

THE Bushwalker



Magazine of the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs (NSW) Inc
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A BRIEF HISTORY OF NEW SOUTH WALES' NATIVE FORESTS

This was going to be an update article on the Carr Government's proposed world class forest reserve system, which people would have possibly read with passing interest. However, faced with the task of getting readers of this to realise the magnitude of the current situation, it is clear that some history needs to be recounted.

DEFENDING THE OLD GROWTH CONCEPT

There have been some lay historians and even the odd dissident scientist, who push the view that the forest areas of New South Wales have developed as something of a 'weed like' growth since European occupation and that prior to that time, the landscape was typified by vast open grasslands and woodlands - a completely human managed environment. Hence, people argue, clear felling forests and ringbarking trees on grazing land is merely fixing things up to how they should be.

Most of us now hopefully know that in fact there are stands of trees in the remaining undisturbed refuges which predate European settlement in age, by at least a century, if not several. Botanists such as Benson and Redpath (1997) and Mills (1995) have examined the writings of early explorers, from which it is clear that dense forests of tall eucalypt and rainforests were to be found readily along the eastern escarpment and seaboard.

John Macris Conservation Officer



EXPANDING SETTLEMENT LAST CENTURY

As white settlement radiated out from Sydney, the demand was foremost for cleared land for pasture and cropping. Some of the prominent casualties of this push were the lowland and tableland rainforests. Between Lismore and the



Old Growth Forest

coast, the 750 square kilometre Big Scrub rainforest was cleared with such vigour and determination that there is only 0.13 of one percent remaining today. A similar situation took place on the Comboyne Plateau west of Taree, the Roberston Plateau above the Illawarra

and also the Illawarra rainforests near present day Wollongong. In Kevin Mills' excellent book on the rainforests of this area, he recounts historical references to people making the overnight journey from Sydney to Wollongong, to witness the unique jungle like vegetation of the coastal plain. Despite this aesthetic appeal, no one seriously pursued the idea of preserving any area of the rainforest as a park, so that the only remaining traces are now to be found along narrow strips of rock outcrop where clearing was impeded.

Tableland hardwood forests and the woodlands of the central west were also reduced by clearing to scattered remnants here and there.

The main country spared from early clearing was, not surprisingly, the steep and less accessible areas of the Eastern Escarpment and Great Dividing Range. While many of these rugged areas still felt the impact of cedar cutters, low levels of stock grazing and perhaps fossicking, they retained most of their natural assets through the turn of the century.

STATE FORESTS AND NATIONAL PARKS

These two entities, both lands of the Crown, began to be gazetted from late last century with the first State Forest being on the Richmond Range in the far north of the State and the first National Park on the Hacking River south of Sydney - now called Royal. What may be clear in view of the above history of agricultural and grazing predominance over the tablelands, western and coastal plains, is that other land uses such as forestry and conservation, were relegated

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THE BUSHWALKER

Contributions, letters to the editor, original cartoons and suggestions are welcome. They should be sent to the address below. Except for short notes or letters, all contributions should be accompanied with text file on three and a half inch floppy disk in IBM format or E-Mail.

Advertising rates are available on request. Ring John Clarke on (02) 9744-1916

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The Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs NSW Inc represents approximately 67 clubs with a total membership around 10,000 bushwalkers. Formed in 1932, the Confederation provides a united voice on conservation and other issues, runs training courses for members, and provides for the public a free wilderness search and rescue service. People interested in joining a bushwalking club are invited to write to the Secretary Bushwalkers NSW at the above address for information on clubs in their area. Or web site <http://www.bushwalking.org.au>

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Alex Tucker
Tracks & Access Officer

**AUSTRALIAN ALPS
WALKING TRACK
(AAWT)**

In the issue of August 1997, I made a brief mention of the AAWT and its Management Strategy Working Group. Chris Roper of the Canberra Bushwalking Club is Confederation's representative. This 650km track extends from Walhalla, about 40 km north of Moe to the Visitors Centre at Namadgi N.P in the ACT. It is an extension of the Victorian Alpine track established about 1970. The feasibility of the NSW & ACT sectors was publicised



The Grose Valley

in John Siseman's "Alpine Walking Track" first published in 1988, and revised in 1993

The National Parks Services in the three "states" and Environment Australia have formed the Australian Alps Liaison Committee (AALC). This committee decided not to publicise the traditional bushwalker's route along the Main Range in NSW because of concerns for the fragile alpine environment. They may also considered it necessary to

manage the risks to walkers in this high country by restricting the numbers. I have not heard of any intention to preventing this traverse, but it is possible that the AALC may follow Tasmania's lead in setting up a Permit system.

For the present, the official AAWT goes from Dead Horse Gap on the Alpine Way, to the summit of Kosciuszko, back to Charlottes Pass and down the Kosciuszko Road to Smiggin Holes and the Link Road to Guthega Power Station. The Schlink Pass firetrail is then followed to Whites River Hut, to rejoin the Main Range traverse described by Siseman.

It is, of course arguable that the risk of being injured by a car on the narrow and often slippery roads is much greater than being snowbound on the Range in summer. Further there are no views of the Range and few walkers enjoy any extended road bash. Our friends in the Victorian Federation have come up

with an alternative route leaving the Kosciuszko Road at Spencer's Creek and following that valley and the Snowy River to Guthega resort and Power Station. There is a least a faint footpad and this may be a relic of 50 years ago when the SMHEA was investigating a dam at, and power near, the summit road.

If you think this alternative is preferable to the long road bash, please suggest to your club committee that

ALONG THE TRACK

letters be written urging the adoption of Spencers Creek as, at least, an official alternative

The letters should be addressed to The Regional Manager

National Parks and Wildlife Service
Kosciuszko Region.

Kosciuszko Road
JINDABYNE 2627
and

The Convenor AAWT Strategy
Working group
c/o ACT Parks and Conservation
Service

Namadgi National Park
CANBERRA ACT 2600

I wish to suggest a further option. On any extended walk I think it is a good idea to have a lay day or a lazy day. You should certainly climb Kosci from Dead Horse gap, but how about coming down to the fleshpots of Thredbo village by the Crackenback chairlift. There is a YHA hostel there as well, If you need to replenish your food stock there should be a daily bus to Jindabyne and Paddy Pallin's. Another bus back to Bullock Flat and the Ski Tube to Blue Cow and you have eliminated the road bash. I believe that a commercially viable ski tube benefits conservation of the National Park by, at least, reducing vehicle emissions and road kills. The catch is that the service is infrequent in summer, probably only at weekends and school holidays. From Blue Cow there is a clear track to the Guthega road. Let me have some robust feed back on this.

GREAT EASTERN CENTENNIAL WALKING TRACK (GECWT)

This was also mentioned in the August 97 issue. It is the brainchild of the Northern Rivers Economic Development Organisation, but representatives of Confederation, Colong Foundation and the ACF have attended workshops and are monitoring the emphasis placed on Ecologically Sustainable Development by the current Steering Committee. The Queensland Federation

Continued on page 6

THE EDEN FOREST AGREEMENT - HECTARES AND CUBIC METRES



By John Macris Conservation Officer

Scientific data showed an addition of 82 000 hectares would adequately protect most of the outlined values, however the economic constraint was a requirement for a minimum of 20 000 cubic metres per annum of sawlogs. The two figures were not compatible, so stakeholders developed options which compromised between forest protection and timber supply.

The State Government has just announced its position on the Eden forestry region, as to which areas are protected and which will be scheduled for logging.

minimum resource supplies. The joint option of the NP&WS and State Forests proposed 42 700 ha of additions. The option of the timber industry and union proposed.

33 600 ha of additions, very little of it containing the cathedral old growth trees for which the region is revered.

OUTCOME

The announcement is for 37 000 ha of reserve additions and 25 000 cubic metres of timber per annum - poorer protection than either the conservation or the NPWS/State Forests options by several thousand hectares. What this means on the ground is that compromises to protection have been made both in the coastal forests and the escarpment. Key areas left out of the new reserves are Mt Imlay west, Ben Boyd additions near Eden and the western parts of Coolangubra/Cathcart, where Brown Barrel trees often exceed 4 metres in girth and 400-500 years in age.

Important gains include Tantawangolo east (protecting a link through to the coast), east Coolangubra and our last habitat area for the Long footed Potoroo, around the Monaro Highway. The other aspect worthy of our support is the expansion of employment in the plantation softwood sector at Bombala.

Confederation welcomes these important new reserves, but we cannot judge this outcome as a final realisation of the bold forest reforms foreshadowed in 1995. The appetite for Woodchipping continues to be an unresolved problem for this area, hence the conflict in the south east remains.



D'Entrecasteaux National Park - Photo courtesy Websters Publishing

Early this year, public submissions were sought on proposed options for what will be a 20 year harvesting agreement.

The conservationists' compromise option, supported by 80% of submissions, proposed 57 000 ha added to the reserve system while meeting

WHAT THE STATE GOVT PROMISED THE EDEN TIMBER INDUSTRY!!

THE CASTLE

A FAIR AND SECURE OUTCOME FOR THE EDEN TIMBER INDUSTRY

The NSW Government today guaranteed a long-term and secure future for the timber industry on the South Coast, making history with its Eden Forest Agreement, NSW Minister for Forestry Kim Yeadon said today.

"This is the first time in NSW the Government has offered such a guarantee to people working in the timber industry," Mr Yeadon said.

"Not only does the agreement guarantee timber supply for the next 20 years but it establishes two major new timber operations in the region," he said.

Central to the industry package is a new recovery mill at Eden supported by \$6 million State Government funding and a new softwood export operation at Bombala. Each will provide an economic boost and future direction for the South Coast timber industry.

The industry package, which is part of the Eden agreement, includes jobs growth of up to 49 new positions during the next two years.

"The NSW Government has delivered a fair and balanced outcome in forestry," Mr Yeadon said.

"One which supports a viable long-term timber industry and creates a world class reserve system.

"People in the timber industry want security and certainty for their businesses and jobs. The Government's decision delivers that goal. The economic package as part of the Eden forest agreement is proof of this.

"This agreement sets a path for growth which will see new jobs created and a reinvigorated industry. It will provide long-term certainty to the families and communities on the Far South Coast.

The forestry industry jobs package includes:

*Press release from
Kim Yeadon
Minister for Information
Technology
Minister for Forestry
Minister for Ports
Minister for Western Sydney
October 28th 1998*

- A new recovery mill at Eden which will employ 44 timber workers;

- 30 new positions to export softwood pulplogs from the Bombala plantations; and

- 19 new jobs in expanded forest improvement and inventory operations in the Eden Management Area.

The economic package is underpinned by security of timber supply during the next 20 years. This includes a minimum of 25,000m³ annual quota of quality logs for the first five years and a minimum of 24,000 m³ per annum for the remaining 15 years. This will be supplemented by up to 23,000 m³ per annum of salvage logs.

About 13 miles west of Milton on the south coast of N.S.W. is a huge sandstone feature Known as THE CASTLE, It dominates the Clyde-Budawang National Park Proposal, and is a vertical-sided island of rock, some half mile wide. Sheer above the ridges Of Dry Creek, it's altitude is about 2,000 feet. All enquiries to date, both bushwalkers and local inhabitants, have failed to find a record of anyone who has scaled it, although several attempts have been made by experts with elaborate equipment. *The Bushwalker 1945*

ROGAINES 1998-99 1998

5 Dec 3hr Xmas Social Metrogaine, Como

1999

28 Feb 6hr Metrogaine, Campbelltown

27/28 Mar 12/24hr

29 Jun 6hr Paddy Pallin

28/29 Aug 12/24hr NSW Championships

25 Sep 12hr Lake Macquarie

THE TAPESTRY

At dawn of time the weaver cast
A delicate thread the tapestry made
Upon a loom so lavish and vast
The pattern of life, forever laid.

How lovely the weave, with wisdom imbued
How rich the variety, how grand the design!
A precious infinity of life so ensured
Each one unique, according to kind.

So many worlds through time did unfold
Each one a heritage for those to come later;
Until the dirty animal upset the mould
And walked on Earth, to become a hater.

Those worlds, now hidden, are used up for greed
To foul up the air and sully the sea.
No more is the tapestry just used for need
Nothing is sacred, neither you nor me.

And so the great Earth, choked up in its grief
Struggles on to repair the torn thread, at a cost.
So must we, in return, all share one belief:
That love for the tapestry will undo what is lost.

- Jim Wallace.

From page 3

has a representative on the committee.

My latest news is that Local Government Councils from Tweed Heads to Taree have assessed existing tracks and are costing the missing links. A consultant from Southern Cross University is doing a detailed feasibility study.

A member of the Queensland Federation has attended a meeting of the Central Eastern Rainforests of Australia (CERRA) which is a joint activity of the NSW & Queensland National Parks Service, It may be that it was CERRA that declined to allow the GECWT to traverse the caldera from Mt Warning through Lamington N.P. to Mt Mistake near Toowoomba. Again the reason would seem to be to limit the damage to the environment if the walker usage is greatly increased. I support this decision, although I expect that it will be attributed to bushwalker elitism rather than concerns for the environment. CERRA has received Federation funding for a feasibility study of a proposed rainforest track. If the plan goes ahead, I am told it will preclude any other long distance track through rainforest National Parks.

There is to be a full day meeting at Tweed Heads on Monday November 23rd,

to discuss each section.

BONNUM PIC

The owner of the private access to this popular walk in Nattai N.P is still having trouble with bushwalkers and others arriving without first seeking his approval. If you are planning a visit and your club's Walks Convenor doesn't know how to contact the owner may I suggest he ring me (Phone & Fax(02)9451-4028.

The Catholic Bushwalkers Club has asked me to investigate alternative access through other private land shown on the HILL TOP 1:25000 topographic map. I had hoped to be able to report some progress but that will have to wait until November at least.

CARLONS FARM

The NPWS has bought some of the land occupied by the Carlon family in Megalong Valley with funds from the Dunphy Foundation. If you wish to mark up your copy of the Jenolan 1:25000 map, the old house "Green Gully" on Portion 45 and adjoining portions 93, & 109 owned by Carlons and Portion 44 by Tofler. I understand that Mrs Carlon is building a new house about 3 km up

the Valley. She will remain at the old home and will continue to collect parking fees until the NPWS takes up occupancy.

Access to Ironpot and Ironmonger is still through private land which may be owned by Carlons.

BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS

NPWS has published a new edition of this brochure in full colour, at a RRP of \$ 2.00. It seems to be part of a strategy to provide alternative destinations to the Blue Mountains. If the Mountains are hidden in mists, climbers will often find Evans Crown Nature Reserve clear. Walkers are required to contact NPWS Bathurst for permission to enter Copperhanna N.R. near Trunkey, the other seven nature reserves are for the quiet study of nature (Surprise!) by those who can make a good case for their visit. The National Parks, Kanangra Boyd, Goobang and Weddin Mountains are available to walkers but access to Nangar requires permission from owners of the surrounding private land, Enquiries to NPWS at Forbes. Phone 068 514 429. Week days.

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BUSHWALKERS WILDERNESS RESCUE NEWS

This month (October) is always a strong month for training with two regular activities. Last weekend (18th/19th) was our advanced training and was held on Newnes Plateau. This was attended by an adequate number for the type of training I am evolving. I am looking to making a series of introductory and advanced modules that can be mixed and matched to suit that will also make the standard more uniform. This practice emphasised personnel mobility skills and search team skills. Despite the heat a mini search was run by non Committee walkers and a small section of canyon found.

The other usual activity each October is the First Aid course next weekend. There are a small number of places available for those who can promptly contact me on 9622 0049 (h). This course will include a section emphasising self reliance and Improvisation to solve bushwalking trip emergencies. The next programmed course will be the last weekend of May, 1999 for those that miss next weekend

In November members of our Rock Rescue Squad will participate in an ALVRI Regional Exercise with Central Coast VRG as a preparation for reaccreditation as V3 Operators in early 1999.

During the morning of Monday (5th) of the long weekend a member from the Newcastle Ramblers Bushwalking Club broke their ankle in the Gloucester Tops region. The club handled the incident well in raising the alarm. Difficult weather and terrain plus poorly equipped (outside) rescuers meant that the eventual rescue took some time and that some rescuers ended up in hospital with hypothermia. A similar incident in the Budawang a few years ago prompted an improvement in the personal equipment of local volunteer rescuers.

FIRST AID TRAINING

By the time you read this you will have missed the Senior First Aid course run by Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue (BWR) on 24th / 25th October, 1998. Two days and an evening for the exam is all the time it takes to gain this invaluable set of skills. Skills such as CPR and EAR

Keith Maxwell Director Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue

where your quick action can be life saving to dealing with shock, sprains and broken bones. The Confederation Insurance statistics prove that fatalities are rare in bushwalking but lesser injuries are common enough so that First Aid training will (and has) improve the chances of survival from bush accidents often with reduced long term injuries. Where possible, our Instructor tries to provide guidance on improvised techniques using typical bushwalking gear.

Now if you have 10 or more interested walkers in your club a First Aid course can be arranged or you could cool your heels until the last weekend of May, 1999.

Contact me, Keith Maxwell on 9622 0049 (home) to arrange your place. The course cost is discounted for bushwalkers so it has never been easier to get good First Aid training.

SEARCH & RESCUE TRAINING WEEKEND

The next Search and Rescue Training Weekend will be held on March 20th / 21st, 1999, at a location to be confirmed shortly. Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue (BWR), the S & R Section of the Confederation, will be giving instruction on a wide range of introductory rescue skills and bush safety. These weekends are a great chance to meet and socialise with fellow bushwalkers. Last March BWR conducted very similar training that was enjoyed by all present. A wide range of activities, many hands on, will cover topics as diverse as GPS Receivers, night vision, selfrescue, helicopters and crime scenes. So for an enjoyable weekend where you will learn new bushwalking skills in a friendly atmosphere there is only one place to be. Notices will be sent to your Club S & R Contacts soon.

BUSHWALKERS WILDERNESS RESCUE

ANNUAL CALENDAR

This Calendar aims to show the pattern of activities of Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue (BWR) for next year. Please program these dates on your Club Walks Programme. The location will always be given out in pre event publicity.

GENERAL TRAINING - TWO WEEKS BEFORE EASTER

March 20th & 21st, 1999. (Easter will be April 2nd - 5th, 1999.) General Search and Rescue Training also emphasising Bush Safety, First Aid and Wilderness Self Rescue.

FIRST AID -

LAST WEEKEND OF MAY

May 29th & 30th, 1999. St. John Senior First Aid Certificate training at a discount rate for bushwalkers. 8 hours training each day with evening exam one week later. Extra discount for walkers on our Call-Out Lists.

NAVSHIELD - FIRST WEEKEND OF JULY

July 3rd & 4th, 1999. The NSW Emergency Services Navigation Shield. A different location each year. A great way to revise or learn navigation in a friendly atmosphere. Easy and hard checkpoints. Make it as hard or as easy as you like in the one or two day event.

ADVANCED TRAINING - THIRD WEEKEND OF OCTOBER

October 16th & 17th, 1999. Advanced Search & Rescue Training including canyon/cliff rescue. Attendance at a previous S & R Training Weekend a prerequisite.

FIRST AID - LAST WEEKEND OF OCTOBER

October 30th & 31st, 1999. A second chance to do an accredited St. John Senior First Aid Certificate at a discount rate. To get on our Call-Out List you need to have attended one of any of our training weekends in the last 18 months.

FURTHER DETAILS

Phone Keith Maxwell (02) 9622 0049 (h)

John TONITTO (02) 9789 2527 (w)

from page 1

seen the most fertile and accessible land go to agriculture also governed that generally the most rugged or lowest fertility areas could be considered for reservation in National Parks, while the accessible foothills and undulating ridges were claimed for forestry. Occasional exceptions to this were achieved for specific reasons, like the reservation of Kosciuszko on the argument of protecting the catchments of the Snowy Scheme.

WOODCHIPPING AND PLANTATION TIMBER

Over the last few decades, thousands of hectares of plantation Radiata pine forests have been established in State Forests, particularly on the granite country of the southern tablelands. Unfortunately the establishment of many of these involved clearing the native vegetation - readers may remember the campaign against a pine plantation on the Boyd Plateau in the early 1970s. However, this resource will become of growing importance in years to come as described later.

In the 1960s Harris-daishowa established a woodchip mill at Twofold Bay on the far south coast. The defence of woodchipping aired in the media, is that it merely handles the residual unmillable timber which logging produces. However, in reality the supply of timber for chipping becomes the driving force, sending forestry operations into remote areas which would not be economical to log on the basis of their sawlog yields. A wilderness area on the Wallagaraugh River was lost to the woodchip industry in its first decade of operation.

THE RAINFOREST CAMPAIGN

In the late 1970s the rainforests of northern NSW were the centre of great dispute between conservationists and loggers. Forest blockades received national media coverage. Conservation-

ists also took to the courts to challenge the adequacy of the Forestry Commission's environmental impact statements on new roading and logging. The campaigns were successful in convincing the State Government of the day to cease rainforest logging and add around 150 000 hectares to the reserve system. These areas have since been listed as a World Heritage site and are often focal points of nature based tourism in northern NSW. The photograph below shows what might have been for these areas had rainforest logging continued. The location is in the Fenwicks Creek catchment, adjacent to World Heritage listed Werrikimbe



National Park. This former rainforest was heavily logged for coachwood just prior to the rainforest decision, then subjected to a fire which destroyed the remaining rainforest species. Sixteen years later there has been no regeneration of the area other than the bladed grass you see in picture.

Two problems with the outcome on rainforests were firstly that the remarkable pinkwood cool temperate rainforests of the south of the State were totally ignored and remain mostly unprotected, and secondly that the definition of rainforest used by the Forestry Commission did not include areas with eucalypt trees growing as part of the overstorey. This has proved to be an escape clause allowing logging of places which from most people's perspective are clearly rainforest.

THE CAR PARK

Now in the present day we are

trying to redress the past imbalances of National Parks being relegated to the steepest least productive areas and protect some of the fertile eucalypt forests which also happen to be habitat hotspots for threatened fauna. CAR stands for **Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative**. This is the aim of the proposed reserve system as outlined in the National Forest Policy Statement which all States and the Commonwealth signed in 1992 (later for Tasmania). The idea is that a scientific assessment and resource audit take place for each major forestry region. It is then determined which areas are required to meet the

minimum reserve criteria and timber supply targets. Computers generate lines on a map and accompanying figures, then a decision is made by Government which creates the reserves and gives an undertaking on timber supply to the industry. At that point it's all settled for the next

20 years.

Sounds wonderful doesn't it? The only problem is, in New South Wales after three years of exhaustive assessments and options development, the Government is poised to make a decision based on political risk assessment rather than the findings of the scientific work. In the Eden area for example, the scientific criteria suggested that over 80 000 hectares needed to be added to the reserve system, while the Government had committed to only 30 000. Conservationists developed a compromise option which would deliver the guaranteed minimum volume of timber to the industry and add 56 000 hectares. We await the long overdue decision on this area.

ONCE IN A GENERATION OPPORTUNITY

The information coming in from the north-east region negotiations is that

major extensions should be made to the reserve system to adequately protect the agreed targets on old growth, diversity of forest types, critical habitat and wilderness. At the same time the department - State Forests of NSW have had to revise

downwards their estimates of the amount of timber resource remaining. In what must amount to an admission of years of over-exploitation of your public forests, the forestry lobby now

required to desist from logging.

The accompanying pictures show just one of the icon areas sought for protection. The proposed Mummel Gulf National Park on the southern edge of the New England Tableland, features tall



old growth forests, rainforest, threatened marsupial habitat and wild rivers. As the pictures show, there is encroaching logging around the edges of the area but the majority has been under moratorium for the last 3 years. A strong conservation decision is needed to make this area a new addition to our park system. The pictures really project the two possible futures, for this area and others, better than I could describe in words.

CONCLUSION

It is surely time for a move into a plantation orientated timber industry. Initially, the Radiata resource should be further utilised and over time native forest plantations established, particularly over cleared land. 120 million dollars has been allocated by Government for this industry transition, but progress has not been very visible. The history given of the disappearance of areas like the Big Scrub and its numerous cousins, gives a small amount of context to the argument for creating a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system in view of what has been lost. The choice for the Government is harder this time because it is not just the steep unloggable areas up for reservation. None the less the election platform did, from memory, make some quite bold commitments on forests. The decisions may have even taken place by the time this is published, in which case this article will need a new chapter. The crystal ball is a blur, so I will just conclude that if you are ever on the far south coast, take a look at the Davidson Whaling Station Historic Site. Consider what a hard pill to swallow it would have been, to phase out the exploitation of that natural resource for the sake of a conservation ethic. But it did happen.

suggests that sufficient supplies can only be met by very harsh logging practices which amount to 90% canopy reduction in each logging compartment over a harvest period of 4 years (old growth trees are often hundreds of years old). The proposed timber supply agreements would also exempt loggers from pollution, soil conservation and threatened species legislation, meaning streamside areas and critical habitat could be logged and if, for example another Wollemi Pine type discovery was made in a harvesting area, the industry would no longer be

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For a brochure write to Glenn and Robyn
"Tibuc" Coonabarabran NSW 2357

Ph/Fax 02 6842 1740

TRANSPORTATION FOR BUSHWALKERS *(Advertisorial)*

Robert Sloss lived at Cole Vale, near Mittagong. After exploring the adjacent Nattai Valley he realised that it would be feasible to create a walking route following the river down to Beloon Pass and over it into Yerranderie, thus creating a Katoomba to Mittagong walk.

The marking, clearing and mapping of what became a private Bi-centennial project took 4 years to complete and was celebrated by over 200 enthusiastic bushwalkers. (Later Peter Treseder ran the 140km in 14 hours). Unexpected demands for maps and guide notes resulted in Robert publishing a guidebook titled the "Ensign Barralliet Walk". This publication format proved popular and soon requests were made for guides on other areas Robert had walked in. This has led to Robert's publishing a series of nine guide books,

by Robert Sloss of NSW
Wilderness Transit



Robert combines mountain biking and bushwalking to cover the extra distances when researching for his guidebooks.

The most infuriating problem Robert found with walking in NSW was transportation. Leaving his vehicle at the track heads sometimes resulted in expensive damage by vandalism on several occasions (other passengers don't believe in sharing this cost.).

When Robert travelled to Tasmania to walk the Overland Track he found a transport system that enabled walkers to travel easily to tracks and this gave him the idea of marketing a similar bus service in NSW.

Robert's NSW Wilderness Transit Service is now operating from Sydney and has developed a strategy to provide services to bushwalking tracks, either by regular services or by charter for small groups. Robert has found, that the Kanangra Walls area is a popular destination, however he is starting to find that the Budawangs and the Southern Highlands are becoming more popular to walkers who are looking for an alternative to the well known tracks in the Blue Mountains.

Robert now lives at Thirlmere, where he has expanded his interest in the environment movement as a Director on the David G Stead Memorial Wildlife Research Foundation, the first environment organisation formed in Australia.

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The winning table from "Scripture Union Bushwalkers"



Presentation of plaque to President of Scripture Union Bushwalkers



A couple enjoying themselves at the Bushwalkers bushdance



The Judge being "bribed"

THE CASE FOR WILDERNESS

WILDERNESS BROADSHEET (INSERT)

Over sixty years ago the National Parks and Primitive Areas Council published the first wilderness broadsheet. The enclosed broadsheet crystallises the Colong Foundation's thirty years of experience on managing and protecting wild places. It also explains how the birth wilderness concept was linked to the early development of bush walking in this country. Since then, wilderness has inspired many successful conservation campaigns in South West Tasmania, the Blue Mountains and in native forests on the eastern seaboard.

Wilderness protection is perhaps becoming a victim of its success as the word is so much a part of everyday usage it is in danger of losing its meaning.

Media commentators are forever suggesting that politicians need to spend more time in the wilderness. Then there are wilderness lodges that capitalise of the value of pristine landscapes to attract tourists and even vehicles designed for the urban wilderness. On top of this confusion, critics claim that wilderness is an out moded concept that ignores modern day realities.

On the plus side, popularity of the term helps to ensure that most people accept wilderness as an essential part of the landscape. But if wilderness is to endure the hype and stop the damage it is necessary to clarify just exactly what it means.

The broadsheet is an up to date account of the values and progress of wilderness protection, and puts the current debates on vehicle access management into context.

The broadsheet is essential reading for bushwalkers who enjoy our rapidly diminishing wild places. It is imperative to save what is left and to do that, the arguments currently in circulation should be understood. The conservation gains of the last two decades could be quickly eroded by the winds of political change unless the enduring values of wilderness are defended by its principal supporters.

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The Bushwalker 12

BUSHWALKING MILESTONES 1997 & 1998

1997

- Blue Gum Forest 65 years
- “Bushwalker” Magazine 60 years
- Sydney Bush Walkers 70 years
- Springwood Bushwalking Club 30 years
- Catholic Bushwalking Club Magazine “The Waysider” 50 years
- National Parks Association 40 years

1998

- Colong Foundation for Wilderness 30 years
- Wilderness Rescue 60 years
- Navigation Shield Rogaine event 10 years
- Catholic Bushwalking Club 55 years
- Bushwalker’s plaque Splendour Rock 50 years
- Newcastle Bushwalking Club 40 years
- Any club affiliated with Confederation is welcome to write in and notify us of any 5 or 10 year celebration occurring in 1998.
- Thais Turner Bankstown Bushwalking and Catholic Bushwalking Clubs.

MORE RECORDS FOR

PETER TRESEDER

THE FIRST RUN OF THE TOPS TO MYALL HERITAGE TRAIL

In July 1998, Peter completed the first run of the trail.

The trail starts at Barrington House NSW and proceeds via Barrington Tops, Gloucester Tops, state forests of Chichester, Avon, Craven, Myall River, Wang Wauk and Bulahdelah down to Myall Lakes National Park to Hawks Nest NSW, which is on the northern entrance to Port Stephens. The trail is 230kms long and was completed in 30hrs 26mins. All equipment was carried and the route included a swim across Myall Lake at Bomba point.

THE FIRST UNSUPPORTED CROSSING OF THE STURT STONY DESERT

In July 1998, Peter completed the first unsupported crossing of the Sturt Stony Desert (Queensland and South Australia). Starting near Mooraberree, at the northern edge of the desert, he completed the 170 kilometre crossing to Cordillo Downs, at the southern side of the desert, in 22 hours 5 mins. Most of the crossing was through trackless desert and Peter carried all his food and water requirements in a pack.

MODERN TIMES

It took 38 years for 50 million people to tune into the radio. The PC took 16 years to reach 50 million users
The TV took 13 years to reach 50 million viewers
Once the Internet was opened to the general public, it took only 4 years to reach 50 million people.



**LETTERS TO
EDITOR**

Margaret Richardson
North Bondi NSW
27th September 1998

Dear Editor

For the past year - the Forest Campaign Group (FCG) of the Australian Conservation Foundation have been organising weekend walks into threatened forest areas.

The FCG would like to invite Uni. students to join us once again this spring in visiting these unique and vulnerable areas.

The FCG provides dinner and breakfast in return for a small donation, which goes towards covering

- a) costs and
- b) The campaign.

Anyone interested please contact The Australian Conservation Foundation on 9247 4285 to get your name on the walks list.

ALSO FROM MARGARET

I am writing to you regarding my concern for a very important issue-litter.

This litter seems to be at campsites which would suggest it is the work of overnight walkers and perhaps inexperi-

enced walkers.

On a recent overnight walk to Monolith Valley, I was horrified to find by my tent, a bin liner which contained unopened and opened tins of food, glass jars, empty plastic containers and plastic bags. The rest of the camping area had litter scattered throughout. My horror was magnified when I also came across several unburied and decaying faeces.

Litter is a hazard to wildlife as animals may ingest or suffocate on plastic bags, or cut themselves on opened tins. Plastic and aluminum do not biodegrade, but sits there looking more and more unsightly with each passing year. Unburied faeces wash into waterways causing gardia and bacteria to grow making the water quite undrinkable.

I'm sure I'm not the only bushwalker whose pack often leaves the bush heavy with other people's litter.

It seems to me that certain people (and it is only a few) need to learn to respect and take care of our beautiful bush in a responsible manner of simply stay away.

Yours sincerely,
Margaret Richardson

South Coast Register, dated
Wednesday, August 18th, 1998:

**“ NEW DAMS STILL
NEEDED?”**

Despite the record breaking rainfall this month, Shoalhaven City Council water headworks' co-ordinator Mark Jennings says council is currently considering building another dam in the region or increasing the capacity of Danjera dam by another 50 per cent.

‘We had a one in 100 year drought recently which caused a lot of problems,’ he said.....”

It has not been revealed how much this would raise the Top water Level of Danjera dam but it would certainly:

* flood at least two historic mining sites in the Ettrema Wilderness, adjacent to the dam.

* flood the 5 stamp battery (one of only two remaining in the Shoalhaven City LGA


* may flood other sites dependant on the resultant top water level.

Due to the economic and environmental factors involved in the construction of a new dam, it would appear that this may be a reality.

John Berry

St John

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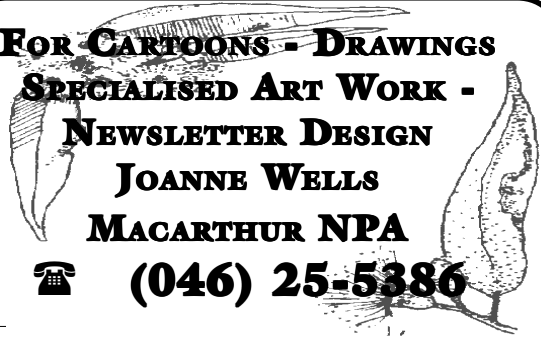
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**ESCALADE 99 - APRIL 16, 17 & 18
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Escalade is a three day celebration of the world of mountain adventure. The festival takes place every two years and brings together the best Australian and international guest speakers, films, slide shows, exhibitions and the country's biggest and most respected sport climbing competition.

Johnny Dawes, the legendary "Stone Monkey" from the UK, and Australian Greg Child who is now a resident of the USA head the programme of guest speakers for Escalade 99 to be held in the Blue Mountains village of Mount Victoria. Steve Schneider from the USA will be back to host the sport climbing competitions and there will be the usual selection of quality climbing and adventure films including the Australian premiere of Hard Grit, a new film about recent Gritstone exploits from England.

An historical lecture will focus on the exploits of Freda Du Faur, an accomplished Australian mountaineer who chalked up many firsts in the New Zealand Alps in the early 1900s including the first Grand Traverse of Mount Cook, climbing unchaperoned with male companions, much to the horror of society at the time!

The latest outdoor equipment will be on display and the photo exhibition promises to be the best yet. For more information contact the festival office :

Escalade 99. 10 Apex Avenue, Mount Victoria, NSW 2786
Phone (02) 4787 1480, fax (02) 4787 1442, email - trihey@pnc.com.au or visit the web site - www.escalade.com.au

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