres. In 1984 it changed again to 40 hectares (approximately 100 acres).

The Royal National Park covers virtually all of the Hacking River catchment downstream of the private lands zoned Environmental Protection 7(d). What happens

on these 7(d) lands flows into the Park and Sutherland Shire. These lands also provide a critical habitat corridor link to the Illawarra Escarpment to the south and are important for conservation in their own right.

The southern edge of the Park offers the best opportunity for habitat transfer. The southern boundary though, is narrow, (less than 5 km wide) and the entire area, other than Helensburgh township, is identified as habitat corridor. Helensburgh, Otford and Stanwell Tops sit within this corridor. The NPWS identifies three distinct habitat corridor types: a littoral corridor (between Otford and the ocean); a wet forest corridor (between Otford and Helensburgh); and a dry forest corridor (a narrow strip to the west of Helensburgh).

The National Parks Association is also concerned that the proposed planning changes allow bush clearing, as well as subdivision and more development rights. Gary Schoer of the NPA advised Wollongong Council that "to make final decisions based on a desktop study is an abrogation of its responsibilities to consider the public interest and the future of these important regional ecosystems whose values have been emphasised in successive studies."

The planning proposals for Helensburgh claim to be a 'new vision', meaning that development would then come before conservation corridors and retention of Sydney's true green belt.

It has been demonstrated by Sydney's countless areas of degraded bushland, that placing residential development in bushland is not compatible with nature. The broader public interest in retaining the ecological viability of the area must be upheld. Urban sprawl must not be allowed to further degrade Royal National Park or spread south to Maddens Plains behind the Illawarra Escarpment. ■

Golden Gum Tree

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short it's a way of bring the people to the park and the park to the people – a fitting way to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our wonderful national park in a World Heritage area."

Organised by Wyn Jones and Bronwen Maxwell, the event was supported by a partnership with the Blue Mountains National Park (DECCW), the Blue Mountains Conservation Society, the Blue Mountains City Council (the Schools Environment Network and Cultural Partnerships program), the Blue Mountains World Heritage Institute, the Katoomba Chamber of Commerce, local Councillors and individuals.

Through the 'run', school students had a positive connection with the natural environment and cultural landscapes, which helped them develop knowledge, skills and understanding to foster responsible environmental

stewardship of the earth.

below: Bush Posties Wyn Jones and Aboriginal Discovery Ranger Janelle Randall-Court at Lawson Public School with Lyndsay Holmes from National Parks. Image: DECCW



Coalition defends National Parks

BY KEITH MUIR

IN the past two months a Parks and Native Animals Coalition has held six public meetings and two rallies protesting the biggest attack on the nature conservation principles of our parks since the National Parks and Wildlife Act came into being in 1967. Plans afoot include weaker National Parks and Wilderness laws, increased private development of national parks, cultural change within the NPWS, diversion of NPWS resources from conservation into managing tourism and plans for blood sport, disguised as recreation hunting, which will compromise pest management programs.

It seems that our consumer-based world still sees nature as a cornucopia full of game animals and development opportunities. Current plans to further exploit natural areas should not be unexpected when you add to the mix recent, significant weakening of NSW planning laws, reduced public participation and reduced environmental protection.

Ms Sally Barnes, NSW National Parks and Wildlife director has described as a "paradigm shift" the NSW Government's plans to generate revenue from commercial activities for future park acquisitions and conservation (*Sun-Herald* 6/9/09).

This paradigm shift of developing parks to generate funds is a very slippery slope. It is a blueprint for the retreat of State Government funding of parks and park jobs. At its worst it could become a vehicle for the provision of land for new national parks in return for favourable consideration of development proposals, which Justice David Lloyd described in September as a "land bribe" (*SMH* 1/9/09).

To rationalise development of the park estate there has been an avalanche of tourism initiatives, starting with Making National Parks a Tourism Priority by the Tourism and Transport Forum (TTF) of 2004. Since then, the

TTF has been advancing its case for tourism inside national parks, including investment schemes for private visitor facilities in national parks. Ms Olivia Wirth (TTF, Tourism Division) commenting on the tourism downturn said that: "More attention needs to be spent on various forms of infrastructure, such as roads and accommodation in national parks..." (*Canb. Times* 14/9/08).

The evidence is also mounting that the National Landscapes initiative, (which is about overseas marketing of Australia as a tourist destination), is now using Tourism Master Plans as a 'Trojan horse' for national park development. And with four National Landscape initiatives scheduled for NSW – the north coast rainforests, the Blue Mountains, the Alps and the far south coast, this is a serious concern.

Peter Garrett envisages Tourism Master Plans to involve "commercial and investment opportunities... visitor facilities, services, infrastructure, access..." (17/9/08). He also told the NPA (ACT) in 2008 that national parks must pay their way through more commercial development. The only NSW Tourism Master Plan to emerge so far is for the Wilderness Coast. Tucked away at the back of the Wilderness Coast Master Plan is a Tourism Accommodation Investment Prospectus which explains how to go about selling iconic sites in national parks to the 'white shoe brigade' and lists national park sites in Victoria and NSW to be flogged off.

The NSW Government needs this park commercialisation "paradigm shift" like a hole in the head! The very purpose of national parks is to set aside these areas from development. Parks should not become the next new development opportunity for the 'white shoe brigade'.

Several local councils, including Ashfield, Strathfield, Willoughby, the Blue Mountains and Sydney have resolved to support moves to protect parks and will raise these concerns

at the Local Government Conference in October.

Flawed thinking

The Department of Climate Change, Environment and Water's rationale for increased development is to generate revenue to put back into conservation (Carl Solomon, NPWS Tourism and Partnerships Branch head, pers. comm., 14 July 2009). No analysis has been provided to demonstrate how this will be achieved. This is the same argument used by the Tourism and Transport Forum, but even their extensive research has not produced a single Australian example of any on-park tourism operation providing significant net revenue to support conservation. Experts in the field say that, on the evidence, this theory is unworkable.

Professor Ralf Buckley, director of the International Centre for Ecotourism Research at Griffith University, said "proposals for upmarket exclusive tourist accommodation within NSW national parks do not fit any of the successful models. The closest analogues are historic hotels in US national parks, and recent lodges in South African national parks, and neither of these have made net contributions to conservation or parks budgets."

"Examples from many other countries and other states, however, show that fixed-site private tourism developments within public protected areas do not provide either funding or political support for parks agencies, and bring significant social, economic and environmental risks and costs."

"Parks are indeed a major attraction for tourists, both domestic and international, but the maximum contribution to regional economies is achieved by keeping parks as natural as possible. Low key public visitor infrastructure adds value to the experience but commercial tourism infrastructure, activities and accommodation should be kept outside park boundaries" (4 March, 2009).

Professor Buckley said overseas experience had shown that where commercial tourism businesses were allowed to operate inside national parks, the quality of service to visitors, visitor numbers, and tourist revenue for regional economies had reduced.

The cost to park management is also being ignored. Park staff and resources have been diverted to tourism.

The NSW Government, with already tarnished credentials, would suffer further heavy losses in key marginal seats from green voters were it to further encourage more national park developments.

The tourism development strategy for NSW national parks should never be released. Our parks must remain protected for nature, forever.

Current visitor data from Tourism NSW shows more and more people visiting national parks each year. Tourism NSW estimated last year that domestic overnight visitors visiting national parks by 2016 would exceed the state plan target five times. This estimated growth suggests that people like parks just as they are, without development. They want basic, well-kept park facilities and pristine parks, not glamour camping and commercial facilities.

How you can help...

Please write, email or fax Premier Nathan Rees and Environment Minister John Robertson, asking them to drop plans to amend the National Parks and Wildlife Act and the Wilderness Act to facilitate commercial development inside our parks.

❑ Premier Nathan Rees, 1 Farrer Pl, Sydney, NSW, 2000. Ph: 02 9228 5239, Fax 02 9228 3934, email thepremier@www.nsw.gov.au

❑ Environment Minister, John Robertson, Governor Macquarie Tower, Level 35, 1 Farrer Pl, Sydney, NSW, 2000, Ph (02) 9230 2152, Fax (02) 9230 2352, email office@robertson.minister.nsw.gov.au ■

SUPPORT THE COLONG FOUNDATION!

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

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

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(NB Membership application covers Bulletin subscription)
- Colong Bulletin Subscription (\$11) to 31 December 2009 (non members only)
- Membership renewal to 31 December 2009 (\$30) Life Membership (\$550)
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Yes, I wish to become a member of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd. I subscribe to the Foundation's aim of preserving Australia's wilderness remnants. I accept the liability provided in the Colong Foundation's Articles of Association to guarantee \$20 should it be needed in the event of the winding up of the Foundation. Signed

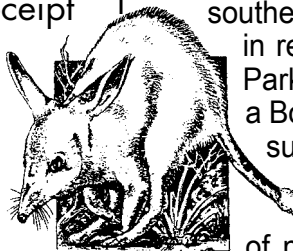
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A BEQUEST

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."



ABOUT THE COLONG FOUNDATION

The Colong Foundation, the successor to Myles Dunphy's National Parks and Primitive Areas Council, is Australia's longest-serving community advocate for wilderness. Its proposal for a *Wilderness Act* was accepted in 1987. To supplement this legislation, our Red Index, audits NSW wilderness areas, identifies threats and formulates site specific protection remedies. There are now 1,836,000 ha of protected wilderness in NSW. However, many beautiful and environmentally highly significant wilderness areas are not protected, such as the 13,000 ha Green Gully in the Macleay Gorges, Pilliga and Goonoo on the north west slopes, Yengo in the Blue Mountains, the Deua Valley on the South Coast and the Tabletop and Main Range in the Snowy Mountains.

The Colong Foundation for Wilderness has had a long and successful history. From its foundation in 1968 until 1975 it was the fighting force that prevented limestone mining and the destruction of native forest for pine plantations in the southern Blue Mountains. The Foundation not only played a leading role in realising Myles Dunphy's plan for a Greater Blue Mountains National Park, it pushed for its World Heritage listing, as well as the reservation of a Border Ranges National Park and Kakadu National Park. It has initiated successful campaigns for the protection of over a million hectares of wilderness in NSW.

The realisation of Myles Dunphy's vision of a comprehensive system of national parks with protected wilderness areas remains the primary objective of the Colong Foundation.

Now, more than ever, the Foundation needs your support. Well financed and powerful rural interests, miners, loggers, resort developers, as well as four wheel drive enthusiasts, horse riders and others, have greatly increased the threats facing Australia's wild places.

Only with your help, through continued membership and donations, can the Foundation continue its campaigns for the preservation of the natural environment and effective nature-based national park management, and by concentrating on wilderness, these rare areas can be kept safe from development and misuse.

THE COLONG FOUNDATION

SENDER: THE COLONG FOUNDATION FOR WILDERNESS
Level 2, 332 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000



PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM THE COLONG FOUNDATION

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