

THE COASTAL PROTECTION BILL, 1979

Nowhere is the environment more important than on the coastline and its hinterland. Our coastal zones contain some of the most important and critical ecological areas in the State which are fragile and easy to destroy and almost impossible to replace. The coast is also where eighty percent of the population of this State live and work, and the area provides a major recreational outlet for the population. The Report of the Committee of Inquiry into the National Estate under the Chairmanship of His Honour, Mr. Justice R.M. Hope, highlighted the emotional significance of the coastline.

The Hope Report stated:

"Australians have a longstanding love affair with the coasts and beaches. From the baby playing on the sand to the fisherman on the rocks, from the child meeting its first wave to the board rider out on the near horizon, most of us have our happiest memories connected with the interface where ocean meets land. We go back there when we can, and many hope to spend their days of retirement somewhere near the sea."

The Report cited Dasmann's description of the coastal zone as containing "one of the most beleaguered groups of ecosystems on this planet - those which form the interface between land and ocean."

Certain key points need to be made about the N.S.W. coastline and its management needs. Firstly, in a national context, the N.S.W. coast will bear, at an increasing rate, the brunt of coastal development pressures and land use conflicts. Secondly any management philosophy which relies heavily on one aspect, be it public land acquisition programmes, erosion control or national parks will become increasingly inappropriate as public demands for development of the coastline increase. Coastal management requires an integrated approach to the many and varied coastal problems and issues. Thirdly, at this stage, the primary problems of the coastal region relate to land use controls and the effects of land development on biological conditions of coastal environments.

The Bill provides the integrated framework for the development of Government policy on coastal management by establishing the Coastal Council and by providing the necessary input of specialist coastal engineering advice in the development process.

The objects of the Bill are as follows: Firstly, it establishes an expert specialist body, the Coastal Council, to advise the Minister for Planning and Environment. Secondly, it indicates the general role of the Coastal Council to encourage, promote and secure the protection, maintenance and the orderly, balanced utilisation and conservation of the coastal region and its resources. Thirdly, it establishes the functions of the Coastal Council, with particular emphasis on policy development in aspects of coastal planning and management, co-ordination of the policies and activities of public agencies relating to the coastal region, and the identification of lands to be publicly acquired in the coastal region. Fourthly, it establishes the Coastal Protection Fund to provide funds for projects and research in the field of coastal protection and management.

The area of concern of the Coastal Council is the "coastal region" which is defined broadly as including the coastal zone. Given the nature of coastal issues, it is desirable to avoid a restrictive definition concentrating on the littoral zone. Almost all authorities agree the immediate land-sea interface is involved, but there are considerable discrepancies on the land boundaries adopted. If the Coastal Council is to have an effective impact on the problems of the coast, then restrictive definitions of what constitutes the coastal region should be avoided. The coast is a region, not a line, the extent of which varies according to the particular task at hand. Moreover,

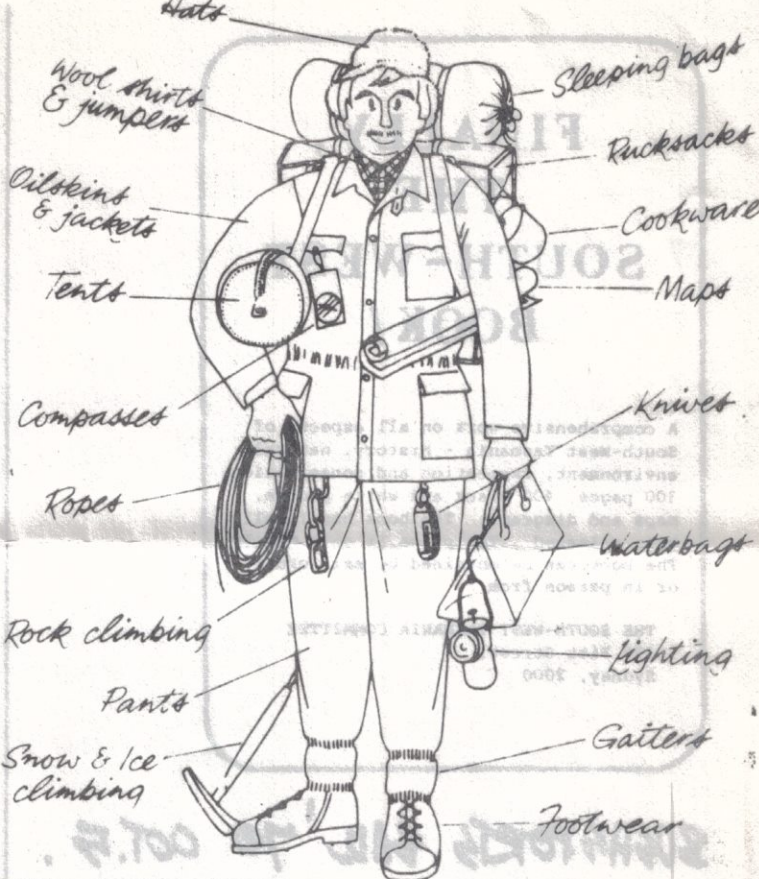
precise definitions of the coastal region is not required as the functions of the Coastal Council are purely advisory in nature.

BUSHSPORTS 1979

The Federation is again running its series of instructional workshops in the rucksack sports. By the time most readers will have received this newsletter, the first two activities will have already been conducted. This still leaves Ski Touring/Snow Camping, Canoeing, Rockclimbing, Caving and Canyoning still to be run. Please note that the Ski Touring/Snow Camping segment, the participants will have been required to have had some previous experience in cross-country skiing.

If your new to the outdoor sports or wish to learn new activities, please send a stamped addressed envelope to Bushsports '79, Box 2090, G.P.O., SYDNEY, 2001.

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BUSHSPORTS BAN '79 OCT. 5.

BOOK REVIEWS

South-West Tasmania (John Chapman): This book (not to be confused with the South-West Book) is a bushwalker's route guide to the standard trips in South-West Tasmania. It gives descriptions of routes to Federation Peak, Mt. Anne Circuit, Western Authors, South-West Cape, Precipitous Bluff and others. It is basically a rewritten version of the old Hobart Walking Club guides to the area. The information, however, has been thoroughly revised. The book is 150 pages long, with many black and white photos, and 22 maps.

The information in the book is quite sufficient and accurate enough for an experienced walker to lead a walk there without any further knowledge. However there are, inevitably, a few omissions and inaccuracies. For example the author clearly did not know of a very good campsite near South-West Cape, choosing to describe a rather exposed one instead. Some of the times he gives seem inconsistent with others. The times, however, are far more consistent and accurate than those given in the Hobart Walking Club notes.

Overall the book is quite good, and the information it contains is a virtual necessity for anyone leading these trips for the first time.

The author, John Chapman, is a Melbournite with much experience in Tasmanian bush. The basis for the book was obtained mostly personally by John Chapman in the summer 1977-78.

The aim of the Newsletter is to keep bushwalkers up to date with current matters of interest. It will do this best if its articles come from a reasonably large range of walkers, not just the regular contributors. Articles for the Newsletter are always wanted. Any articles for the Newsletter can be sent to

Bob Sault,
 4 Clarence Avenue,
 Killara 2071
 (Phone 498 7897)

Closing dates for articles will generally be very early in the month. All other correspondence should be sent to
 Federation of Bushwalking Clubs
 Box 2090, G.P.O.,
 Sydney. 2001