

Bushwalking NSW

Newsletter

Edition 23 September 2015



Father and Son rocks at North Ramshead, Kosciuszko National Park, Photo by Editor, David Trinder

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From the President, Mitchell Isaacs

Our thanks go to Elicia and Thea, Masters students who have chosen to develop a communication strategy for Bushwalking NSW as a project for their study in communications. Their assistance is greatly appreciated.

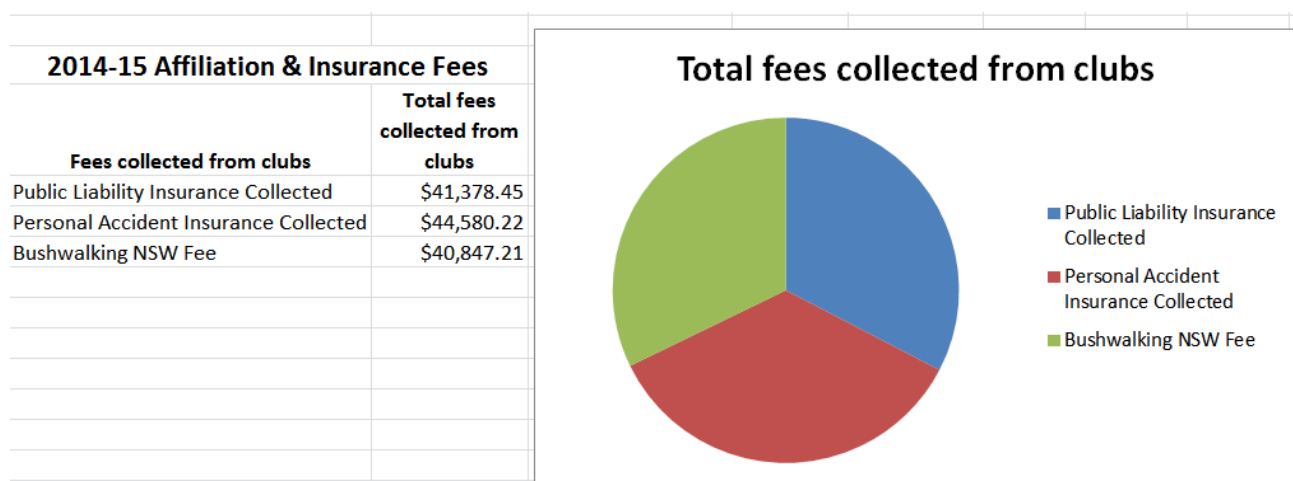
We have had a trio of financial gurus working away this month, Isabel, Kirsten and Alex, working through our finances and working on the beginnings of a future financial plan.

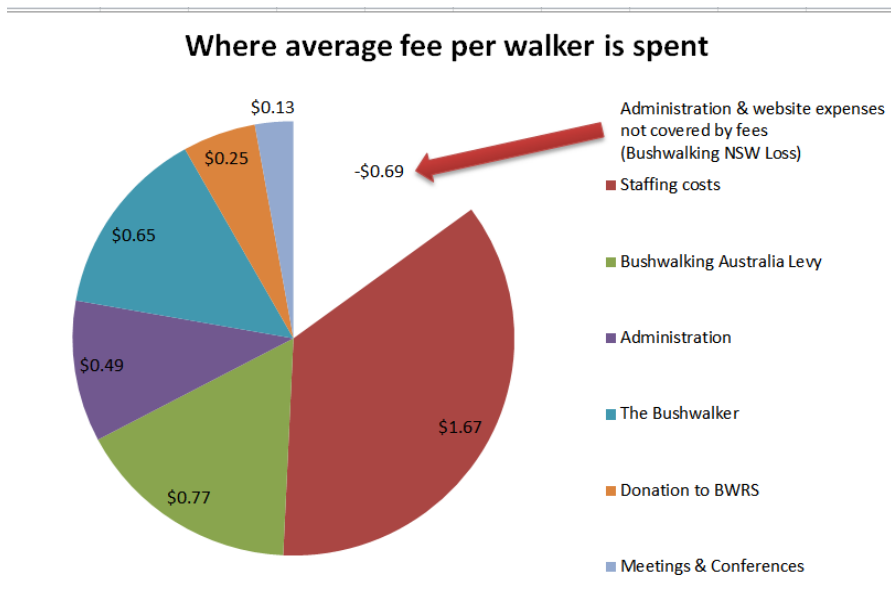


Out in the bush - the weather is all over the place at the moment, and I've never been a scout but I'm going to borrow their motto - Be Prepared! Check the weather forecasts before heading out, and make sure you and all your party are prepared for all scenarios - hot, cold, wet, dry. Above all, stay safe, and have fun!

Where do your fees go?

Of the fees collected by Bushwalking NSW, around two-thirds go towards insurance, and one-third goes towards running the organisation. The pie charts here show the breakdown of your fees. While the individual affiliation cost is \$5.50 per year (or \$5 for non-metro clubs), the average per member is less due to a cap on total cost for our larger clubs.





As required by our constitution, the committee will meet in the near future to determine the upcoming annual fee. Bushwalking NSW has worked hard to keep costs as low as possible, and our fees have not changed for quite a number of years. This means that in real terms, your fees have decreased substantially over the last decade. Unfortunately, this means that we are now operating at a loss. While not an immediate problem, as we have improved our management of insurance fees giving us some increased flexibility, this is not sustainable into the future.

We will be examining the full structure of our fees and finances, including individual fees, split between metro and non-metro clubs, and the cap applied to larger clubs. This will be accompanied with our consideration of a strategic plan and financial strategy, so that we understand where we're going, what it will cost, and ensure that we can deliver this at best value to our members.

This will be particularly important over the next 12 to 18 months, as we work on your insurance cover for the following three years. We will be working hard with Bushwalking Australia and the insurance broker to ensure that the insurance product provides the best and most appropriate cover for bushwalking clubs in NSW, and for the best possible value. We will ensure we keep you updated through this process, as we are all club walkers and we understand the importance of this cover to our clubs.

From the Executive Officer, Kirsten Mayer



You can now find Caro Ryan's AGM presentation on **How to grow your clubs** on our website at: <http://www.bushwalkingnsw.org.au/about/agm-2015/>

I'm delighted to report that we are growing! 3 clubs have just affiliated or re-affiliated.

We've also started work on our strategic plan, and our new committee are in full swing.

We are preparing to meet with Bushwalking Australia in mid-November to discuss insurance amongst other things so let me know of your insurance requirements.

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

National Parks Association of NSW Annual Dinner

Let Kirsten know if you'd like to join Bushwalking NSW table at the National Parks Association of NSW Annual Dinner on Saturday 17th October in Sydney: <http://www.npansw.org.au/index.php/home/our-events/annual-dinner>

David Trinder is the new editor of the Bushwalking NSW Newsletter

Send any informative articles or letters to The Executive Officer





Sierra Classen is the Conservation Secretary of Bushwalking NSW

Blue Gum Beginning

Bushwalking NSW is a peak body that unites bushwalking clubs from throughout the state. We provide clubs with insurance--that's a pretty important legal requirement—but what else does Bushwalking NSW do? Did you know that Bushwalking NSW is the offspring of the Blue Gum Committee from back in the 1930s?

Here's how it happened for those of you who didn't. This is a lesson in the power of teamwork and cooperation. Please correct me if I get anything wrong.

Back in 1928, some bushwalkers with the Mountain Trails Club were doing a bushwalk in the Blue Mountains, when they happened upon the Blue Gum Forest. They were struck by its uncanny beauty and felt compelled to stop and take it all in. All around them stood the straight blue-grey trunks of these immense blue gums and all around them was a soft carpet of inviting grass—grass that looked almost juicy enough to eat.... if you were a cow or a sheep! And that is exactly what Charles Hungerford had thought when he acquired a Conditional Purchase Lease of the forest. He explained to that shocked party of bushwalkers that he planned to ring bark and torch those cathedral gums and use the land for grazing cattle and growing walnuts.

As they went on their way, the bushwalkers felt moved by the impending loss of this wondrous place. One of them, Roger Rigby, brought the issue to the next Mountain Trails Club meeting. In July of 1931 it also came to the Sydney Bushwalkers' meeting where finally the Blue Gum Committee was formed. The purpose of the committee was to discover if the bushwalkers couldn't acquire

the Blue Gum Forest for themselves, to preserve its unaltered beauty for generations to come.

It transpired that Hungerford was amenable to negotiation. Hungerford set a price for the Blue Gum. Though Hungerford claimed to be making a great sacrifice by asking such a low price, the Depression and general lack of financial flushness among the Sydney Bushwalkers and the Mountain Trail Club members meant that the sum seemed impossible to compile. This is where the power of coordinated teamwork comes into the story. It took a lot of meetings, hat passings, kneeding of foreheads, 2000 pamphlets circulated, a walking guidebook published, and a formal Blue Gum Ball for fundraising (see ticket stub below), but eventually the Blue Gum Committee gathered a sufficient sum (20 pounds under the original asking price of 150) to satisfy Hungerford. In the end, the committee had rallied the support of the Wildlife Preservation Society, an ever better-organised and well-connected local bushwalking community, and a host of sympathetic government and non-government entities. A corporate partnership with a generous local businessman yielded a two-year interest free loan of 80 pounds.

Inspired by the euphoria of their triumph, the Blue Gum Committee and the bushwalking community at large set about creating the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs of NSW (which later became the Confederation of Bushwalking Clubs of NSW, and then Bushwalking NSW). The committee would serve to unite bushwalkers and liaise with the wider to community as a single voice for the interests of bushwalking. Perhaps, too, they were hoping that this new entity might serve to protect the wilderness and natural areas of NSW, the heartland of the bushwalker, from future threats. Relic of this intention lies in the constitution. #2, 3, and 4 of our 9 Objects relate to protecting and wisely managing the wilderness and natural areas we dearly love and rely on.

Since its creation from grand roots, this committee has reserved numerous key wilderness areas and acted as a rallying force for conservation from the local right up to the interstate level. We hope to continue to perform this essential role in the bushwalking community. Now, more than ever we operate in concert with many active conservation organisations within what is usually called the Environment Movement. It is also our duty and our goal in Bushwalking NSW to enable and encourage your effective engagement with conservation issues affecting bushwalking and bushwalkers.

There are many more stories to tell about Bushwalking NSW and bushwalkers in general grappling admirably for conservation in Australia. If you have a story to share, please contact us. We'd love to hear it. I, your friendly conservation officer, will even shout you a beverage for your troubles. On top of that, I'll record your story for our archives and maybe even stick it up on the Bushwalking NSW website!

P.S. Please continue to tell us about conservation issues you think it is important for the bushwalking community to be aware of (ones that affect bushwalkers and bushwalking). Tell us what conservation related ventures your club is participating in. With your permission, we might pass the word on to clubs about what you are doing to give them some ideas.

In other news...

Annual Nature Conservation Council Conference (Bushwalking NSW is a Group Member of the NCC)

What? NCC Annual Conference

Where? The University of Sydney

When? 24th-25th of October (a weekend)

Where do I book tickets? <http://www.nature.org.au/about/governance/annual-conferences/>

Coming right up, folks, the long awaited Nature Conservation Council (NCC) Conference! Bushwalking clubs, one and all, send in your delegates to the state capital, Sydney, where you will meet interesting and kind-hearted conservation and bushwalking enthusiasts. There will be workshops and snacks and numerous discussions about relevant issues. You will hear from some amazing project officers and volunteers for the NCC and attend the NSW Environment Awards Ceremony, where deserving environmentalists of today receive accolades for their incredible contributions.

This year, the NCC will be pulling out all the stops because it's their 60th BIRTHDAY. Traditionally, there are lots of bushwalkers at this conference so don't worry about you or your club delegates being lonely. Let us know if you are going to be there and we can form a BNSW mob.

New Deal for Nature

As the NSW government rewrites our state conservation laws, the NCC has written their own. Enter the new Biodiversity Conservation Act. The NCC has drafted a document containing 10 essential components of a proposed completely new Biodiversity Conservation Act to protect ecosystems and individual plant and animal species that are currently under threat. They are calling this proposal a New Deal for Nature. Click here to read more.

http://www.nature.org.au/media/172082/a_new_deal_for_nature_web_final.pdf

Open Letter to Curtail Mining Impacts in NSW

The Nature Conservation Council (NCC) along with a few other organisations have teamed up to write an open letter to the Premier of NSW. The letter calls for reforms to State Environmental Planning Policy to protect sensitive natural areas, catchments and communities from the negative impacts of coal mining. The suggested reforms include making areas of indispensable environmental significance off limits to mining. Click here to read the full letter and add your signature:

<http://www.nature.org.au/get-involved/take-action/premier-baird-fix-our-broken-mining-rules/>

Have your say on NSW environment and heritage

By Alex Allchin

Consultation with the community is an important step in the development of the legislation, policies and guides that affect the areas in which we go walking. In order to allow people to get involved, the Office of Environment and Heritage have created website at <https://engage.environment.nsw.gov.au/consult> where you can 'Have your say'.

The page is updated on a regular basis as consultation periods expire, and new ones are added, but currently of interest to bushwalkers would be the draft plans of management for both Hunter Wetlands National Park and Mugii Murum-ban State Conservation Area. Clubs and their members are encouraged to partake where they can.

Changes have been proposed in the draft Plan of Management for Mugii Murum-ban which will really benefit those who walk in the area. It's important that we show our support for these proposed changes, and Bushwalking NSW hopes to have a guideline out next month to assist clubs and their members in this process.

Alex Allchin, Tracks and Access Officer, Bushwalking NSW.

email AJAllchin@gmail.com

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad is an arm of, was instigated by and is supported by Bushwalking NSW. This an article by its President Keith Maxwell



BWRS in action

Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS) is an active volunteer rescue squad of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association (VRA). BWRS adds communication & rescue skills to those of bushwalkers to make our members very effective rescue personnel.

Recently BWRS was involved in two major activities.

Each year BWRS supports OXFAM TrailWalker with Safety Response teams, in shifts, over the 48 hours of this 100km challenge walk with over 540 teams of four walkers.

From the event start at Brooklyn it follows national park tracks and fire roads of urban bushland to Middle Harbour then eventually the finish at a reserve near Manly. Teams are monitored over the event through the seven 'checkpoints' (rest points) . Night walking is a must to finish the course between the Friday morning start and 48 hours later on Sunday.

TrailWalker is excellent publicity for BWRS. Our members are conspicuous in our fluoro polo tops and rain jackets. OXFAM have a thoroughly prepared safety plan which includes BWRS as an essential part as the safety arm of the event.

The TrailWalker emergency number is answered by our safety co-ordinator in the Event Control Centre (ECC). Many times our BWRS Safety Response teams just do a pickup of an injured walker. Our BWRS teams can get closer to the OXFAM track via the keys to normally locked fire roads. This year was a quiet year with only 17 pickups of injured walkers (many at night) and no stretcher carries / helicopter evacuation of any seriously injured walkers! Serious incidents can easily be transferred to NSW Ambulance or other emergency services via their representatives in the ECC.

Recently, BWRS was also heavily involved in a NSW Police evidence search from 5 to 12 September. In 2012 a person went missing in bushland not far from the NavShield 2012 base site. BWRS teams did day only bushwalks to search particular areas. RFS and SES teams searched adjoining areas. As usual, BWRS was given the more challenging but more interesting bushland to search. Late in the week emergency services teams were combined to intensively search an area adjoining the site of valuable evidence. BWRS mingled easily with other services. NSW Police were pleased with the overall results.

In October BWRS will be back testing a new theory on the disappearance of a small plane 'VH-MDX' in Barrington Tops. Increased computing power with recent flight tracking software has suggested a site not previously tested. The mystery of VH-MDX has gathered many followers who are keen to see the BWRS results. The whereabouts of a pilot and four passengers remains unknown. In previous years BWRS has run joint

exercises that have searched many areas of Barrington Tops. I have had memorable bushwalks (Barrington Tops searches) into this wild country.

BWRS is a long established important community service. It is an active volunteer rescue squad that uses member bushwalking skills in remote area search and rescue to assist community events and NSW Police for lost and injured persons. BWRS welcomes new members via our website www.bwrs.org.au

FIRST AID for BUSHWALKERS on November 15

All bushwalkers should have some level of First Aid knowledge. Accidents and injuries sometimes occur so simply. However, there are some easy to learn First Aid basics that could keep a family member or bushwalking friend alive / comforted until emergency help arrives.

Bushwalking has become a safer activity with the advances in communication (to raise an alarm) plus medical treatment and evacuation procedures for an injured person. However, you may still need to offer First Aid to your injured companion until emergency services arrives.

You can gain the confidence to provide adequate First Aid, for situations where medical help may be only an hour or so away, with just one days training in First Aid.

On November 15 you could complete a recognised St John Ambulance First Aid course. "Provide First Aid" is being offered by Bushwalkers Wilderness Rescue Squad (BWRS).

"Provide First Aid" This nationally recognised course can now be completed in just one day because of the theory you prelearn before the course. This course used to be known as Senior First Aid that required two days of instruction.

BWRS has a special extra for bushwalkers in this "Provide First Aid" course since the Instructor has permission to show some splinting and bandaging not usually taught in other courses.

Registration is now open for this great opportunity to learn some basic life saving First Aid skills in just one day.

You will need to book on line at the BWRS website and pay the full course fee to confirm your place (the class size is limited)

<http://www.bwrs.org.au/>

You will find answers to all the frequently asked common questions at this website.

Pre learning - Please be aware that you must learn some First Aid theory from the St John Ambulance website BEFORE 15 November. There will be no revision on this day. The first activity on 15 November will be the theory exam.

Practical Skills - after the exam the rest of the 15 November will training in practical skills in First Aid.

Instructor - is an experienced bushwalker who has taught many First Aid courses. Past trainees have praised the instruction.

Enrol today to learn First Aid with fellow bushwalkers on November 15; don't let another bushwalker take your place. The next "Provide First Aid" course from BWRS is not until May 2016.

Keith Maxwell.

'Sister Club' partnerships

By Alex Allchin

With nearly 70 member clubs in BNSW, our organisation has grown from its Sydney based inception back in 1932 to the current day where we have clubs spread out all over the state. We're lucky in NSW to have so many great places to go bushwalking, but sometimes knowing where to go when visiting a new and unfamiliar areas can put people off venturing outside their regular stomping ground.

One way a club can tackle this problem, and get their members walking in new parts of the state, is to for a 'sister club' partnership with another bushwalking club. The idea is that sister clubs can share information between members on where the best bits in their region are to visit and even host walks in these areas for members of the other club.

I know that a few clubs in BNSW already have already formed a sister club partnership, but it would be great to see more clubs link up. If your club is interested in finding a 'sister', and I encourage your committee to consider it, please let our executive officer know through an email to admin@bushwalkingnsw.org.au and we'll add you to the list of interested clubs. Also let us know if you have a specific area or club in mind.

Hopefully by the time the November general meeting come around we'll have a selection of clubs willing to participate, and we'll be able to start the matchmaking process.

Alex Alchin is the Tracks and Access Officer of Bushwalking NSW. He has written about Tracks and Access and about other issues



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

National park and walking track closure updates

If you're heading out into the bush, always check the national park website for alerts such as closures, fires and floods. 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. It's a good idea to select "Next 4 weeks" from the drop down box on the left hand side to see any planned closures within the next month.

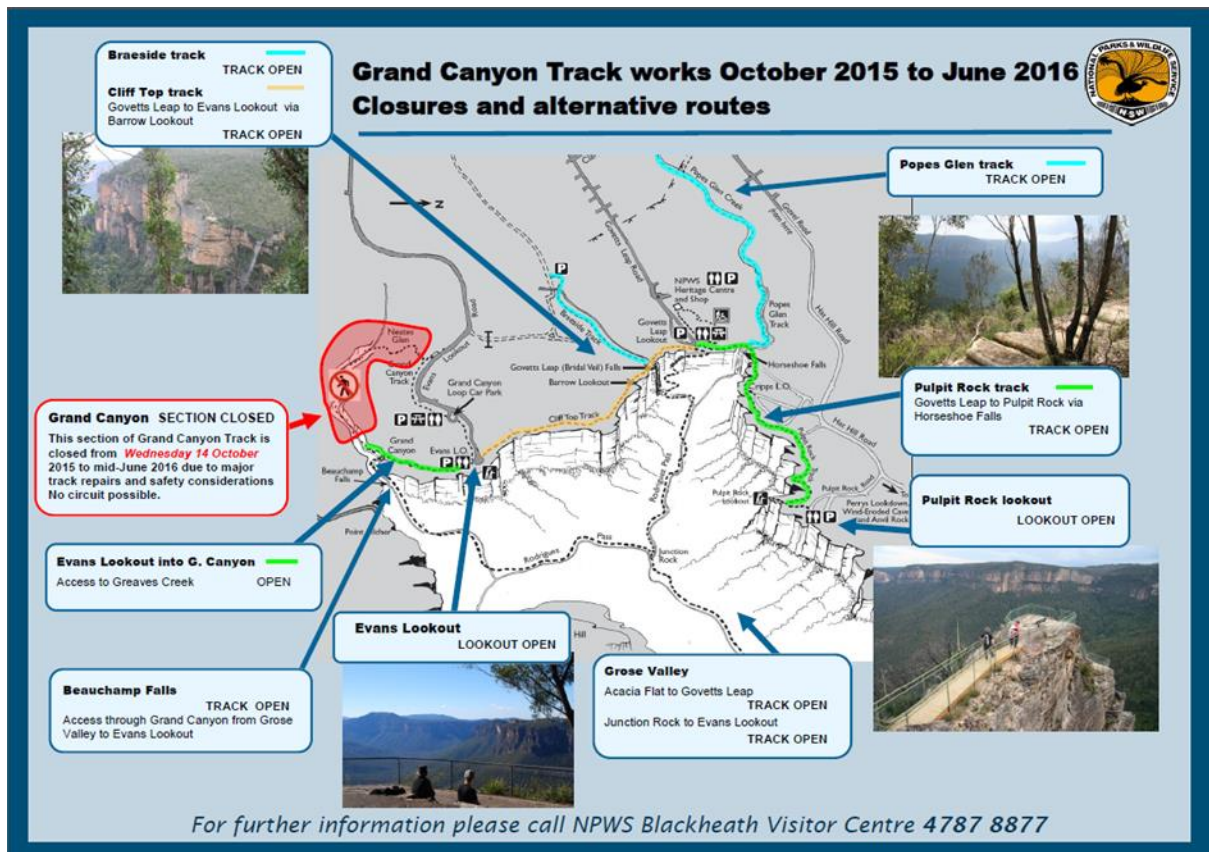
<http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/alerts/Alerts-list/?view=map>

Grand Canyon walking track closed

The Grand Canyon walking track will be closed from Wednesday 14 October 2015 to mid-June 2016. The closure is necessary to allow work to continue on improving the walking track.

Interestingly, access for canyoners will still be permitted, but on weekends only.

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.



Track maintenance by bushwalking clubs in national parks

Walking tracks are the roads by which most bushwalkers travel. They come in various different forms and styles. Within NSW, most of our walking tracks are in national parks and are usually managed by NPWS.

These tracks however require maintenance in order to prevent them from becoming overgrown. There is a spectrum of required maintenance ranging from simply use of a track to major trimming, grooming and repair work on a regular basis.

Whilst there are numerous volunteering opportunities within national parks, the majority of these are landcare type activities. Opportunities to partake in track maintenance are limited.

Bushwalking NSW currently is working on creating more opportunities for bushwalking clubs to partake in track maintenance.

Some examples of what clubs are doing are listed below:

- Sutherland Bushwalkers have adopted a section of the Coast Track in the Royal National Park to do maintenance over a period of 18 months.

- Canberra Bushwalking Club are working with the parks service to develop a 13km section of walking / cycling trail.
- Coast and Mountain Walkers have been working on the Green Gully area of a number of years.
- Springwood Bushwalkers have recently started some track maintenance work in the Blue Mountains National Park.

What we hope to see in the future is a framework for club participation in track maintenance in national parks be developed with NPWS so that it is easier for other clubs to get involved. BNSW could even for instance host days on a regular basis around the state where members from all clubs are able to get involved.

I'd really appreciate hearing from clubs on the matter, specifically whether they are currently undertaking any track maintenance or land regeneration project, and if not, are you interested in undertaking track maintenance in the future?

NSW national park daily vehicle entry and camping fee increase from 6 October 2015

NPWS have decided to increase vehicle entry and camping fees in national parks in order to assist with meeting conservation objectives and maintaining visitor facilities.

Essentially, vehicle entry fees will increase by \$1 per day, and camping fees will increase between \$0.50 and \$3.50 per day. In future years, prices will be adjusted on an annual basis in line with CPI.

The price of an annual pass will not be increased this year, and they are good value for money for those who regularly visit parks with entry fees.

Further information on the changes can be found on the NPWS website here <http://goo.gl/OC75hD>

Attention canyoneers and abseilers - DMM carabiner recall

Climbing gear manufacturer DMM have released a recall which affects a selection of their 2014 and 2015 manufactured carabiners. Thankfully, checking to see if any of your carabiners need to be returned is easy to do and can be done at home.

This pdf <http://goo.gl/moaoS4> provides a guide on how to check your carabiner, and the DMM website <http://goo.gl/sbe7pD> gives information on what to do if your gear needs to be returned.

Please pass word of the recall onto those you know who have abseiling gear.

Please carry out the following inspection of the gate pusher:



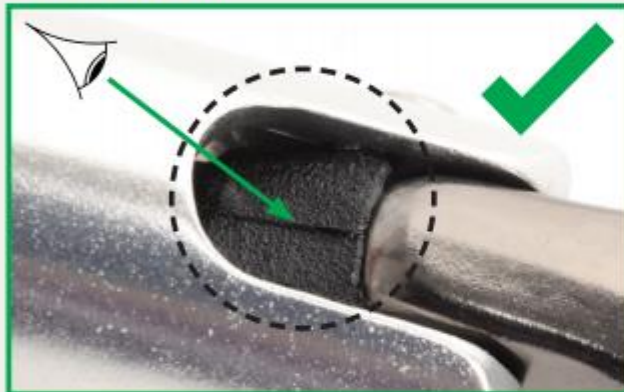
The pusher is located inside the gate of the carabiner. It can be seen in the recess at the base of the gate.

On some carabiner models the pusher can be seen through the recess in the front of the gate, when the gate is open.



Visually inspect the gate pusher for the 'moulding line'. Look carefully at the gate pusher in your carabiner, it may be necessary to open the gate, a good light source is essential. Angling the carabiner in the light will help bring the moulding line into relief. The moulding line is visible from both sides of the gate.

MOULDING LINE = OK



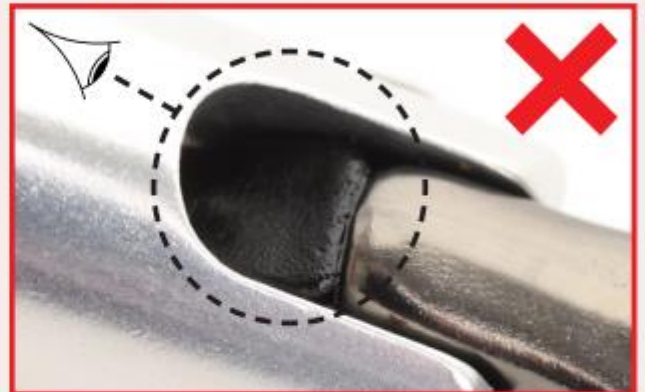
OK, NO RECALL



no dysfunction

Do not return to DMM, continue use.

NO MOULDING LINE = RECALL



RECALL



risk of dysfunction - DO NOT USE

Immediately retire from service, quarantine and await further instructions from DMM.



OK, NO RECALL

Certain specialist carabiners utilise a stainless steel spring pusher. This is silver/grey in colour and is unaffected by the recall.

If you have any doubt about the results of your user inspection, please return to DMM for inspection according to the upcoming returns process.