

Bushwalking NSW

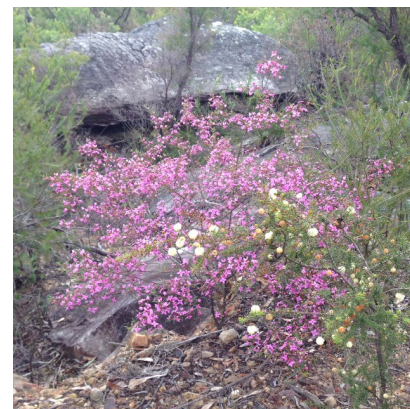
Newsletter

Edition 21; July, 2015

Hi everyone,
I hope you've all been getting in some brisk walks to warm you up and enjoying the flowers or even visited the snow, it is looking good down there!

Thank you all who have already sent in your annual fees. We are processing them while also preparing for our AGM.

Caro Ryan has kindly agreed to provide our key note speech which I'm very much looking forward to. We will warm up the evening with a fun socialising game so make sure you are there by 7pm and don't miss out!



A huge thank you to our President, Mitchell Isaacs, for his outstanding work in compiling the paperwork for the business end of the AGM. His efforts will allow us to move efficiently through the agenda on the night. We welcome your early feedback at on the special motions just circulated to all clubs - just email: admin@bushwalkingnsw.org.au and we can compile your input for efficient presentation on the night.

You will also see that we are developing the Bushwalking NSW Policy on development in National Parks. Send a blank email to bnsw-dnpp-subscribe@yahoogroups.com to join the discussion with others interested in contributing to this policy.

See you at the AGM!

Kirsten Mayer, Executive Officer, Bushwalking NSW, email admin@bushwalkingnsw.org.au

RSVP for the AGM now:

Bushwalking NSW Annual General Meeting
7pm Tuesday, 18th August, 2015
Ashfield RSL Club, 374 Liverpool Rd, Ashfield
RSVP to admin@bushwalkingnsw.org.au

Join us at 7pm for a chance to meet and mingle, have some nibbles and a drink.

The meeting commences at 7.30. Don't forget it is your club's chance to vote so be sure your delegates can attend.

Ashfield RSL Club, is in Liverpool Road, corner of Frederick Street. Just 5 minutes' walk from Ashfield Railway Station. Sydney Buses 418, 462, 464, 466, 480 & 483 stop right outside the Club. There is also plenty of off-street parking.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Presidents Report

Who's been out in the bush this month? It's been cold, but when not snowing there have been some gloriously clear, crisp, sunny days, just perfect for bushwalking. Why not share your walking stories with us? You could share a link on our facebook page, send us some photos and a short report for the Bushwalker magazine, or maybe you'd prefer to tweet us a photo? We'd love to hear about it however you want to tell us!



As Kirsten settles in well to her new role with Bushwalking NSW, we're also preparing for our AGM on 18th August. We've got a great guest speaker, Caro Ryan (check out her website at lotsafreshair.com), and we'll also be discussing a new policy on development in National Parks - very important for all of us. If you've ever considered getting more involved in supporting bushwalkers at a state level, you could consider putting your hand up to be on the committee. New blood is always welcome, and if you're not sure send Kirsten or myself an email to find out more.

Finally from me this month, rug up and get walking, but remember, while it's cold, it has also been very windy. Make sure your campfires are completely out before leaving it unattended, as the wind can spread a fire very quickly. The National Parks & Wildlife Service recently dealt with multiple grassfires that burnt several hectares around Blowering Reserve, after four separate fires left attended escaped. Don't let that be your fire!

Yours in walking

Mitchell Isaacs, President, Bushwalking NSW, email contact via admin@bushwalkingnsw.org.au

Tracks and Access Issues - We're here to help!

Mapping Websites for Bushwalkers - Part 2

This month topo.otto.be is our feature mapping website. From what I can find out, it was created by a bushwalker, for bushwalkers in NSW. It's design is quite simple, but has some features that make it a very useful resource for planning trips, and sharing routes with others.

The website makes use of mapping software produced by Google to display LPI topographic maps. These maps are the same as the paper ones you can buy from shops, and are in a raster format. This raster format, as opposed to a vector format (what things like google maps uses) means that the information displayed on the map won't change (or declutter) as you zoom in or out. Currently it only covers a portion of the state (north past Newcastle, south down to Jervis Bay and west past Lithgow) but it is to be expanded in the future.



Grid References

The first great feature I'll talk about is the ability to handle grid references. As you zoom around and explore the map, at every click your location is displayed in the bottom right hand corner. Provided is both the name of

the topographic map sheet, and the six figure MGA grid reference. No longer do you need to try and break those squares mentally up into tenths, or pull out a roma to get an accurate grid reference!



Grid reference for Mt Dingo is Jenolan - MGA 422 506

To complement this feature, the ability to plot grid references is also present. Right click anywhere on the map and a box appears. By entering six figure (or even eight figure) grid references in the bottom box, and clicking “Add Points” your grid references will be plotted on the map, simple as that.

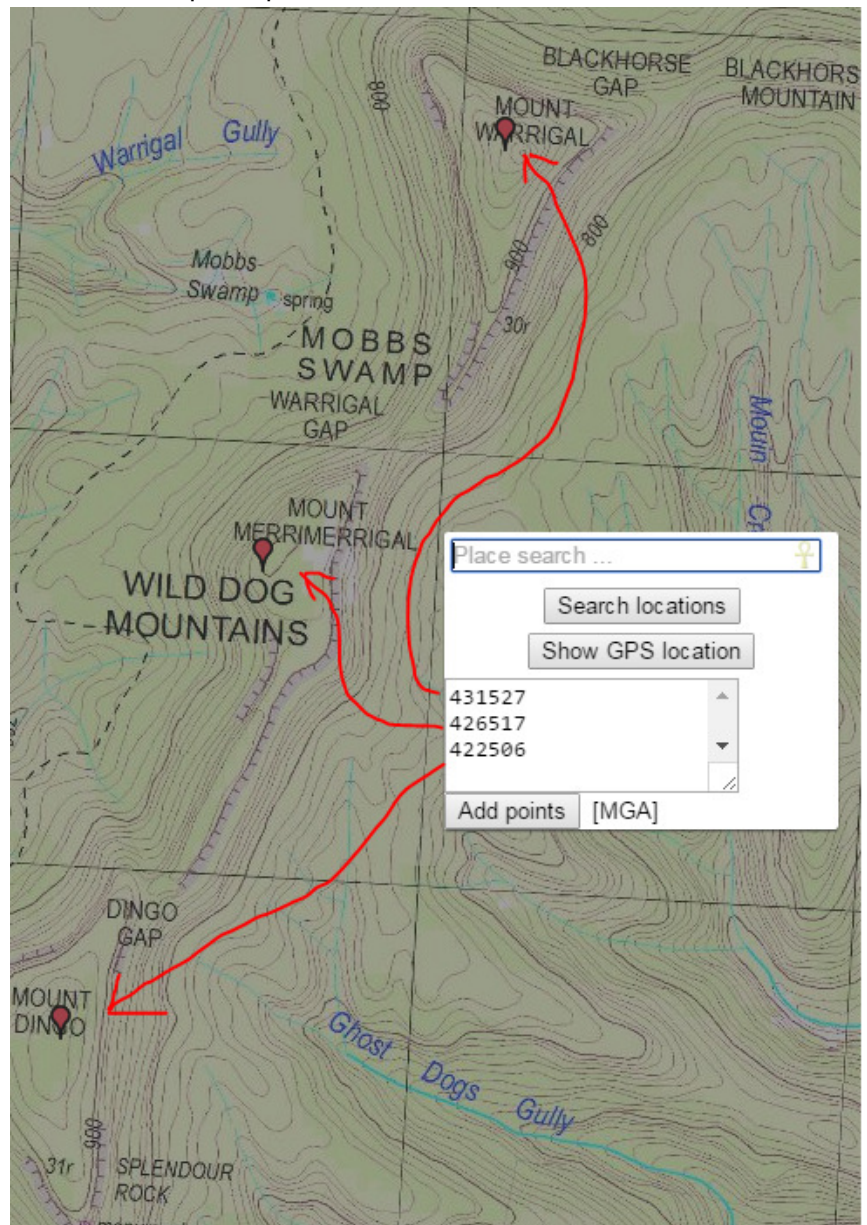
Keep in mind that:

- multiple grid references need to be added one line at a time, separated by an enter
- there can't be a space between the eastings and northings - IE MGA 123 456 become 123456
- grid references are only unique to a 100km square block, and so you will need to zoom on the map to the within 100km of where the grid reference location, or else they will be plotted in the wrong spot!

A handy feature for those who are looking at old track notes, or maybe using the older second edition topographic maps, is the ability to handle AMG grid references. By clicking on the “[MGA]” button, you can toggle between the new and old grid reference system. By changing it to “[AGM]”, you will be able to input the old style of grid references and they will be plotted correctly.

For information on the difference between MGA (Map Grid of Australia 1994) and AGM (Australian Map Grid 1966) see this page by Tom Brennan -

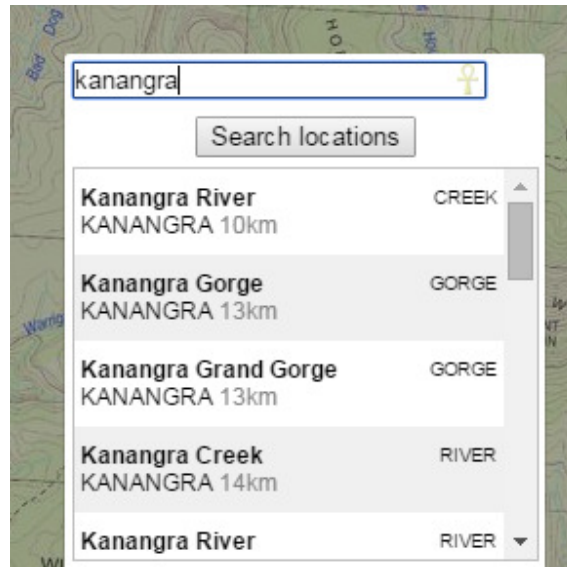
http://ozultimate.com/canyoning/map_grid_s.htm



Three grid references easily plotted

Search Function


You might also notice that there is a “Place search” text box present. By entering a name such “Kanangra”, a whole list of options will be shown, and their distance from where the map is currently centred. Clicking on any search result will take you to that location. This is quite useful when you are trying to say find a creek that you have read about but don’t know where it is located.




Using the search function


Line Tool

This is used to place a blue line on the map, useful for outlining an area or highlighting a route. By clicking on

the  button at the top left of the screen, you can then place down a line by clicking along the length of the route on the map. A blue line will connect the dots between each click, and you just need to double click on when you would like to finish. Unfortunately you can only have one line on the map at a time, placing a new one removes the previous one. Also, there is no ability to correct your line, so making a mistake means you may have to draw a new one all over again.

Once a line is placed, you can view an elevation profile by clicking on the  button. This is a quick and easy way at getting an overview of the terrain, and a good way to help visualise slopes from contours.

Adding Labels

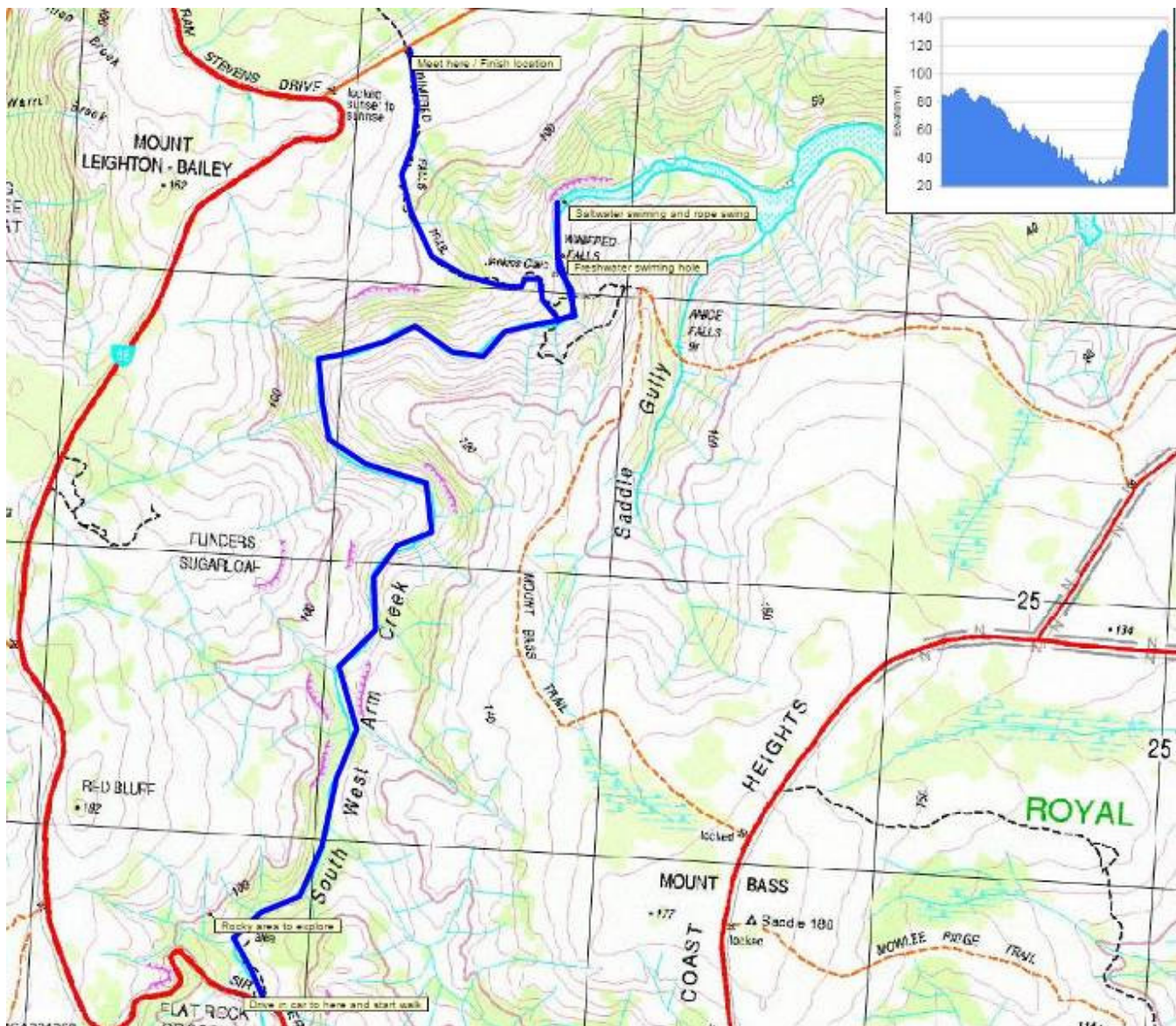
Next to the line tool, is this button  used to create labels. Once clicked, it will prompt you to enter some text. After doing so and clicking OK, you are then able to place a label with your chosen text anywhere on the map by clicking in the desired location. This text will be visible regardless how far in or out you zoom. You cannot however change it once placed, so be careful!

Sharing information with others

A great feature about this website, is that both lines and labels placed on the map can be easily shared with others. All you need to do is click on the “Link” button in the top right hand corner and a shareable link will

appear underneath. If you copy this link and share it with others, they will see the line and labels that you have placed. Keep in mind that plotted grid references aren't copied across.

Below is a link and map I sent to participants on a walk I recently lead. It uses topo.notto maps to show the route to be taken, along with comments and points of interest along the way. By clicking the "E" button, the elevation profile can be found, and once the walk was completed, further comments could be added to the map. <http://goo.gl/QYe6Qu>



Final comments

This website provides some key features that SIXmaps which featured in the previous newsletter lacks. It does not however include any additional layers such as vector maps or aerial imagery. Because of this, it is a good website to use in conjunction with others resources when planning a trip.

The background of the top section is a photograph of a rugged, forested plateau. In the foreground, a hiker wearing a white hat and a backpack is walking on a rocky path. The plateau is covered in dense green vegetation, and in the background, there are steep, forested hills under a blue sky with some clouds.

Little Forest Plateau

A guide for bushwalkers, historians and nature lovers

Ron Doughton

Second Edition

Recently released is the second edition of Little Forest Plateau, and it has been made available free of charge on the Shoalhaven Bushwalkers website. The 74mb document can be downloaded here - <http://goo.gl/GkkNkL>

Covering history, geology and geomorphology, the book then delves into large sections on passes, waterfalls and caves. Nearly every page is contains photographs of the area and grid references are provided where possible. Sketch maps located at the end of the book show the wealth of features to be explored in the area.

The first edition of Little Forest Plateau was released in 2013 by Ron Doughton, author of the popular guidebook *Bushwalking in the Budawang*s. After a long battle with cancer Ron passed away on 24 March, 2014. His near-finished second edition draft was then completed by his fellow walkers.

The publication is a valuable contribution for the benefit of the bushwalking community and a must have for anyone interested in venturing out into this part of the state.

National Park and walking track closure updates

NPWS have recently launched their new website. Lots of new information and interactive features. Well worth checking out and using before your next adventure.

This new website has introduced a map based alert feature. This means that national park alerts such as closures, fires and floods can be viewed on the map. By visiting the website below, and navigating to an area you plan to visit, it is easy to see what areas if any are affected.

<http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/alerts/Alerts-list/?view=map>

As always, please get in touch with myself if you or your fellow bushwalkers have any tracks and access issues you wish for us to look into.

Alex Allchin, Tracks and Access Officer, Bushwalking NSW. Email AJAllchin@gmail.com

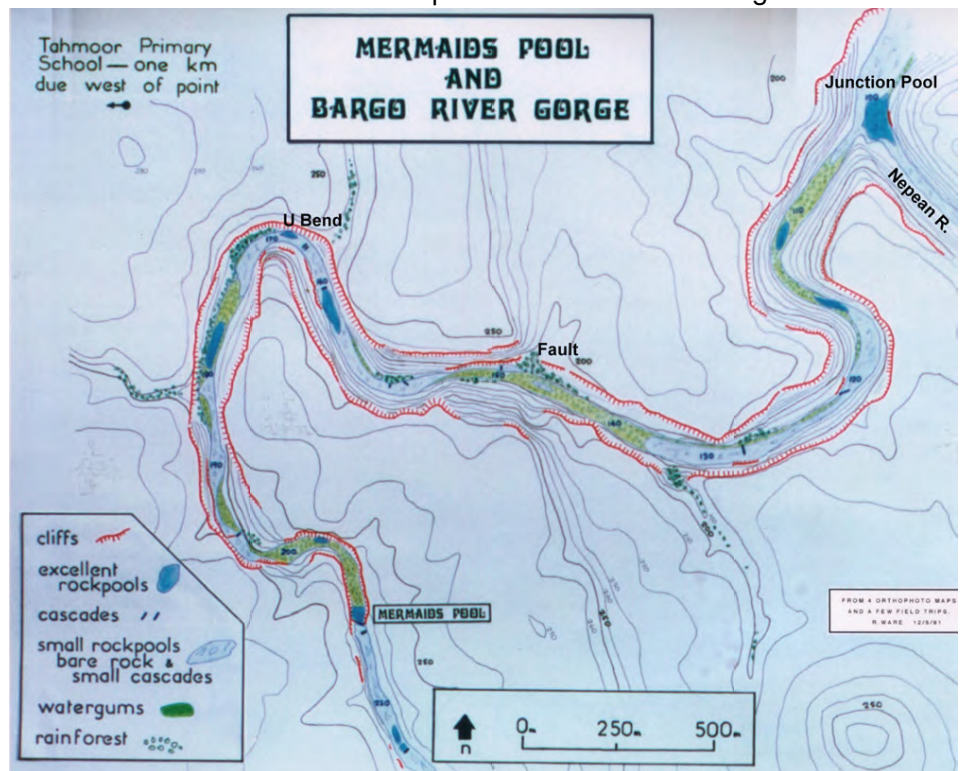
Conservation Officer's Update

The Proposed Bargo-Nepean National Park

National Parks Association of NSW, along with other environmental organisations, have put proposed a Bargo-Nepean National Park. It aims to protect all the Crown Land and steep forested land of the Bargo River catchment, and Nepean River from its confluence with the Bargo River to the land protected as catchment for some of Sydney's water supply.

Besides being a fantastic region to explore on a bushwalk, area the includes unique native vegetation such as the critically endangered Shale Transition Forest.

The beauty of just one section within the park proposal, Tahmoor Gorge, can be enjoyed for the comfort of your home through this youtube video - <https://goo.gl/xnWg2f> Hopefully it provides some encouragement to get out and experience what this area has to offer for yourself, and see why it is worthy of protection as a National Park.



Map of the Gorge at Tahmoor East

The detailed proposal document, filled with maps, photos and information on the area, is well worth a look at for anyone interested in learning more about the area. It can be downloaded here - <https://goo.gl/Fmn5T2> (14mb)

Also check out the Bargo-Nepean National Park Proposal facebook page to engage in conversation and stay current with updates - <https://goo.gl/4ifGaQ>



The Gardens of Stone Alliance, a group of environmental organisations passionate about protection the area, have commissioned a special photographic competition to bring attention to an unprotected region on the western side of the Blue Mountains with superlative natural beauty.

The Gardens of Stone - In Focus is a photographic competition that offers photographers opportunities to visit spectacular places and later this year celebrate the pivotal role of photography has played in the protection of nature by being part of a spectacular exhibition. Entries to the competition have just concluded, and there has already been a collection of stunning photos taken by talented photographers posted on the internet. Check some of them out on the Protect Gardens of Stone facebook page - <https://goo.gl/agdw2S>

Visit the Colong Foundation's website for more information - <http://goo.gl/EtL5Qh> - and be sure to check out the photographic exhibition when it is held early next year.

Coal waste pours into the Wollangambe River



Photo provided by Lithgow Environment Group

Early in July, coal waste from Clarence Colliery, a coal mine in the Lithgow region, spilt down into the Wollangambe River. This river, which lies within the Blue Mountains National Park and Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, is very popular with both bushwalkers and canyoneers.

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), has described the event as a serious environmental incident. Since the spill, the coal fines which form a thick black sludge when mixed with water, have slowly made their way down the river. The extent of impact has been investigated by NPWS, EPA and concerned bushwalkers, with contaminated sites located over 8km downstream.

Shortly after the spill occurred, work commenced as ordered by the EPA to prevent any further waste from entering the river, and this has been achieved through the installation of multiple silt fences in places in the gully between the Wollangambe and the waste storage area. Removal of waste from the Wollangambe River itself is yet to occur, and so the extent to which the pollution covers the river increases with each passing day.

A facebook group “[Get out to the ‘Gambe](#)” has been created to serve as a way for those concerned to keep updated on the issue. Many photos and videos of the current state of the Wollangambe have been posted, and they are well worth looking through in order to gain some perspective as to the impact of this incident.

The Colong Foundation for Wilderness has also created a webpage here - <http://goo.gl/hcDtdf> - which provides an overview of the issue.

Bushwalking NSW is currently in communication with NPWS and EPA as to how we as bushwalkers can best provide assistance.

Below is a collection of information and media on the spill:

- Prime7 News report - <https://goo.gl/CA2AsI>
- Article from the Blue Mountains Gazette in which the Mayor calls for greater protection under the council's LEP - <http://goo.gl/FhNDZx>
- Sydney Morning Herald article - <http://goo.gl/nT2P7H>
- Youtube video of the coal making its way down the Wollangambe - <https://goo.gl/BX6WQY>
- Photos provided by Lithgow Environment Group - <https://goo.gl/HAQj9N>
- EPA media releases - <http://goo.gl/YtX7dZ> , <http://goo.gl/LNxja2> and <http://goo.gl/mHft6s>

This incident is a tragedy for the river, and here is no assurance that it will be successful in reversing the impacts of this spill. This incident highlights just one risk that development in our precious natural areas pose.

Alex Allchin, filling in for Sierra Classen, Conservation Officer, Bushwalking NSW.
Email angelina.willow@gmail.com



An unpolluted tributary (top) flowing into the Wollangambe River (below)

BUSH NAVIGATION for Bushwalkers

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad in action

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) of Bushwalking NSW is part of the available Emergency Services in NSW; which means there can be long periods of no activity OR times when several things may happen all at once as at NavShield 2015 or TrailWalker 2014.

The first weekend of July each year is NavShield where teams of emergency services and bushwalkers practice their map & compass navigation on a pre set course.

BWRS has worked hard at making NavShield a safe and social event that welcomes the full range of emergency services. Amongst the NavShield pre planning each year is a Safety Plan. The Plan was put to the test on Saturday night when BWRS and WICEN (volunteer amateur radio operators) had to arrange a night time evacuation just as the One Day Awards Presentation was due to start. While team mates of a participant (with a banged up knee) walked towards Radio Check Point Charlie to raise the alarm, the casualty (PC) was being helped to move slowly to a nearby fire road. Care is needed in after dark vehicle movements on steep fire roads and is only done where necessary. Eventually, Dave the (NSW Ambulance) Paramedic was able to do a fantastic patch up on casualty PC. Fellow team mates were able to take him to Gosford Hospital from NavShield base in Yengo National Park.

As usual, NavShield 2015 on 4 / 5 July had over 400 participants. See the BWRS website at www.bwrs.org.au for a full list of results.

In previous years BWRS has had challenging incidents at OXFAM TrailWalker. BWRS is an important part of the safety organisation with safety teams, in shifts, over the 48 hours of this event on the last weekend of August each year. TrailWalker uses many tracks / fire roads in bushland of Sydney's northern urban fringe.

All participant incident phone calls to the TrailWalker ECC (Event Control Centre) are received by the BWRS Safety Team Co-ordinator. They share a communications table with St John Ambulance, NSW Ambulance & NSW Police. Thus response can be scaled up according to the severity of the incident.

While helicopters and 4wd ambulances bring many wonderful medical resources there still are times when the patient has to be transported to a pick up point by old fashioned methods along tracks with twists and turns up and down. The evacuation, early in TrailWalker 2014, of an 80kg man required tricky movements up and around small rock outcrops. BWRS members were on a buzz after successfully overcoming the difficulties. Saturday night was even more demanding when a 120kg man required paramedic treatment before evacuation. The morning evacuation after staying overnight with the patient was not easy and took several hours to move him to a suitable sand bar for helicopter pickup.

OXFAM TrailWalker 2015 on 28 - 30 August with its 100km route will again be a challenge for the over 2,000 participants. BWRS will no doubt be involved in every type of incident from disoriented teams to transport of exhausted teams up to evacuations of injured participants.

NSW is fortunate to have a range of emergency services that includes BWRS to assist when outdoors activities don't go as planned.

Keith Maxwell, President, Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad

Reminder: We need your stories!

We are now seeking articles and photos on the theme of “How I started Bushwalking” for the next edition of The Bushwalker magazine. Do you have a great story to tell?

Please take the time to send through your stories and photos, the magazine is read by thousands of people, and we want to inspire them to discover the enjoyment that bushwalking allows.

Please send articles to editor@bushwalkingnsw.org.au...