

Regional Futures for Wilderness and Protected Areas in Tasmania

Nicholas Sawyer

Tasmanian National Parks Association



Wilderness Loss 1

- Hydro-electric development
 - Lake Pedder
 - Middle Gordon Scheme
 - biggest single destruction of wilderness
 - Gordon below Franklin
 - Henty-Anthony

Wilderness Loss 2



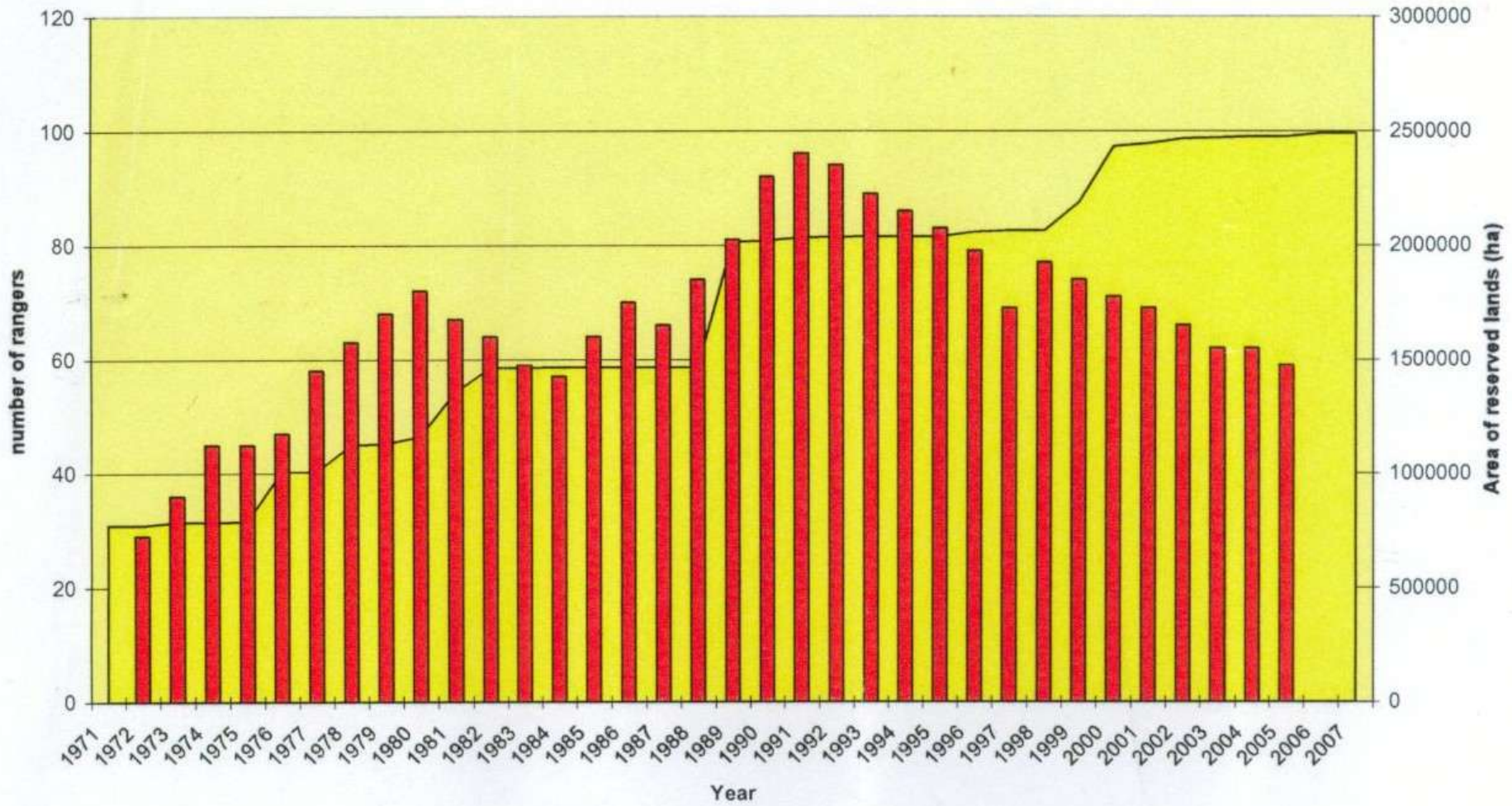
- Forestry
- Mining
- Land Clearing
- Road Construction:
 - Cradle Mountain Link Road
 - Western Explorer



Parks and Wildlife Service



- Created 1970
- Development and management of an ecologically representative system of reserved lands and for conservation of flora and fauna
- Cutbacks and restructuring
- “Mission creep”:
 - focus on environmental values and habitat conservation
 - embracing more anthropocentric values
 - promoting commercial opportunities
 - being the basis of the tourism industry
- Visitor facilities now absorb the majority of PWS resources



Management of Reserved Areas

- 1992 Management Plan for the TWWHA
 - assumed that tourism operations would not expand beyond those already in existence
 - only a very limited range of new proposals could be considered
 - little guidance provided on the approval process
- 1999 Management Plan for the TWWHA
 - included a “New Proposals and Impact Assessment Process”

Proposals in the TWWHA

- Commercial helicopter/floatplane landings
 - Rejected
- Cockle Creek Wilderness Lodge
 - Approved but never constructed
- Pumphouse Point Wilderness Lodge
 - Approved - work may have started

Key Challenges for Protected Area Management



- State Government attitude
 - leads to compromise on protection of natural values and weakening of management control
- Pressure from industry
 - Tasmania risks losing its grip on the wilderness tourism sector if it doesn't make it easier to develop in national parks, says the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania
- The COAG proposal to delegate many of the Federal government's responsibilities under the EPBC Act to state governments
- “Frank and fearless advice” – limited opportunities for raising pro-conservation arguments in decision making forums

Specific Issues

- Poorly considered (government backed) schemes for development – e.g. Three Capes Track
- Poorly considered (private) schemes for development – e.g. Mount Wellington Cable Car
- Walking track hardening
- Off road vehicles

Specific Issues

- Development at Cradle Mountain
- Development at Lake StClair
- Cradle Huts
- Standing camps

Conclusion

A scenic view of a mountain range with snow patches and a lake in the foreground. The mountains are rugged and dark, with patches of white snow on their slopes. The sky is a clear, pale blue with a few wispy clouds. The foreground shows the calm surface of a lake, reflecting the sky and the mountains.

Underlying all of these concerns is the failure of senior PWS management and the state government to recognise the importance of preserving the intrinsic wildness of Tasmania's unique reserved lands

Crossley, 2009



Photograph: Ted Mead