

Bushwalking NSW

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GENERAL MEETING 25 MAY 2021 MINUTES - DRAFT

Time & Date	7:30-9:00pm on Tuesday, 25 th May 2021
Location:	Online via Zoom

Attendees:

Name	Club	Delegate/Attendee
Alison Harris		Attendee
Amy Reeves		Attendee
Andrew Davey		Attendee
Andrew Stones		Attendee
Ann Sharp		Attendee
Anne Plowman		Attendee
Anton Baggerman		Attendee
Artspark Studio		Attendee
Barry Williams		Attendee
Ben Salon		Attendee
Bill Gehling		Attendee
Bronwyn Fuller		Attendee
Charlie Potter		Attendee
Chris - BBLLAG		Attendee
Chris Nash		Attendee
Corey Hanrahan		Attendee
Corrine McCallum		Attendee
Dan Broun		Attendee
Danuta Hulajko	Women's Walks Southern Highlands Inc	Delegate
David Bell		Committee
David Gurney		Attendee
David Springthorpe	The Coast and Mountain Walkers	Delegate
Derek Synnott		Attendee
Ella Freestone		Attendee
Emily Hanrahan		Attendee
Eva Squire		Attendee
Fiona Wright		Attendee
Freya Higgins-Desbiolles		Attendee
Gina Woodward		Attendee
Heather Ferguson		Delegate
Heather Hughes	Sutherland Bushwalking Club	Delegate
Helen Dalton		Attendee
Helen Donovan	Walking SA	Attendee
Helen Rakali		Attendee

Quorum: 5 delegates present in person or by proxy, representing at least 3 approved organisations constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a general meeting.

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Helen Smith		Attendee
HL Gan		Attendee
James McCormack	Wild	Presenter
Janet Smith		Attendee
Jason Little		Attendee
Jenny Smith		Attendee
Jess Barker - BLLAG		Attendee
Jo Petersen		Attendee
Jodie Dixon		Attendee
John Marshall		Attendee
John VanderNiet		Attendee
Jon Gray	Bankstown Bushwalking Club	Delegate
Julian Sacre		Attendee
Kate Johnston		Attendee
Keith Maxwell	The Bush Club	Delegate
Ken Campbell		Attendee
Lachlan Short		Attendee
Laura Hahn		Attendee
Leah Taylor		Attendee
Leonie Bell	Sydney Christian Walkers	Delegate
Lisa Parnell		Attendee
Lucy Moore		Attendee
Lynda Paju		Attendee
Maarten van der Wende	National Parks Association of NSW	Delegate
Margaret Covi		Committee
Margaret Moorhouse		Attendee
Mark Connell		Attendee
Mary Marlow		Attendee
MB		Attendee
Megan Pryke		Attendee
Melinda Brouwer		Attendee
Michelle Kennedy		Attendee
Murray Stanley		Attendee
Paul Jennings	NSW Nordic Ski Club	Delegate
Paulus Wijngaarden		Delegate
Peter Hamer		Attendee
Peter Robinson		Attendee
Richard Fornari		Attendee
Robert Gillam	Yarrowood Bushwalking Club	Delegate
Rod Quintrell		Attendee
Rose Grum		Attendee
Rosemary Nichols		Attendee
Sam Garrett-Jones		Delegate

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Shane Flynn		Attendee
Sharon Colsey		Attendee
Shaune Walsh	Sutherland Bushwalking Club	Delegate
Shawn Buchan		Attendee
Shawn Palmer		Attendee
Sonja Weinberg		Attendee
Susan Bowes		Attendee
Susan Halliday		Attendee
Teresa Rose		Attendee
Thais Turner	Bankstown Bushwalking Club	Delegate
Tim Trehearn		Attendee
Tim Unger		Attendee
Tim Hanigan		Attendee
TJ Chang		Attendee
Tom Allen		Attendee
Ute Foster	The Coast and Mountain Walkers	Delegate
Vanessa Wills		Attendee
Xavier Anderson		Attendee
Yvonne Trevaskis		Attendee

Present

1. Members of the Bushwalking NSW Committee and delegates of various BNSW clubs, additional members and visitors as per the attendance list above.

The meeting commenced at 7pm with David Bell as chair.

2. The EO and Chair welcomed members and visitors at 1900 and in the meeting preamble a number of clubs reported on their activities. The Chair declared the General Meeting open at 1930, and welcomed James McCormack.

Apologies

3. Jennie Minifie; Bill Avery, Secretary The Walking Volunteers.

Previous Minutes

4. The Chair moved that the tabled minutes of the General Meeting of the 16th Feb, 2021 Bushwalking NSW Inc General Meeting be accepted.

Seconded and approved.

Guest Speaker

5. James McCormack, Editor of Wild Magazine, spoke on the topic: Luxury Lodges = Wilderness Lost. James first presented this topic in Wild Magazine Issues #178 and #179. Some points shared (not exhaustive):

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- The goal is no private infrastructure in national parks. It isn't no business. Just no private infrastructure. It's not about being anti-business, nor anti-luxury, and it's not about being pro- or anti-huts. These developments aren't just huts. They're huge.
- Private accommodation for walkers within national parks is at the core of our worldviews such as: private/public, rich/poor, development/wilderness etc.
- Cost to stay in luxury accommodation around \$3,000 for 3 nights.
- This phenomenon of accommodation being built in National Parks nation-wide.
- Impacts on equality of access:
 - Exclusion of many, purely due to economics
 - Exclusion of campers
 - Numbers limited it seems to increase exclusiveness
- This is the loss of access to public land
- Largest issue is loss of wilderness – can't have a wilderness lodge – once the lodge is there, it's no longer wilderness. Visual and sound impacts.
- Loss of wilderness suits the target demographic: "52-year-old single female".
- Instead of taking these clients to appropriate locations; it's to make locations 'appropriate' to his clients by removing wilderness.
- Huge servicing required = helicopters = noise = loss of wilderness
- Other issues:
 - land clearing
 - greywater waste clogged and inadequate, killing myrtle forest downstream
 - hardening of trails – remove mud, add steps, more duckboarding,
 - Loss of serendipity, spontaneity and freedom
- the Light to Light Great Walk is only one of more than 100 projects the Government has identified with the aim of generating an income from national parks. Nine money-making projects have been given "priority funding" from **\$80 million allocated**
- The NPWS has declined a freedom of information request for the details of the other 90 or so projects under consideration
- The tragedy is that many of these developments are paid for by tax dollars. The public pays their taxes, and some of those tax dollars are then doled out to developers so they can alienate that same tax-paying public.
- Sums are eye-watering \$3 - \$25 million. Some without environmental impacts assessments, nor business cases made.
- Reasoning for developments is jobs but more would be employed with porters, camp crews, cooks ... without the huts and hot showers.
- Jobs will be lost – by outdoor guiding companies, and then on KI, and around Ben Boyd NP, many B+B's and accommodation providers who will lose out clients to these lodges. And transport service companies etc etc

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- Government is not receiving good returns either. At Malbena 10ha of wilderness (and the chopper flight paths covering thousands of hectares), is being flogged for as little as \$20/week. It's hard to see the value spending \$25 million, to gain say, \$100K in licensing fees.
- National parks already pay their way and contribute \$19.5 billion annually to NSW's economy.
- These developments grant monopoly rights to private companies. No competition from other lodges. Camping the only competition, hence the push to close campsites.
- Marketing is already done for them. National parks are a brand.
- Showers are fundamental to the lodges' marketability. But they're not appropriate in the wilderness. Soaps, shampoos, cosmetics, etc. Plus gas shuttled in by helicopter.
- Commercial tourist infrastructure doesn't have broad community support. 90% were strongly opposed to Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing. Only 3 in 1,346 submissions supported Tasmania's Lake Malbena/Hall's Island development.
- Projects getting through emasculated national parks bureaucracy, replaced by tourism sector. But there's even been a split in the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania, with some members revolting against the push for tourist projects within parks.
- Political influence of tourism industry lobbyists is immense.
- Lodge developments allow politicians to seem like they are 'doing something'. Far harder for a politician to drum up interest in a media release saying that within any given park, nothing has altered in decades.
- See:

<https://www.facebook.com/benboydlighttolightactiongroup>

General Business

6. The EO gave a quick run through of the main themes of the Strategic Plan.

Close

7. The Chair concluded by thanking James McCormack and declared the meeting closed at 2100.