



Our mission is to help conserve the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains and to increase awareness of the natural environment in general.

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MR FOLEY'S "TERRA NULLIUS"

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[Editor, *The Hut News*]

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NSW Labor leader Luke Foley has been quoted as saying that "flying over unpopulated areas to the south-west (of Badgerys Creek) at night 'strikes a balance between residents' concerns (about aircraft noise) and the necessity for the airport to be a commercial success" (Blue Mountains Gazette 3/5/17). People living at Mulgoa, Silverdale, Greendale, Wallacia, Warragamba and Luddenham might be surprised to learn that their villages are unpopulated!



But really, somebody should show Mr Foley a map! In these "unpopulated areas", which Mr Foley dismisses so lightly, he would discover Lake Burrigorang – the main water supply for an expected city of eight million people. Protection of this Special Area extends for three kilometres from the top of the full storage water level in Lake Burrigorang (formed by Warragamba Dam), with fines of up to \$44,000 for unauthorised entry. We can't walk anywhere near it, camp beside it, swim or paddle a canoe in it ... but Mr Foley would have noisy polluting aircraft flying over it all night, every night.

Like the World Heritage National Parks which adjoin it, the Burrigorang Valley is rich in biodiversity. I recommend to Mr Foley the definition of biodiversity on the Australian Museum's website:

"Biodiversity is the variety of all living things; the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, the genetic information they contain and the ecosystems they form. Biodiversity is usually explored at three levels - genetic diversity, species diversity and ecosystem diversity. These three levels work together to create the complexity of life on Earth."

Our national parks are quiet places where a little bird can be heard when it sings to find a mate and the smallest sound can sometimes warn of a predator. Here, above all, the noise of aircraft would do the most damage.

The debate about Badgerys Creek is centering on the spurious argument that there is a need for a second Sydney airport, the totally unproven and unlikely prospect of quality jobs in the region and the proposed airport's adverse effects on present human populations.

We need to turn the debate back towards nature. Protection of our unique natural environment in the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area needs to be the priority.

Christine Davies