

Supporting letter to key Ministers and other leading Parliamentarians:

Include the following points in your letters to the above Parliamentarians:

Dear Minister,

I am writing to you as a person vitally interested in the conservation of the internationally significant natural areas of south Eastern Australia.

As you know there is a growing awareness in Australia and around the world of the importance of contiguity in nature conservation. In accordance with the goal of greater connectivity and also in recognition of the importance of protecting the natural heritage of the high country of south eastern and the adjacent forests I have written to the Victorian Government urging it to act on two proposals for park extension, the first which would close the single gap which exists in the chain of protected alpine areas extending from west of Canberra to north of Melbourne and the second which would create a new national park in East Gippsland.

The first proposal which involves extending the Alpine National Park to link up with Baw Baw National Park resurrects the concepts first advanced by the Australian Conservation Foundation in 1969 and the Victorian National Parks Association in 1974. Unfortunately, from the 1970s onwards, consideration of a continuous park was adversely affected by the division of this region into two separate Study Areas for the purpose of the making of land use recommendations by the Land Conservation Council Victoria .

I am aware that as an initial step the central part of the area linking the alpine areas of the Western Alps region has been included in a National Heritage List nomination the details of which can be inspected as a public notice on the internet. This provides some idea of the intrinsic heritage values of the area which includes deep valleys as well as intervening sub-alpine areas.

A similar approach has been suggested for East Gippsland where the proposed 'East Gippsland Forests National Park' would be contiguous with the South East Forests National Park created in New South Wales from five earlier parks and state forest. All of these areas also has been nominated for the National Heritage List.

Details of the proposals including descriptions and maps appear on the website of the Colong Foundation for Wilderness. www.colongwilderness.org.au

I urge you to take the steps necessary through the forum of the Australian Alps Ministerial Council and other channels to provide every possible encouragement to the Victorian Government to proceed with park proposals which I believe will substantially improve the protection of areas identified as important for a 'sea to snow' world heritage nomination.

Yours sincerely

Signed