

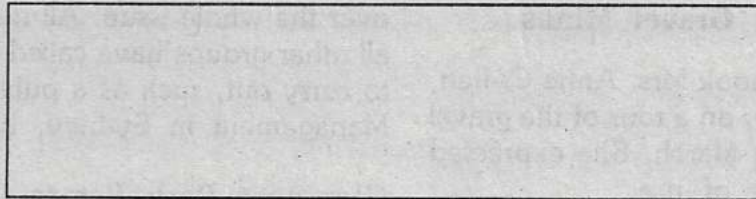
April-May-June 1990



## Lower Mountains Eco-News

NEWSLETTER OF THE LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

RETURN ADDRESS:  
LBMCS  
P.O. BOX 119  
SPRINGWOOD 2777



### Notice of Meetings

General and Business meetings will alternate at the Neighbourhood Centre, Springwood. General meetings begin at 8.00pm on the 4th Friday of each month.

#### General Meetings

##### April 27

Peter Smith (ecologist) - Fauna of the Blue Mountains. Peter and Judy have just finished a book on the subject to be published in August.

##### June 22

Jill Dark - Western Australian Flora (to be confirmed).

##### August 24

##### October 26 (AGM)

November 30 - Christmas party.

#### Business Meetings

May 25

July 27

September 28

Business meetings in April, June, August, October and Dec, will be held at 7 David Street, Glenbrook, at 8.00pm on the 3rd Tuesday of these months. All members are welcome to attend.

No general meeting will be held in December.



## Aims

To inform the public on environmental and conservation issues; research into population and distribution of flora and fauna in the Blue Mountains and neighbouring regions.

## Memberships

Blue Mountains Environment Council  
Nature Conservation Council of NSW  
Australian Conservation Foundation  
Society for Growing Australian Plants (Blue Mountains Branch)  
National Parks Association (NSW)  
Australian Museum  
Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society  
National Parks and Wildlife Foundation  
The Wilderness Society (NSW)  
The Western Sydney Network of Environmental Organisations  
The Total Environment Centre

## Other Group Involvement

Glenbrook Lagoon Society  
Eastern Escarpment '530A' Committee  
Darks Common Trust  
Nepean River Committee  
Escarpment Protection Group  
Echo Point  
Native Plant Reserve (Glenbrook)  
The Colong Foundation (Inc)

## Society Contacts

President: Richard Phillipps (39-2568)  
V.Presidents: Margaret Baker (54-1196)  
Margaret Esson (51-1826)  
Secretary: George Threlfo (39-5125)  
Editor: Deborah Chambers  
Treasurer: Eileen Brammall (39-6420)  
Librarian: Wynne O'Brien (58-6504)  
Gen. Enquiries and Talks  
Organiser: Aleen Hanley (39-4079)

# Secretary's Report

## Londonderry Tip and Gravel Mines

LBMCS representatives took Mrs. Anne Cohen, Member for Minchinbury, on a tour of the gravel and sand-mining sites in March. She expressed support for the actions of the local action group RAGE, and our groups to ensure that mining occurs with full regard to the environmental impacts of such activities e.g. full treatment of waste waters, rehabilitation of mined and adjacent areas.



She also expressed strong interest in particular pieces of land which may be preserved under the State Government Open Space Strategy. One such area is the Ham Common area at Hawkesbury Agriculture College.

A similar tour by Ms. Pam Allen, Shadow Environment Minister on Friday, 6/4/90 has had to be postponed for a short period.

A special meeting of all interested parties opposing the tip will be held at Penrith Council Chamber on Monday on 9/4/90. We will be represented as will the BMEC.

At this stage, the State Government and the Waste Authority remain particularly intransigent

over the whole issue. All matters which we and all other groups have called on the Government to carry out, such as a public inquiry on Waste Management in Sydney, have been denied.

## Glenmore Park Estate

Reluctantly, we have become involved in matters relating to the construction of the estate. This is a huge undertaking which will result in a mini-Penrith to the south of the F4 Freeway between the Old Northern Road and Mulgoa Road.

Our early concern was the lack of or inability of current protection measures to stop massive runoff problems from the first construction site.

A number of discussions have taken place with Penrith Council officers, the estate engineers and the NSW Soil Conservation Service and have resulted in a number of improvements.

In some cases, we feel this has occurred after the horse has bolted but we must insist that full protection measures are in place before any further developments of the estate occur.

We will monitor this process very closely in conjunction with Ted Foster, from the Nepean River Committee, and interested local residents.



Another concern that has just surfaced is the likelihood that the Regentville Public School will be made redundant when other school sites are developed within the estate.

For the quality of some of the 19th century buildings alone, this should not be permitted to occur. There are other major social issues in closing the school.

We are currently involved in providing the action committee with networking facilities and strategies for carrying through a successful campaign against the closure.

### Lapstone Car Park

Several representatives of the BMEC recently had a meeting at Springwood with representatives from InterCity Rail.

A number of matters pertaining to SRA operations on the mountains were raised including the installation of two-metre safety fencing along the railway through the mountains and the apparent lack of proper landscaping.

Another matter raised was the deplorable standard of construction of the carpark at Lapstone Station. This resulted in further meetings on site with InterCity representatives and separate discussions and followup with the Mayor and Guy Mathieson.

### Lapstone Tunnel

Mayor Ralph Williams has agreed to convene a meeting of all interested community and

government parties to resolve the future of this area. Meeting will probably be held in May.

### F4 Freeway

We are again taking up a number of issues regarding the freeway. One of these is the revegetation and proper landscaping of the whole route.

As well, we have concerns on the construction of the link up the escarpment and the adequacy of the runoff controls during this phase.

A further onsite meeting on this issue will be held on Wednesday, 11/4.

### Blue Mountains Environment Council Fundraising

An inexpensive dinner (Indian) and night at Q Theatre to see "The Holy Mountain" will be held on 1, 2 or 3 May. The play has strong environmental themes.

Please phone George (395125) if you are interested. This will be a good night out!

BMEC will also be coordinating a large gathering in early June to celebrate World Environment Day.

This will involve a light meal, walking, spotlighting, singing, poetry recitations, tall yarns and general good fun. Details at following LBMCS meetings and in the papers.

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## Blue Mountains

*Blue Mountains in wild and lonely places deep,  
Their precious jewels in hiding keep.  
Where dark the towering walls forbidding  
Lean close to guard these secret places  
From human feet despoiling.*

*Only running water finds the way to go  
Water running pure and crystal clear  
Falling to the pristine pools so far below.  
Hidden pools, deep and icy cold,  
Reflected beauty in their stillness hold.*

*When the veils of mist have cleared away  
Come shafts of sunlight glinting down  
To spangle rocks and hanging fern,  
Turn spider webs to diamond necklets  
To grace a fairy gown.*

*Sunbeams dancing on the rippling stream,  
Weave shadow patterns on golden sands below.  
Cool and damp the air is; and filled with water music  
Where hidden waters flow.*

*Those who dare to seek them out, beware!  
For fierce storms across the Mountains sweep,  
Sending foaming walls of water metres deep  
Raging down those gentle falls.  
In the maelstrom close confined  
No living thing can long survive.*

M.E.



## Development appeals: one down, one to go

Two appeals concerning the proposed development of land of Muriel Street have now been heard in the Land and Environment Court.

The first, against NPWS, resulted in a reduction of the term of the Interim Protection Order, which now expires 1st May 1990 instead of in September.

The second, against BMCC, was heard recently and we await the judgment.

The rural portions of land proposed for conservation have been the subject of submission from this society to Commissioner Simpson.

The Commissioner has agreed with our request and Council's latest proposal for conservation of the ~~Faulcon~~<sup>Faulcon</sup> Bridge Mallee heath and the alternative site suggested for **limited** development at the **north** end of Shirlow Avenue (with proposed zoning RBC 8 dwellings/hectare).

There will be a similar area off Meeks Crescent along part of the eastern boundary.

Commissioner Simpson also recommended Council's latest zoning proposal for Muriel Street, viz. total environmental protection **or** part RBC in **one** dwelling only.

The balance of the land currently zoned rural to be zoned for environmental protection **could** then be dedicated as a public reserve and bush walking area.

We have requested nomination of this area for acquisition via the State's Open Space and Heritage Fund.

This nomination has been accepted by State Cabinet and will be considered in due course.

The Shadow Minister for the Environment, Pam Allan MP, has offered her support, as has Ross Free MP, Member for Lindsay, and Barry Morris, MP Member for Blue Mountains; also the Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd; the Upper Blue Mountains Conservation Society and the Blue Mountains Branch of the National Parks Association.

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## Society Welcomes Protection Order

*The following appeared in the Blue Mountains Gazette of December 19, 1989.*

An interim protection order has been issued over land at Faulconbridge by the Hon. Tim Moore MP, Minister for the environment.

The Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society has congratulated the minister on his move.

"This is only the second such order issued and its purpose is to protect the rare species, Faulconbridge Mallee or Eucalyptus burgessiana and Allania endlieheri and the extremely rare species Acrophyllum australe," a spokesperson for the society said.

Any person causing damage or despoiling of the land or trees, or vegetation, or the carrying on of any activity that may affect the preservation, protection or maintenance of the land or the rare species, is subject to a penalty of \$10,000 or six months imprisonment or both.

"The Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society has been seeking such protection for land at Faulconbridge for more than three years.

Part of this land - off Muriel Street - was previously nominated by the Heritage Council as an item of the State's environmental heritage and is now temporarily protected.

The final outcome will be determined by the Land and Environment Court next year.

"The society thanks its many supporters, including the 300 members of the public who wrote letters to the minister as a result of the street campaign last year; the Blue Mountains societies concerned with conservation and state organisations, especially the Colong Foundation (for Wilderness Ltd) whose book of the submission for Blue Mountains World Heritage listing was launched last week.

"Long-term protection of the land is now sought in the form of a permanent order of acquisition for a nature reserve."



## National Threatened Species Network

*The following appeared in Wildlife News, the WWF's publication, issue of January to March 1990.*

**Written by - Michael Kennedy, WWFA Project Officer**

World Wildlife Fund Australia is about to establish a National Threatened Species Network, with the aim of promoting the conservation of the species and habitats throughout Australia.

The program has been approved and funded by the Federal Government's Endangered Species Advisory Committee (ESAC). A National coordinator for the network will be working from the WWF office in Sydney, and a state coordinator will be employed with key conservation groups in each state and territory.

The overall aim in establishing and maintaining a National Threatened Species Network (NTSN) is to enhance community support for the National Endangered Species Programme by utilising and supporting existing non-government conservation organisations and by doing so, promote the conservation of threatened species and habitats.

The NTSN will operate in a number of ways, building upon past experience in education and campaign efforts.

It will distribute information on matters affecting the conservation of threatened species, participate in national and local campaign to save species and habitats, monitor the implementation of treaties, legislation and strategies directed at wildlife, and a host of other essential activities.

1990 is a crucial year for the conservation of threatened species in Australia, and the decade ahead will tell whether our efforts have been effective enough. The networks will be pushing for the introduction of specific threatened species legislation and comprehensive strategies in each state and territory and at the Federal level, and your help in achieving these goals is absolutely vital.

If you would like to be involved in the coming activities of the threatened species networks anywhere in Australia, please write to the National Network Coordinator at the WWF's Sydney office for further details.

The bigger the network the more chance of success - we need your participation!

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## \$1 an acre - the price of NSW Crown lands

The NSW Government seems determined to exacerbate the problem of land degradation in Australia by passing legislation to sell off the State's valuable Crown lands.

On the 1st January new Crown Lands legislation came into operation, allowing land to be sold in the Eastern and Central Division. This comprises two thirds of the State. Crown lands are supposedly public land, yet under the new legislation the public is not guaranteed a say on whether or not such land should be sold. The legislation gives the Minister for Natural Resources wide discretion over the lands disposal.

Last year the Minister, Ian Causley, decided that the Department of Lands conservation policy no longer applied to Crown leases. This resulted in the rapid conversion to freehold of land which

had previously been protected from sale because it was environmentally sensitive. Much of this land was sold off at values set more than fifty years ago. For example, in August last year, the Lands office approved the conversion to freehold of 1,929 acres of land, in the Upper Hunter Valley. The land containing rainforest was sold for one dollar an acre.

It is likely the new legislation will lead to the deforestation of public land, much of which will not have been fully evaluated for its biological resources and suitability for reservation. Once sold, the public will effectively lose it forever. To reserve the land as, for example, a national park, future governments would have to repurchase it at market rates, providing the owner was willing to sell and the land was not already cleared for agricultural purposes.



A recent NSW Soil Conservation survey indicates that more than 72 per cent of NSW soils (60 million hectares) suffer from some form of land degradation while more than 38 per cent of NSW soils (29 million hectares) have been severely affected.

By selling off the State's Crown lands the Greiner Government is not only sacrificing options to promote sustainable agriculture in NSW but is counteracting the millions of dollars the Federal and other State governments are

investing in tree planting programmes, landcare groups and environmental protection.

Members are asked to write to the NSW Premier, Nick Greiner, the Leader of the Opposition, Bob Carr and the Minister for Natural Resources, Ian Causley (all c/- Parliament House, Sydney, NSW, 2000), and demand that the public have a say in the management and disposal of NSW Crown lands.

by Sue Shipard, ACF Assistant

## Parks Service in Trouble

*The following appeared in the February 1990 edition of NCC Newsletter, published by the Nature Conservation Council of NSW.*

The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service has been reduced to its lowest ebb in its 22 year history.

Political interference and low salaries have been cited as reasons by resigning staff.

Since the former Director of the Service was dismissed by Environment Minister Tom Moore, over 80 staff have resigned and not been replaced.

The Government's appointment of a new Director, Mr Bill Gillooly, former head of commercial operations at the Zoo, at a much increased salary package of \$130,000 a year, has exacerbated staff dissatisfaction: Service staff are not well paid with rangers earning only about \$23,000 a year and there seems little hope for a quick restructuring of salaries to bring them up to a comparable level.

A former career service officer, Mr Tony Williams who managed the Blue Mountains District, is among those who left in disgust after the sacking of the former Director. Tony is now running a newsagency at Port Stephens and was recently reported in the press saying:

"The Government is progressively dismantling the Service by taking away any power to do anything. It has done this by strangling the resources allocated to staff, strangling the money supply and removing effective decision-makers from the organisation."

Assurances given to environment groups by Mr Moore at the time of the former Director's dismissal, that the Service would be maintained as an effective Government organisation seem far removed from today's grim reality.

At the time NCC, through its Chairperson, was

invited to participate in the selection of a new Director for the Service but declined as a protest against the dismissal of the former Director.

National Parks Association Director, Graham Well, was appointed to the selection committee by Mr Moore. The committee interviewed 10 shortlisted applicants and rejected them but later selected Mr Gillooly from the applicants for the Assistant Director's position.

## New Course in the Mountains

A course has been designed for people concerned with the environment. ECO\*CARE offers a two-weekend workshop called 'Viable Futures' for anyone wanting to achieve sustainable futures in their local neighbourhood and/or regional area.

Workshop sessions will be held by Wyn Jones, who has extensive experience in Australian ecosystems; Rosemary Morrow, noted permaculture teacher and designer; and Janine Williams, an environmental planner. All of them have worked extensively on environmental assessment and problem issues.

The course will be held in May and again in June, at Wentworth Falls, from Friday night to Sunday evening. Participants should bring their own concerns for analysis and discussion with the ECO\*CARE teachers.

Practical field workshops, such as early-morning ecology studies of wildlife, and daytime excursions to analyse the Wentworth Falls urban system, occur on each weekend.

Topics include pollution, weeds, drainage and sewage disposal, wildlife habitat and town planning.

Further details are available from Wyn Jones (047) 877 511 (or Rosemary Morrow (047) 844 528 after 3/4/90).