



# Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc

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**Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow**

Monday 18 November, 2013

The Hon. Robyn Parker, MP  
Minister for the Environment  
Level 32, Governor Macquarie Tower  
1 Farrer Place  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister Parker,

## **Biodiversity Offsets Fund and BioBanking review**

I refer to our meeting of Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> July regarding the proposed new **Biodiversity Offsets Fund** announced 20 July 2013.

During this meeting you committed to establishment of a working group including environmental NGOs to assist in the development of the Fund scheme. As discussed during this meeting, a number of functions of the Fund are problematic and require further discussion including:

- Developing methods to ensure that suitable offsets can be procured prior to any approval. This is exacerbated by the large number of restricted threatened flora species (many being restricted to one or a few sites only)
- Provisions where funds are used to cover existing legislative requirements (e.g. Recovery Planning)
- The absence of whole-of-state vegetation mapping to inform decision making
- Mapping of existing offset areas (a program I am aware is presently under development)

Can you please provide an update regarding the establishment of such a working group and regarding the development of the Offset Fund program.

I also wish to raise the current **BioBanking legislative review**. This was instigated on 10 May 2012 as required, and closed to public consultation on 9 July 2012. It is now over 16 months since this review closed to public consultation, during which period substantial changes have been made to the BioBanking scheme. In this regard:

- Given that the subject of the review has substantially changed will you open a new round of public consultation to inform this review?

- If not, will the review consider BioBanking Methodology amendments, gazetted Statements and Agreements and operational schemes (e.g. Green Corridors) which have operated subsequent to the close of public consultation?
- When will public submissions be exhibited on the OEH website as previously advised?

The Society would be pleased to assist in any capacity in regard to the issues raised, and thank you for your time during this busy period.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "P. Ridgeway". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "P" and a long, trailing flourish at the end.

Peter Ridgeway  
President, Blue Mountains Conservation Society