

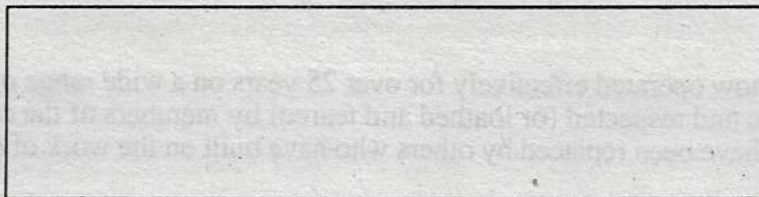


July/August/September 1991

## 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 MEETINGS

Held at the Neighbourhood Centre,  
Springwood, at 7.30 pm.

August 9 - Carol Proberts - LYREBIRDS -  
A talk with video and slides on these  
beautiful birds, native to coastal  
eastern Australia.

October 11 - AGM followed by Margaret  
Turton - QUOLLS, AUSTRALIA'S NATIVE CAT -  
Margaret will pass on knowledge gained  
from a survey she has been doing on  
spotted-tailed quolls in the Blue Mtns.

#### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Fri. 12th July (Springwood)  
Tues. 13th Aug. (Glenbrook)  
Fri. 13th Sept. (Springwood)  
Tues. 8th Oct. (Glenbrook)  
Fri. 8th Nov. (Springwood)  
Tues. 10th Dec. (Glenbrook)



## 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

## Other Group Involvement

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)  
C.H.A.N.G.E.  
The Total Environment Centre

Glenbrook Lagoon Society  
Eastern Escarpment '530A' Committee  
Darks Common Trust  
Nepean River Committee  
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)  
Publicity Officer: George Threlfo  
Editors (acting):  
Eileen Brammall, Aleen Hanley  
Treasurer: Eileen Brammall (39-6420)  
Librarian: Wynne O'Brien (58-6504)  
Gen. Enquiries and Talks  
Organiser: Aleen Hanley (39-4079)

## Secretary' Report

Our Society has now operated effectively for over 25 years on a wide range of environmental issues. It is well known and respected (or loathed and feared) by members of the community. Over time the activists have been replaced by others who have built on the work of earlier members.

We are always undermanned and need your support in assisting us with general management, fighting issues and constantly recruiting new members - these often come from single issue groups after their issue has been finalised.

In this regard I welcome two newer members who have already shown ability and enthusiasm :

- Julie Senior is now editing the newsletter
- Colin Anderson from Lapstone has already raised environmental concerns in his area and is co-ordinating the rehabilitation of the bushland reserves in the creeks running through Lapstone.

Updates on some issues we are involved in :

1. Glenbrook Landcom Proposal. We were approached at the beginning of this campaign and not only gave advice but partly wrote and edited the initial submissions. We also aided the lobbying of State Parliamentarians and attended and spoke at each public meeting.

On Tuesday, 2 July, BMCC again 'debated' the issue but fudged directly supporting the community on the zoning issue. A motion by Ald. Clarke to put the whole area under a 7(e) zone was defeated and replaced with a motion for BMCC to approach the Minister for Environment to have the area transferred to National Park. This is bound to fail as GOLD already has a letter from Mr. Moore giving his support to inclusion of the area but clearly stating that the State Government will not provide funds or exchange the land.

We are left wondering that a 7(e) zoning would be used as a precedent when a similar area of land at Blaxland with the same proposed zoning comes up for subdivision once the plan is finalised.

The dead end decision referred to above is in contrast to a decision by BMCC last November to zone 7(e) another Landcom area at Mt. Riverview.



2. The Environmental Management Plan. Six members and friends recently quickly considered the latest proposed changes. Margaret Baker and Margaret Esson also submitted items on behalf of our Society - we were well represented in the report !

Our group submission again questioned the subjective nature of the Development Criteria - as did M. Baker, provisions for Canopy Conservation in both the Megalong Valley and other areas in the mountains, lack of objectivity of escarpment protection measures, heritage protection and the keeping of hoofed animals. The latter is currently being pushed by various aldermen to assuage the horse lobby. However, we should be publicly calling for BMCC to go back to its original intention to phase out hoofed animals from the sandstone ridges of the mountains.

Margaret Esson has again highlighted our concerns on potential developments in and around the Faulconbridge Mallee areas - some minor modifications in the plan may come from this

Margaret Baker has indicated that we regard the plan as a Development Project rather than an Environmental Management Plan. She notes the continued watering down of the original Aims and Objectives and the backdown regarding developments on steep slopes and in unsewered areas. She calls for the reinstatement of provisions in the last plan on :

- Environmental Education
- Land Between Towns
- Development Criteria

Little rational 'debate' occurred on the plan on 2 July. It will be re-discussed in 3 weeks time. Please come to our meeting on Friday next (12 July) to consider the plan in more detail.

Note that the Water Board and SPCC are demanding a number of improvements. Watch both the local and State media for developments.

3. Prospect Powerlines. While we have left the later running on this issue in the able hands of the POWER group, we will still need to assist them in some ways. We spoke and wrote submissions to the Commissioner Mr. Milton Morris. Even though Mr. Morris has clearly recommended :

- a. The preparation of a new EIS
- b. Formation of a Community Consultative Committee to facilitate this process,

Prospect appears set on simply supplying a report to the Minister, Mr. Webster and avoiding these recommendations.

4. Some good news at last : Guy Matheson is to be congratulated on his efforts to secure the future of the Lapstone Tunnel and its portals. A handing over from the State Rail Authority to BMCC will occur in the coming weeks. Revenue from the lease of the tunnel is expected to be used to generate improvements within this area. Lillian Erskine has worked hard to finalise this result.



Lillian Mills. Age: 10 yrs.





### UPDATE - FAULCONBRIDGE MALLEE AREA

The future of this land remains undetermined.

In March a further letter from the Property Services Group advised us that "N.P. & W.S. is the eligible applicant for this project". Accordingly we wrote to the Director, N.P.W.S. requesting him to apply for finance for acquisition from the Open Space and Heritage Fund. This request has been strongly supported by The Colong Foundation and the Faulconbridge Residents Association. We have also asked the N.P. Advisory Committee to make the same request.

Council's unprotective perimeter zoning proposals ignore recommendations of the Heritage Council, botanists, environmentalists, residents and bushwalkers.

Shirlow Avenue ridge (together with Chapman Parade, Singles Ridge and Yellow Rock) are on the agenda for consideration at the next Council meeting. The present zoning proposal was changed from 7e to RBC 4/ha with hatching: the latter may limit but does not prevent development. This is a significant mallee community along the NP border; it is rocky with extreme fire risks and environmentally sensitive with 2 species of rare plants (Eucalyptus burgessiana 2RCa and Atkinsonia ligustrina 2RCa). There are no services. At our meeting with the Minister Tim Moore, he stated "no water, no sewer, no build."!! Town Planning recommendation is to rezone RBC 4/ha to 7e.

The subdivision and DA for Meeks Cres. will destroy the upper part of an historic track and block access to the gully unless an alternate route can be made.

The escarpment block off Muriel Street with proposed zoning changed from 4/ha to 8/ha will allow the developer to have more lots than in the subdivision application prior to the court case. Many of these will be smaller - not "substantially larger" as recommended by the Land and Environment Court. Indirect impact on the adjacent significant mallee community - "an item of the State's Environmental Heritage" and possibly on the zone of the very rare species Acrophyllum australe 2VCi on the wet escarpment ledge, may occur. A previous zoning proposal was for 7e or one dwelling only.

Our last submission to Council requested recognition of Heritage recommendations (vegetation and rare species) and also requested amendment to the late (Nov.1990) zoning proposals.

Margaret Esson  
Vice-President 7.7.91.

### **Support the Lower Blue Mountains Conservation Society and buy your books from our stall at the Ivy Market**

Springwood Civic Centre, 2nd Saturday of every month except  
January, and two markets in November, 8.30am - 12.30pm

We sell new books on the Blue Mountains, Australian native plants and animals,  
bushwalking, conservation and related titles. If the book you want  
isn't there on the day we can generally obtain it for you.





## THE WEST'S PRECIOUS BUSHLAND

Only one percent of western Sydney is protected bushland. This one percent totals only 1,700 hectares, and includes Agnes Banks and Windsor Downs nature reserves, Georges River and Mitchell Park State recreation areas and Castlereagh State Forest. Many species in these areas have a tenuous existence.

Doug Benson, senior botanist, and Lyn McDougall, botanical assistant at the Royal Botanical Gardens, have stated that many of the regions 80 plant species now vulnerable, could be extinct in the next few years if at least seven unprotected areas are not added to this one percent. Benson has cited farming and residential development as the greatest threats to the remaining plant species.

The area studied covers the Cumberland plain from Parramatta westward to the Hawkesbury River and from Windsor south to Campbelltown. The areas identified as being critical to the protection of the west's 1000 species are:

1. Catchment area of Longneck Lagoon.
2. Southern additions to Agnes Banks Nature Res.
3. Castlereagh State Forest.
4. Commonwealth land at Shanes Park.
5. Mulgoa Nature Reserve.
6. Kemps Creek Nature Reserve proposal.
7. Water Board land around Prospect Reservoir.

Benson has called for "urgent steps to conserve the significant areas of bushland still remaining in Sydney's west", as they hold the last remaining stands of native bushland in western Sydney.



Copies of "Rare bushland plants of Western Sydney" by Doug Benson and Lyn McDougall (\$6.95), and "Taken for granted: The bushland of Sydney and its suburbs" by Doug Benson and Jocelyn Howell (\$31.50) are available from the LBMCS stall at the Ivy Market, or by phoning Margaret Baker on 54 1196.

### TEC EXCURSION

#### MULGOA - PROPOSED NATURE RESERVE

Sunday, 4 August 1991, 10.30 am

Mulgoa Nature Reserve has been identified as critical to the preservation of western Sydney's unique habitat. The Reserve proposal covers significant remnant tree stands on Wianamatta shale just south of Penrith. The vegetation is different from that of sandstone country and both the bird and vegetation communities have affinities with woodlands west of the Great Dividing Range. George Threlfo of LBMCS and an eminent naturalist will lead this 5km walk through undulating woodland and grassland. We will see three sections of the Reserve proposal including the ruins of "Regentville" built in the 19th century. We will enjoy lunch along the way.

BYO DRINKS AND CUPS. DONATION TO TEC \$20.

Please contact TEC prior to walk for bookings.  
Telephone (02) 241 2523 or (02) 247 4714.



### CRISIS IN THE WEST

Despite calls for a moratorium on future land releases in western Sydney by the State Opposition and local community and environmental groups, the Minister for Housing, Mr. Schipp, has stated that the State Government will press ahead with staged development aimed at housing the bulk of Sydney's projected population growth of up to one million people over the next 20 years. The Minister is now in charge of the Department of Housing and Sydney Water Board, whose managing director Bob Wilson has stated he has no confidence in growth of that magnitude being compatible with a "decent riverine environment".

The moratorium on future development has been called for until it is demonstrated that environmental problems can be dealt with. Dr. David Hughes of CHANGE has said that the Water Board has not completed its water quality models on the Hawkesbury-Nepean river system and the State Pollution Control Commission has not come to terms with the region's air pollution problems. He suggested that the government should be examining disused industrial land close to the city areas such as Alexandria, Auburn and Silverwater with a view to developing medium-density housing.  
(from SMH 11.6.91)

Local areas affected by such proposals include the Cox Street, Glenbrook proposal and the developments at Glenmore Park and South Creek Growth Area which is planned to house 300000 people.

### A NEW VIEW ON COUNCIL - NEW HOPE FOR THE MOUNTAINS

The newly formed Community Environment Team are promising to give entrenched BM councillors a run for their money in the next Council elections. The elections are set down for 14 September and should shake up a council which TEC's Milo Dunphy has called one of the poorest local government administrations in the state when it comes to environmental policy and practice. TEC's Keith Muir recently stated that the "general thrust of the planning instrument (EMP) is urban sprawl".

The CET aims to run a campaign for open, accountable and consultative local government and to bring the protection of the environment forward on the political agenda. As part of its policy the team would investigate further ridge and escarpment development and implement a comprehensive tourism plan. CET are running on a strong environment-oriented and community responsive platform.

Anyonewishing to contact their ward CET co-ordinating committee should phone 59 1633 or 59 1433.

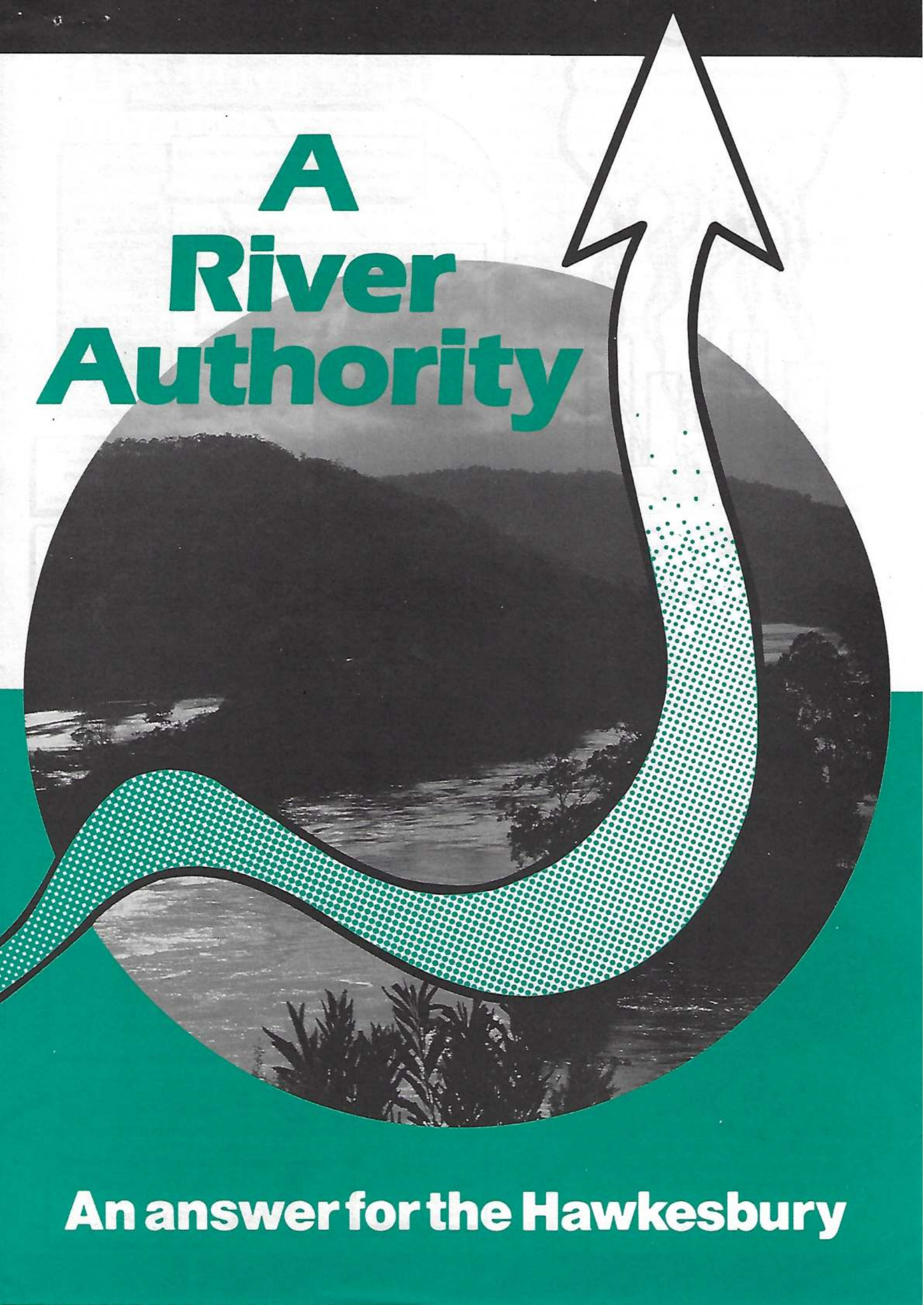
### GOOD NEWS FOR THE FORESTS

A Resource Assessment Commission draft report has blamed the decline in the timber industry on the practice of cutting down hardwood forests faster than they can regrow. The report also states that job loss has resulted for many reasons, and not from the dedication of forests as conservation areas. The main cause of the dwindling supply of hardwood sawlogs is prolonged overcutting - not the inclusion of timber producing areas in national parks or conservation reserves.

Welcomed by conservation groups, these findings will boost arguments challenging Resource Security Legislation which is heavily stacked towards perpetuation of industry's bad habits.

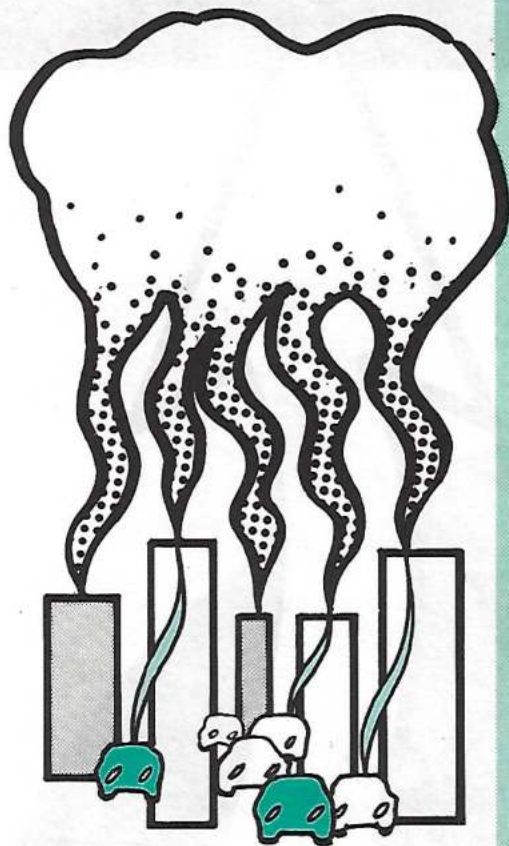


# **A River Authority**



**An answer for the Hawkesbury**





## Sydney or LOS ANGELES

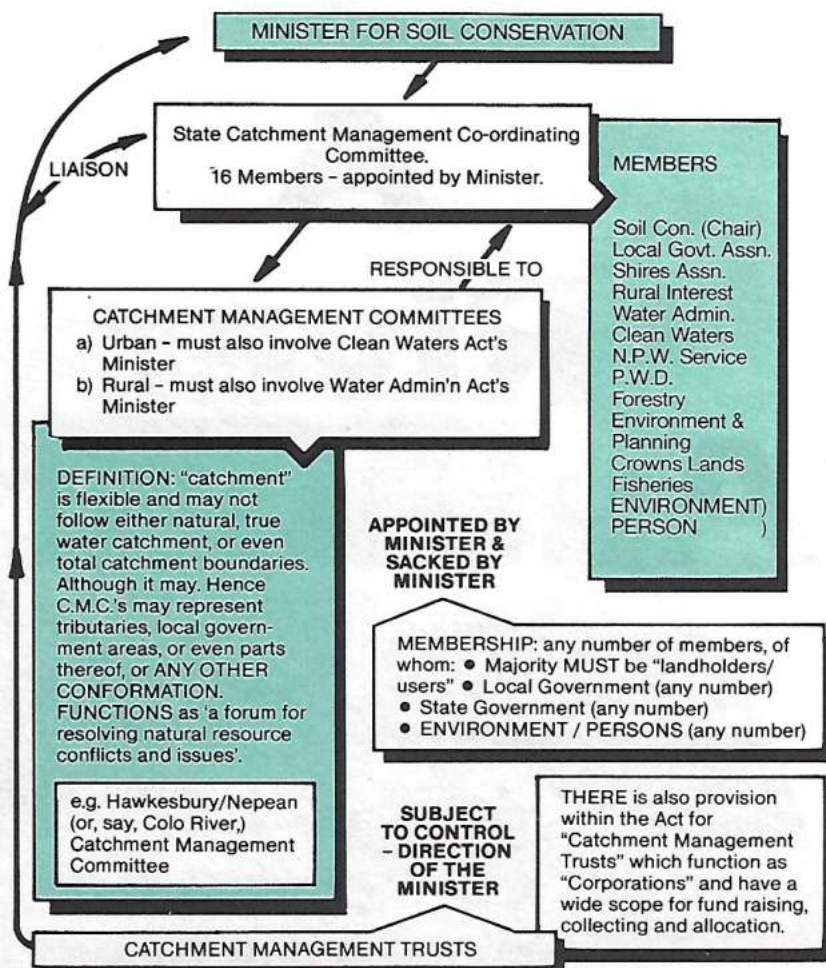
The health of the Nepean-Hawkesbury river affects everyone in Sydney. Yet we are creating another Los Angeles in terms of air pollution and our beautiful river is becoming a sewage and stormwater drain. Peoples' lungs and lives are at risk from breathing the air and swimming in the river system.

It is now a matter of urgency to find solutions to manage the resources of the river in an ecologically sustainable way.

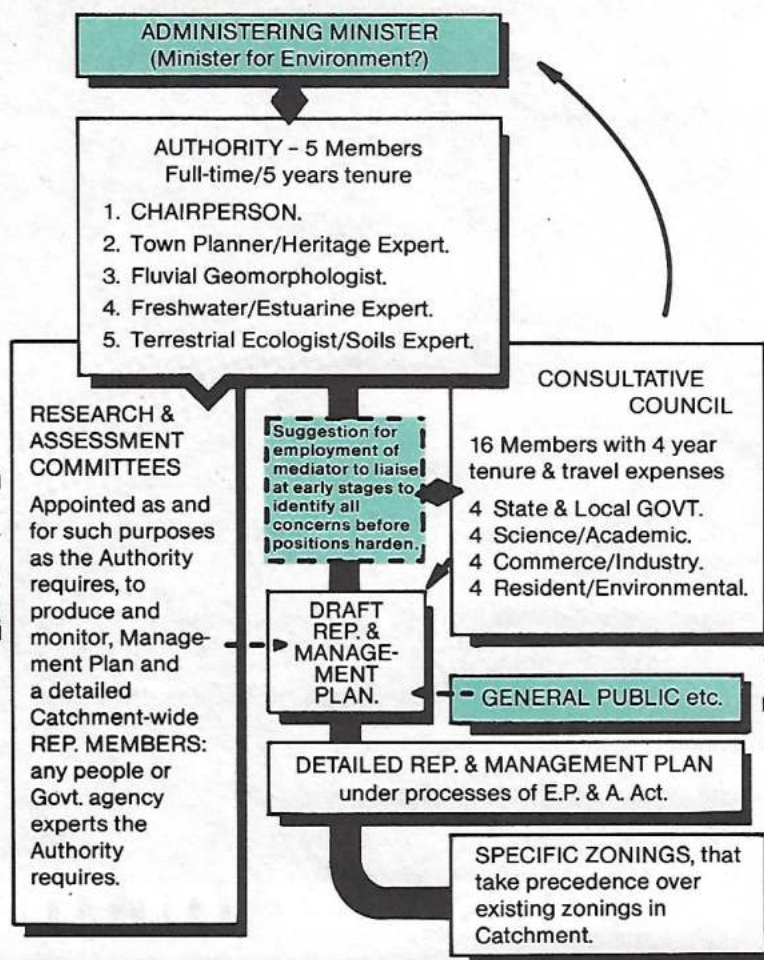
### CHANGE,

Coalition of Hawkesbury and Nepean Groups for the Environment, represents forty groups - 10,000 people in the catchment. These people and others are demanding responsible ecological management for the river.

## Current River Catchment Management



## Flow Chart of Rozzoli's Bill





# OVERGOVERNMENT UNDERPROTECTION

The 15 State Government departments and more than 13 Local Councils with an interest in the river often ignore the obvious. A river is united by its air and water cycle, and should be managed as a whole unit. These government bodies' actions ignore the need to assess the total impacts on air and water of existing and proposed development and activities on the catchment.

The State Government is deluding those that care about clean air and water by proposing Catchment Management Trusts under the Catchment Management Act for the Nepean-Hawkesbury catchment. Trusts can be dominated by commercial interests and are not required to produce an environmental management plan. Legislation is needed now to shift priorities from vested interests to co-ordinated ecological management. This is not for the benefit of a few, but for the benefit of every resident of Sydney.

## The Nepean-Hawkesbury River Authority Bill

Kevin Rozzoli (Member for Hawkesbury) has produced a proposal for a Hawkesbury River Authority Bill, in consultation with CHANGE. Its concept is supported by CHANGE. This Bill creates a River Authority that would:

- consist of full-time members appointed on the basis of their expertise;
- have the power to create research and assessment committees with members appointed by the Authority to carry out studies, collect and compile data and produce a plan to determine land use. It would create codes of practice against which development proposals can be measured;

- be told of potentially harmful development proposals and would determine the consistency of the proposals with its plan;
- have the right of appeal on certain land use decisions in the Land and Environment Court;
- establish a land data bank at a central location in the catchment from which information can be obtained by all interest groups;
- be able to prevent a local council or government from deciding on development if the Authority believes there is insufficient data to assess the environmental impacts, until further research is carried out;
- set up a community consultative council that gives advice to the minister.

### The River Authority Bill and More

This Bill deserves consideration. Suggestions to improve the Authority are:

- to establish a mediation council to liaise between affected interest groups at the early stages of a plan. The Authority could provide detailed information so that parties know what they are talking about;
- for the Authority to educate the community about the river system.

## We urgently need your support now.....

The State Government needs to be pressured to act. You can help by writing to the Premier and other decision makers, requesting a Nepean-Hawkesbury River Authority be established, at the following addresses:

Premier  
Premier's Office  
8th Floor, State Office Block  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY 2000.

Minister for Local  
Government and Planning  
37th Level  
Legal & General Building  
8-18 Bent Street  
SYDNEY 2000.

Minister for the  
Environment  
Level 20  
Westfield Tower  
100 William Street  
EAST SYDNEY 2011



For more information contact CHANGE at:

(02) 652 2565

(047) 39 5125

(02) 985 7707

(045) 77 4078

