



Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc

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Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow

MsTrish Doyle^[1]

Member for Blue Mountains

5 Raymond Rd,

Springwood NSW 2777

bluemountains@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Trish

Release of Trout in Blue Mountains Watercourse

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society (the Society) is a community-based volunteer organisation with 900 members. Our mission is to help protect, conserve and advocate for the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains. In fulfilling its mission the Society advocates protection of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (GBMWA).

The Society seeks your assistance in making representations on our behalf to the Minister for Primary Industries regarding the release of trout into Wentworth Falls Lake. The Blue Mountains Gazette reported¹ that 1000 trout had been released on January 12 2022 by the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

As you are aware, the lake is formed by a dam at the headwaters of Jamison Creek. This creek flows from the dam through the township of Wentworth Falls, then enters the national park before it flows over the famous waterfall (Wentworth Falls) on the southern escarpment. The release of exotic fish into this waterway that leads directly into the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area is alarming.

The Society first raised concerns about this practice in 2002 and we request that you raise these concerns again directly with the Minister. Specifically, we wish you to ask the minister:

- Does the Department have any evidence that these introduced fish do not travel beyond the dam wall? Members of our Society have observed mature trout being caught by people just below the wall and also at the base of Wentworth Falls itself.

¹ Blue Mountains Gazette Jan 16 2022

- Has the Minister considered the negative impacts on native aquatic life (fauna & flora) in the lake itself? Noting that:
 - The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment has identified predation by introduced fish, including trout, as a threat to frogs, including endangered species.
 - An Australian Nature Conservation Agency report² found hatchery raised trout carried pathogens which: “Have undoubtedly played a major role in the spread of these disease organisms...” The negative impacts of trout on native species in many countries, including Australia, has been well documented.
 - Recent research has shown that of the invasive species known to affect Australia’s 22 most at risk native fish species, invasive trout (*Salmo trutta*, *Oncorhynchus mykiss*) pose the greatest threat, followed by eastern gambusia (*Gambusia holbrooki*).³
- Has a risk assessment been undertaken of the release encompassing both the lake itself and the waterways downstream?
- What is being done to eradicate both the introduced red fins and brown trout, which are predatory fish in the World Heritage Area?

We look forward to the Minister’s responses on these questions. Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely



Madi Maclean
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² Australian Nature Conservation Agency 1996 “Impacts of introduced salmonids on Australian native fauna”

³³ Lintermans, M., et al 2020. *Big trouble for little fish: Identifying Australian freshwater fishes in imminent risk of extinction*. **Pacific Conservation Biology**. <https://doi.org/10.1071/PC19053>