TNPA NEWS

TASMANIAN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION INC

Newsletter No 14 Spring 2010 & Summer 2011

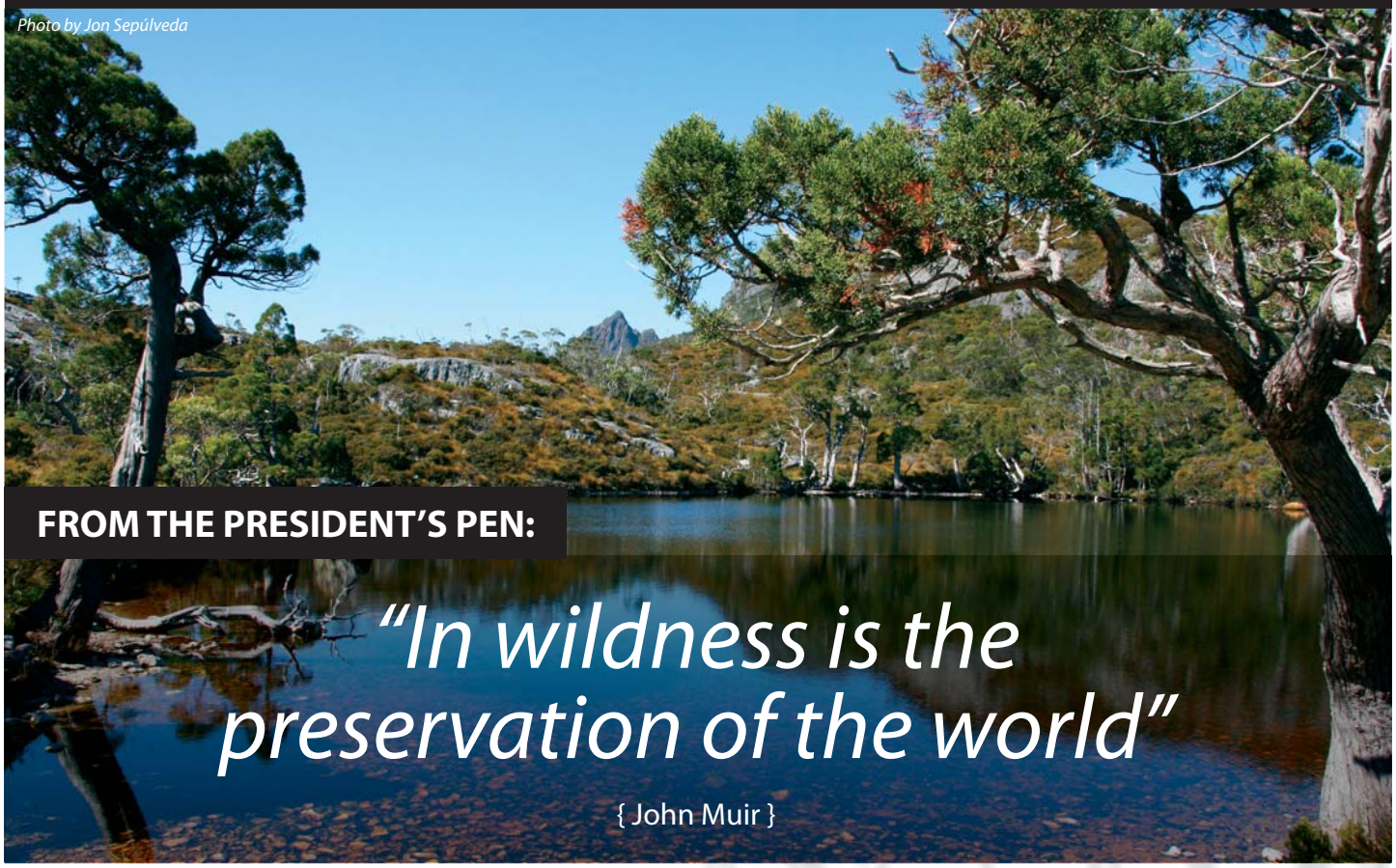


Photo by Jon Sepúlveda

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN:

"In wildness is the preservation of the world"

{ John Muir }

As I write this it is less than a week to Christmas and, with holidays looming for many, it is a time to reflect over the activities and achievements one has undertaken during the year. In keeping with this theme I thought it might be an opportune time to share with you some of these reflections.

As in past years, the TNPA has had a reasonably busy year and continues to be the public voice on management issues relating to Tasmania's conservation reserves. The main focus over the last twelve months has been the proposed Three Capes Track development within the Tasman National Park. The development, initially proposed by the Lennon Labor government around five years ago, is to construct a permit-operated six-day walk with both public and private accommodation facilities and is aimed at providing a second iconic walk similar to the existing "Overland Track Experience" [*see development time line box inside newsletter* – Ed].

While the TNPA has concerns with the proposed routing of the track (it leaves out the scenic Waterfall Bay to Fortescue Bay section, and some new track sections pass through phytophthora sensitive and high risk areas), our main concern is with the excessive level of infrastructure that is proposed to be built in the Park, primarily associated with the five accommodation

THANK YOU

The TNPA Committee would like to thank the following people and organisations who have over the last months volunteered their time to assist the TNPA, or who have helped us in other ways.

The TNPA Autumn Walks 2010
Rosemary Bruce, John Cannon, Heather Chauncy, Catharine Errey, Pam Fenerty, Rob Hill and Lesley Nicklason; and particularly Bec Johnson, the 'Autumn Walks' organiser.

The 2010 Buttongrass Ball & Other Fundraising
Chris Bell, Peter Berechree, Plants of Tasmania, Judy Sandeman, The VerandahCoots, David Wanless, Greg Wood.

TNPA News Production (this edition)
Tasprint Pty Ltd, Chris Bell, Jess Feehely, Bec Johnson, Bec Kurczok, Jon Nevill and Simone Yemm.

Secretarial Assistance to the TNPA Simone Yemm.

Other Support & Assistance
Tom Baxter, Chris Bell, Bob Brown, Jenny Burnett, Janet Henderson, Rob & Toni Hill, Steve Johnson, Debbie Quarmby, Ray Thomas, Greg Wood, Environment Tasmania, Sustainable Living Tasmania, and the National Parks Australia Council.

To identify, protect, conserve, present, and where appropriate, rehabilitate the area and to transmit that heritage to future generations in as good or better condition than at present.

Overall objectives of the World Heritage Area Management Plan 1999

nodes. The Government appears to be strongly committed to this development, although the project cost of constructing the walk has gone from $15-18 million to $30 million, vindicating TNPA's early view that the development would cost at least $25 million. During the past year the TNPA has proposed a model similar to that of the Great Ocean Walk in Victoria where, apart from camping facilities provided within the Park, all building-based accommodation facilities are provided by private operators located outside the park. The Tasman Peninsula is ideally suited to this model, and the TNPA believes that like Great Ocean Walk this would provide a much better conservation outcome for the Park as well as facilitate a greater spread of economic benefits.

During 2010 the TNPA has continued the postcard campaign, spoken with politicians of all persuasions, has meet with Tourism Tasmania; made a presentation to the Tasman Council; and had several letters published in the Mercury newspaper. Several media releases also focused on the flaws in an economic analysis of the benefits of the development undertaken by KPMG. The media have also taken up the issue, with the ABC Stateline program doing a segment in which representatives from the TNPA were interviewed. With the Federal Government committing around $12million to the proposal as part of a regional infrastructure stimulus package, the TNPA has written to both the Federal Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Infrastructure to inform them of our concerns.

While some initial environmental assessments have been undertaken by the Parks and Wildlife Service, the full EIS will form part of the Development Plan and Environmental Management Plan which is to be released for public comment early in 2011. The government is also seeking a third funding contribution (believed to be around $7 million) from a commercial operator. This is of extreme concern to the TNPA as it implies a long-term stake and probable control of a significant part of this national park by commercial interests, if this arrangement is adopted. This is reflected by the concern held by bushwalking clubs about restrictions which are likely to apply to those who are not doing the 3 Capes Track re: walking and camping at existing campsites in the park.

The Tasmanian State election was held in March 2010, with the result potentially being of relevance to the ongoing management of reserved lands within Tasmania. Consequently the TNPA put considerable energy into lobbying the three main parties in the lead-up to the election, and developed a policy and set of 'asks' for the election (see TNPA News 13), and promoted its views through meetings with the parties, an election sticker and several stalls at the Saturday Salamanca Market in Hobart.

A number of core issues were raised in the election policy. First, in order to ensure a better framework for protected area management in Tasmania, in recent years the TNPA has lobbied for a single Minister to oversee the two Acts that control the creation and management of reserved land in Tasmania, and to ensure that this Minister has no conflict of interest. Second, after the funding cuts to the Parks and Wildlife Service in mid-2009, the TNPA and other stakeholder groups had lobbied hard for this funding to be restored and increased. The TNPA therefore is pleased to congratulate the Labor-Green government for acting on these two issues.

Together with these two main issues, the TNPA has also provided submissions or comments on the following issues:

- the proposed Bay of Fires National Park,
- the management of off-road recreational vehicles in the Arthur-Pieman Conservation Area,
- the decision by the Resource Planning and Development Commission on the Lauderdale Quays development located within the Ralphs Bay Conservation Zone,
- the future management options for the historic Lake Margaret Power Station site,
- the revised Tasmania Heritage Register listing for the D'Entrecasteaux Sites,
- the draft State Coastal Policy,
- the proposed Visitor Centre and café at The Springs within the Mount Wellington Park, which led to an interview and article appearing in the Mercury, and
- a proposed standing camp, and the associated servicing by helicopters, at Christys Creek within the Central Plateau Conservation Area.

More recently the TNPA has written to the Parks and Wildlife Service (PWS) commenting on proposals by Tasmania Air Adventures (TAA) to fly float planes into a number of popular tourist and wilderness areas around Tasmania. While another business, Roaring 40s Sea Kayaking, has also expressed interest in using such transport to land clients on the Bathurst Channel, they have also noted that *"growth in visitation is eroding the area's wilderness values"* and argue *"that greater management control should be placed on all visitations (commercial and non-commercial) to ensure that the remote wilderness value of the area is maintained into the future. Fundamentally the company feels that motorised transport of all kinds is at odds with wilderness values".* The TNPA agrees strongly with these sentiments and is requesting that the PWS develop a clear policy for motorised access to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA) based on a process of broad public consultation. This need was amply demonstrated around 10 years ago when there was an unprecedented level and uniformity of public opposition to the proposal to provide helicopter landing sites in the TWWHA. Of 651 public submissions received through the public consultation process, only 12 supported the proposal to allow helicopter landing sites, and 3 of these were from the proponents.

The TNPA has also followed up a number of issues brought to our attention by members during the year. These have included: the noise and disturbance associated with helicopters over the Overland track, the upgrading of the

road on Maria Island NP, the advertised "exclusive" access arrangements to Schouten Island (part of the Freycinet NP) for clients of the up-market Saffire Lodge outside Coles Bay, and the location of a new weather facility on The Boomerang within the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. The Committee welcomes members bringing such issues to their attention and encourages this practice. After all, our members (and the public in general) are our eyes in the parks.

As well as focusing on the above park-related conservation issues, the TNPA also undertook the following activities during the year:

- organised the "TNPA Autumn Walks" during which the TNPA hosted a month of free, guided bushwalks on weekends from mid April to early May,
- attended both the one-day National Parks Australia Council and ACT NPA Symposium held in Canberra during May,
- held a slide night at the University as a fundraiser and organised a wine fundraiser,
- helped with the Folk Federation (Tasmanian) annual Buttongrass Ball, the proceeds of which are generously donated to the TNPA by the band and dance caller (the VerandahCoots and Dave Wanless),
- produced TNPA News13,
- held several Saturday stalls at the Salamanca Market. (we see this as a valuable place to promote the TNPA and issues of concern to Tasmanians and to interstate and international visitors),
- provided information to the journalist Dallas Hewitt for an article relating to the new parks legislation recently introduced in NSW, (the article appeared in Nov/Dec 2010 issue of Australian Geographic Outdoor), and
- continued to liaise closely with other key Tasmanian ENGOs, in particular Environment Tasmania and the Tasmanian Conservation Trust.

In June this year we also welcomed Simone Yemm as the Secretarial Services officer for the TNPA.

As in past years, the continued success of the TNPA depends on the commitment of a dedicated Management Committee and the continued support provided by our members and other supporters for assisting in all our activities. I personally thank you all and please know that your continued support is genuinely appreciated. And finally, while this edition of the TNPA News will not be printed and distributed until the new year, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the TNPA Committee to extend our best wishes to everyone for a safe and happy festive season and all the best for 2011. We hope you have time to get out and enjoy Tasmania's wonderful natural places and parks.

Robert Campbell , President

TNPA PEOPLE

Catharine Errey

– TNPA's newest Management Committee Member

I grew up in Fern Tree with parents who were proto greenies and treechangers. Having moved to Tasmania from Adelaide, they were entranced by Tasmania's natural beauty and wildness – and their enthusiasm rubbed off on their offspring. I was introduced to bushwalking at an early age and it has been a favourite activity ever since.

I lived away from Tasmania for many years and while in Sydney joined the National Parks Association (NPA) in NSW (a very long-established organisation in NSW) so that I could go on some of their bushwalks (they have an extensive bushwalking program). I certainly did that, but was also impressed by all the environmental lobbying work that they do and which is reported in their glossy bimonthly (I think) journal. I sometimes responded to the journal's prompts to write letters to politicians, etc, on various issues.

A good friend of mine was for many years president of the Armidale NPA branch and she spearheaded a group which put together a proposal for some extensions to the New England National Park – which the Parks Service adopted. My friend has also served on an advisory committee to the NSW Parks Service – it would be good to see TNPA given this kind of recognition but our local organisation is still young and relatively unknown – let's hope this changes! [TNPA has applied – unsuccessfully (Ed)]

When I moved back to Tasmania in 2002 I made enquiries about the local NPA and got round to joining the TNPA a couple of years after that. I am also involved with various environmental groups in an outdoor hands-on capacity, including Fern Tree Landcare, Threatened Plants Tasmania and TLC, and have just come back from the remote west coast having been a SPRAT (sea spurge eradicator!). I am also something of an online activist, doing submissions from time to time and sending the occasional email to the relevant pollies.

I feel greatly privileged to be living in this beautiful island that has so many unspoiled wild places, and that I still have the health and physical capability to be able to "go bush". At the same time I recognise that our national parks and other reserved areas are such only through the passion and efforts of many people over many years – and I feel that those of us who appreciate Tasmania's wild places have an obligation to help keep them that way.

By Jess Feehely, Environmental Defenders Office

Review of the EPBC Act:

Proposed changes to improve federal environmental laws

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)* is the key piece of national legislation regulating environmental impacts in Australia. While natural resource management and planning have traditionally been the responsibility of state and territory governments, the EPBC Act recognises the need for a consistent approach to environmental regulation on matters of national importance.

> *"The Panel noted some valuable achievements made by the legislation, but found that it was unnecessarily complex and overly prescriptive in some areas"*

In 2008, then Federal Environment Minister, Peter Garrett, commissioned Dr Allan Hawke to conduct the mandatory 10 year review of how effectively the EPBC Act has been implemented and whether it is achieving its objectives (the 'Hawke Review'). Over the following year, Dr Hawke and the review panel received 340 written submissions from non-government organisations, industry bodies and interested individuals, as well as contributions from academics and government agencies.

The long-awaited final report was released to the public in December 2009[1]. The Panel noted some valuable achievements made by the legislation, but found that it was unnecessarily complex and overly prescriptive in some areas and made 71 recommendations for improving its operation. This article briefly examines several key recommendations of the Hawke Review aimed at addressing some of the current failings of the EPBC Act in relation to management of natural values – proposed new triggers, review of the Regional Forest Agreements and improved monitoring and enforcement.[2]

[1] *Report of the Independent Review of the EPBC Act 1999. October 2009. This report, and the interim report, are available at http://www.environment.gov.au/epbc/review/index.html.*

[2] *While the Hawke Review addressed both natural and cultural values, this article concentrates on recommendations affecting natural values. This article draws on a number of review pieces, including Major changes proposed to federal environmental laws by Hawke review, N. Thomas & T. Kwok; "The EPBC Act: toward extinction or evolution?". I. Spence, The Australian Pipeliner, April 2010; and "Review suggests improvements to key environment act", J. Moran and M. Considine, Ecos Magazine v 153, http://ecosmagazine.com/paper/EC153p4.htm.*

A NEW ENVIRONMENT ACT

The Hawke Review makes various recommendations which aim to clarify the EPBC Act's purpose, including confirming that ecologically sustainable development is the overarching principle, and protection of the environment is the 'primary object' of the Act. Given the extent of the proposed changes, the Review also recommends rebranding the legislation as the *Australian Environment Act* to "embrace the all encompassing nature of the environment and the Act's role as national legislation".

A number of recommendations in the Hawke Review focus on improving the legislation around the principles of "harmonisation, accreditation, standardisation, simplification and oversight." These recommendations include:

- establishing a standard national list of threatened species, marine species and ecological communities by accrediting existing State lists,
- investment in better policy advice and guidance regarding what constitutes a 'significant impact',
- expanding the role of strategic assessments, particularly in relation to water plans,
- once a referral is triggered, allowing the Minister to consider the impact of the proposal on the whole of the environment,
- establishing an independent Environment Commission to advise the government on project approvals, strategic assessments and bioregional plans,
- establishing an Environment Reparation Fund and national 'biobanking' scheme, and
- improving transparency in decision-making and providing greater access to the courts for public interest litigation.

SCOPE OF THE ACT

The EPBC Act has been criticised for failing to provide comprehensive protection to Australia's environment.[3] The Act, and therefore the role of the Federal government, is constrained by the limited list of 'matters of national

[3] *See, for example, the submission to the Hawke Review by the Australian Network of Environmental Defenders Offices, February 2009 - available at http://www.edo.org.au/policy/090219epbc.pdf (viewed 14 December 2010).*

environmental significance' for which assessment and approval by the Federal Minister is required. Currently, approval is only required for actions likely to have a significant impact on the following matters (often referred to as 'triggers'):

1. World heritage values of World Heritage properties;
2. Wetlands of international importance (Ramsar wetlands);
3. Listed threatened species and ecological communities[4];
4. Listed migratory species;
5. Commonwealth marine areas;
6. Nuclear actions; and
7. Listed National Heritage places and Commonwealth Heritage places.

> *"The EPBC Act does not currently apply directly to many issues of national concern, including greenhouse gas emissions, land clearing and water extraction."*

The EPBC Act does not currently apply directly to many issues of national concern, including greenhouse gas emissions, land clearing and water extraction. Many organisations that made submissions to the Hawke Review recommended that the scope of the EPBC Act be increased to give effect to international commitments (including the Kyoto Protocol) and to better protect Australia's environment.

Proposed new triggers

In response to criticisms regarding the scope of the EPBC Act, the Hawke Review recommended a number of changes that would broaden the regulatory reach of the Act, including:

- A trigger for actions likely to impact on ecosystems of national significance; and
- An interim trigger for actions likely to produce more than 500,000t of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_2e) annually.

The inclusion of a trigger for significant ecosystems is intended to promote a landscape scale approach to environmental assessments, recognising ecosystems which are significant in building a representative system of habitat types, resilient sustainable landscapes and connectivity between ecosystems and which may provide a significant climate change refuge for displaced species. The proposed trigger aims to better manage the cumulative impacts of actions which collectively contribute to the decline of threatened species and habitat.

Noting the need for an urgent response to carbon pollution, the Review recommended that an interim greenhouse gas trigger be introduced while the proposed market-based scheme is established.[5] The Review also recommended that all strategic assessments and bioregional plans be required to consider cost-effective climate change mitigation measures. Both recommendations reflect a move towards a more holistic assessment of the impacts of proposed actions, and would allow emissions-intensive proposals to be subject to conditions regulating the quantity, management and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions.

Regional Forest Agreements

The EPBC Act also does not currently apply to forestry activities undertaken in areas covered by Regional Forest Agreements[6], including a number of high value conservation forest areas. This exemption was introduced in 2002[7], to 'avoid duplication' of the assessments undertaken during the RFA process. However, the RFA assessments have been criticised as scientifically flawed and failing to assure adequate protection of biodiversity consistent with the objectives of the EPBC Act.[8] Many submissions were also critical of the monitoring of compliance with RFA processes (such as compliance with conditions of forest practices plans in Tasmania).

The Hawke Review noted that the current process for review and auditing RFAs is "neither independent nor transparent, and more importantly, in most cases, required reviews are not being undertaken. Long-term sustainability of the forests and forest industry require this to be rectified."

The Review concluded that it was not appropriate to remove the RFA exemption and require the Federal government to assess impacts on a coupe-by-coupe basis. However, the Hawke Review recommended tighter scrutiny of RFAs and a stronger focus on their performance in protecting biodiversity, including:

- Commonwealth and the States to agree to sustainability indicators to provide a basis for performance auditing for RFAs;
- Reviews of RFAs are to consider whether the RFA meets the objectives of protecting biodiversity and continuous improvement of the Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management framework;
- The EPBC Act provisions will apply if the review has not been conducted within 2 years, or if the review indicates that the RFA is inadequate, alleged breaches are not being investigated, or that RFA processes are not being complied with in respect of a particular action.

IMPROVED MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT

The Hawke Review also makes a number of recommendations regarding compliance, such as giving the Minister discretion to undertake compliance and performance audits, and to retrospectively alter permit conditions if the circumstances demand it (such as when unexpected impacts are

[4] *Species listed under State or Territory legislation, will not be subject to the EPBC Act unless the species is also listed in the EPBC Regulations.*
[5] *Report of the Independent Review of the EPBC Act 1999, October 2009, p22.*
[6] *Section 38 of the EPBC Act.*
[7] *See Schedule 1, Regional Forest Agreements Act 2002.*
[8] *For example, see the decision in Brown v Forestry Tasmania (No 4) [2006] FCA 1729, per Justice Marshall.*

identified, or the impacts are greater than anticipated). This recommendation is further supported by the call to produce a code of conduct for consultants conducting environmental impact assessments under the EPBC Act. The Code would include auditing protocols to confirm that predictions made during the EIA prove correct upon implementation.

The recommendations also provide for a wider range of enforcement options, including warning notices for minor non-compliance and Environment Protection Orders to prevent or compel certain actions (such as rehabilitation work) where more serious breaches have occurred.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

When he released the Hawke Review final report, then Minister Peter Garrett explicitly rejected the recommendations in relation to the RFA provisions and stated that a greenhouse trigger would not be necessary, even as an interim measure, if the proposed CPRS scheme was passed by the Parliament.[9] He noted at the time that the government would respond to all other recommendations around mid-2010. To date, no further statements have been made regarding the implementation of the Hawke Review.

It is hoped that the Commonwealth government will soon announce its support for many of the comprehensive, progressive reforms recommended for the EPBC Act; reassess the need for a greenhouse trigger; and reconsider its opposition to the RFA proposals. A revised Environment Act in line with the Hawke Review would significantly improve Australia's capacity to achieve our international obligations and to effectively manage critical natural values.

[9] Peter Garrett media release 21 December 2009 - available at www.thegovmonitor.com/energy_and_environment/australia-releases-the-hawke-environmental-report-19453.html.

RE-STYLING OUR PARKS?

Those amongst you who have visited Tasmania's national parks in the last 12months or so, have no doubt seen a lot of new 'blue' signs, and noticed a parallel loss of the traditional 'brown' PWS signs.

It would seem that the PWS has been progressively replacing all the brown timber signs (with white routered writing) in Tasmanian national parks, including the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, with blue plastic signs with white writing (see photo from Freycinet National Park).

This is something that some of our members have brought to our attention, expressing concerns such as –

- the loss of what are in effect the traditional style of sign for national parks Australia-wide and across much of the world,
- the colour is very visible, and not 'natural' colour, and therefore does not blend in, and
- such a significant change occurring with no public consultation (or advice even).

It would seem that these concerns are valid. The blue signs are insensitive to their national park context. Because of their colour they do not blend in and are highly visible. In parts of the Central Plateau they can be seen from over a kilometre away, making a mockery of the 'wilderness' values which underpin this World Heritage Area. One could also question the use of recycled plastic in a natural, conservation context.

We also question the need for a style change – from something synonymous with national parks and reserved land management to something that is more closely associated with tourist signs. While the blue signs might be appropriate for marine and coastal reserves, there is nothing about them that echoes, or is sympathetic to, our terrestrial parks and other conservation reserves. It has been rumoured that the change was required to meet new standards. It is hard to believe however that every sign in Australia is required to be blue with white lettering, and made of plastic!

And, yes, where was the public consultation for such a major change to the presentation of our parks – which are after all part of the public estate?

Photo by A. McConnell

The TNPA would also question the cost of this state-wide sign replacement. Of course, there will be some older signs that would have needed replacement, but it is highly unlikely this would have been more than a small percentage of existing signs. Our major concern in relation to the cost of the exercise is that the PWS, which has been grossly underfunded in the last 10 years and which received a significant boost in funding in the 2009-2010 following pressure (including from the TNPA and other environmental NGOs), has chosen to spend their extremely scarce dollars – meant for building up the diminished ranger numbers and for serious infrastructure maintenance and repair – on a costly and inessential program of state-wide sign replacement. What does this action say about the priorities of the PWS? Sadly it strongly implies that conservation is significantly lower on the list than tourism and visitation support!

There have an unprecedented number of 'inappropriate infrastructure' concerns brought to our attention by TNPA members in the last 12 months. This is of concern to the TNPA as it suggests the PWS is re-styling itself – away from a conservation agency, and/or the assessment and approvals processes within the PWS have broken down in part, resulting in poor infrastructure decisions.

We hope to have a more detailed coverage of this matter in the next issue. And, to help in our exploration of this matter, the TNPA would like to hear more members' views about infrastructure changes/new infrastructure they are aware of in Tasmanian reserved lands.

Anne McConnell

MARINE PARKS

Australia has made international commitments to "protect at least 10% of the marine environment". The Australian Marine Science Association has interpreted this commitment as requiring at least 10% of all major marine ecosystems protected within no-take areas, or marine sanctuaries (with vulnerable or rare ecosystems protected at much higher levels). While the deadline for this target is imminent, both the Commonwealth and States have fallen short of this goal, at least if you accept AMSA's interpretation.

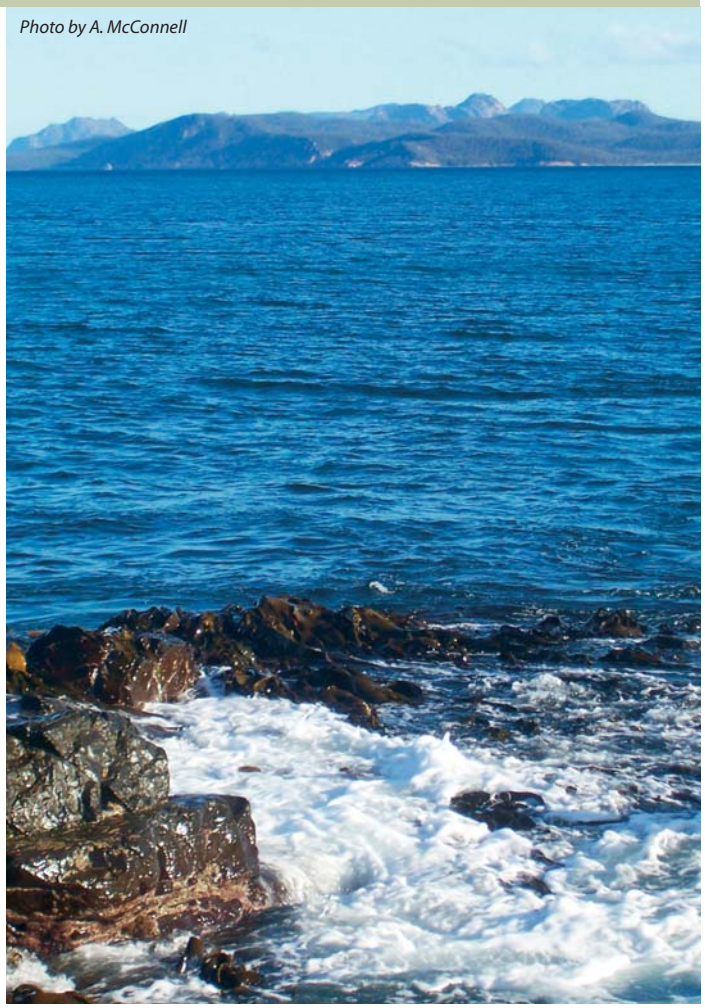
However, progress amongst Australia's jurisdictions varies from 'not bad' (Queensland) to 'terrible' (Tasmania).

Queensland in conjunction with the Commonwealth has protected about 10% of all coral habitats off the Queensland coast in sanctuary zones, and other habitats are protected to varying degrees. South Australia is currently developing a comprehensive network of marine protected areas - although how effective it will be in providing real protection remains to be seen. Western Australia is progressively expanding its MPA system. Last year Tasmania created a suite of so-called 'marine protected areas' in the Bruny Bioregion; however all are open to fishing. These 'parks' in fact provide no effective protection, placing Tasmania alongside the worst third-world countries with their networks of 'paper parks'. In New South Wales, the State Parliament at first agreed (early 2010) to support an initiative by the Shooters Party which would have seen a roll-back of the State's marine sanctuaries. I believe however the Parliament is having second thoughts, and it is to be hoped that this retrograde move by the Shooters Party will come to nothing. However the situation is also worrying in Victoria, where the State Government has promised a review of their MPA system (although only 5.3% of State waters, most are sanctuaries) with a view to closing some parks, or reducing their size.

Shortly before the last Federal election, Tony Abbott (the leader of the Federal Opposition) promised a review of the Commonwealth MPA program, again with a view to rolling back protection levels and areas. This was extremely disappointing, as (until his statement) there had been broad bipartisan support at the Federal level for nearly 20 years for the establishment of marine protected areas based on conservation principles and supported by science.

The establishment of marine protected areas finds wide support amongst conservationists and the tourism industry. However, fisher groups, both recreational and commercial, have argued that the scientific justification for MPA networks is poor or non-existent. This is not correct, and a group of scientists wrote an open letter to the Prime Minister and Tony Abbott

Photo by A. McConnell



underlining the strength of the science behind the creation of MPA networks. This letter, along with the AMSA MPA *Position Paper*, can be found on my website, onlyoneplanet.com.au.

In summary, Australia, both at the State and Commonwealth levels, has failed to make adequate progress in meeting international commitments to protect the marine environment. Even so, continued progress in this important area faces strident opposition from fishers, although they stand to benefit in the long term from protection measures. Australia's fish stocks, under current management regimes, are in general decline (note for example the recent collapse of Western Australia's rock lobster fishery). Poor science is one of the primary arguments put forward by MPA opponents - entirely wrongly.

I believe the TNPA needs to have a policy position on MPAs. Rather than develop its own statement, my view is that the TNPA should endorse AMSA's 2008 Position Paper on MPAs. The AMSA paper is balanced and well-argued, and provides a detailed review of the science. My only concern with the AMSA paper is that the target they advocate (at least 10% of ecosystems protected in no-take zones) is low by most scientific assessments, many of which recommend 30% to 50% should be protected in sanctuary zones.

For further reading see the links on the marine page of my website (see address above).

Jon Nevill

By Chris Bell

Wilderness - What is it?

Photo by C. Bell

Wilderness is a primal landscape where the interaction between all living organisms – and between those organisms and that landscape in question (an ecosystem) – is largely intact, and which is sufficiently remote from *modern human altered* landscapes as to render the impression of originality of the Earth: ie; where we can imagine an Earth before humans – *irrespective* of the fact that some of these landscapes may have had an indigenous past and the landscape in question may not be entirely 'unmodified' by earlier peoples. Thus, wilderness can either be an absolute (as is the case of Antarctica, Greenland, the alpine areas of Tasmania, etc) or relative (parts of Southwest Tasmania for example); either way, it is a remote place where we can sense that Nature is still decreeing the rhythms of life.

There are many definitions of wilderness from many individuals and from many organizations. The more critically we look at the attributes of land we judge to be wilderness, the sharper we have to be in order to define precisely what wilderness is, and the more clinical our language must be. The above definition, the author's own, could be infinitely honed, but is presented here merely to establish a simple cornerstone from which we can evaluate the arguments others have put forward. Additionally, as we learn more about the impact of some indigenous cultures upon their landscapes it is necessary to further hone our interpretation of what we mean when we say 'unmodified'.

The novelist Virginia Woolf once claimed that "Words are an impure medium" and, as this is obviously true, it is not surprising that as a consequence it is difficult (if not impossible) to precisely articulate human concepts. Few words in the English language have been so thoroughly misunderstood or are becoming so irrationally dismissed as the word 'wilderness'. And fewer still have been so thoroughly derided, even inciting hostility in some quarters.

Despite the dismissive rhetoric against it, wilderness is real and it is definable. Furthermore, the longer we are divided over semantics concerning which word describing this class of land is 'acceptable', the more this landscape will be exploited and lost. As a human community whose very future is now far from certain, and where all of us – be we indigenous inhabitants or Europeans – have at least an inkling of what we mean when we talk of 'wilderness', we cannot afford this division nor the squandering of time. Each and every hour of the day, wilderness, remote country, wildlands, 'country', call it what you will, is being sacrificed, degraded or destroyed entirely.

As many of the individuals dismissing wilderness are those who often use the words Nature, wilderness, wildness, landscape and even national park *synonymously*, it is time we examined the individual meaning of these words in order to carefully separate them.

Wilderness and wildness, while of course related, actually describe two different things. Wilderness, as defined at the beginning of this chapter, is a physical *place*; wildness on the other hand describes land's characteristics of originality and remoteness; its 'unmodified' (by modernity) state. Wilderness, must *always*, of necessity, be wild, but the reverse is not true. Many natural areas, while evoking a sense of wildness, may not necessarily be deemed wilderness as their core is too small or they are surrounded by highly visible, ruined landscapes (much of Hartz Mountains National Park in Tasmania for example – compromised by rural land to its east and clear felling to its northwest).

> *"Wilderness is always about Nature, but Nature is not necessarily about wilderness"*

Wilderness and Nature also are two essentially different entities which many writers and practising artists keep carelessly and consistently interchanging. Clearly stated, wilderness is *always* about Nature, but Nature is not necessarily about wilderness (in fact, rarely is). Wilderness is about a distant (by default) *physical place*, but Nature is about the living world in *general* which encapsulates the entire physical and living world. We cannot substitute them for they are different things.

Nature is also NOT landscape, yet, again, so many individuals comfortably interchange the two. Nature, as already described, is about the living world of which all life forms – including humans – are strands. Landscape is what is in front of us in a spatial sense; indeed, for many, it may not have any connection to Nature at all – we can call a new housing estate or an oil refinery a 'landscape' (as some artists do!). Wilderness, must of course, entail *landscape* (and all its constituent parts), but a landscape is not always a wilderness (in fact, seldom is).

Far from splitting straws, the distinctions are crucial; we need to be clinical in the use of language – particularly when there is so much confusion (and hostility) surrounding their use. To re-affirm: Nature is about the living world, in all its many manifestations which, in essence, 'drives the world' (however much it may be now compromised or imperilled). Wilderness is a *place* and it does exist.

A national park and wilderness are definitely *not* the same thing; they are separate entities. National parks are established, first and foremost, to protect biodiversity – *and*, of course, the physical landscape (and in rare circumstances, historically important places). A national park may sometimes contain a wilderness core, but many national parks in Australia are either far too small to contain a wilderness core or do not even exhibit a sense of 'wildness'.

Certainly the distortion, overuse, or usurping of the word wilderness (Wilderness Railway, Pennicott Wilderness Journeys, etc) by the tourism 'industry' does not help us to understand what the word *should* mean, and for any person involved in land management where wilderness is central to management strategies, the overuse or distortion is objectionable and deeply frustrating.

Now we have defined what wilderness is, we need to locate it!

When Captain Cook nudged the ice floes of Antarctica in the *Endeavour*, sailing further south than anyone had done before him, he was unaware he had almost discovered the seventh continent; yet Cook was certainly aware of one thing: continent or not, humans were absent from that part of the world. Antarctica was a wilderness in 1774, is a wilderness now, and doubtless will be a wilderness in a thousand years' time. The wilderness status of Antarctica is *absolute*; there is no debate.

Yet despite the rhetoric of many writers that wilderness does not exist (some at least acknowledging Antarctica as a wilderness) and in spite of the overwhelming assaults upon our Earth from an out-of-control land-gobbling population, large tracts of wilderness – *entirely unmodified by humans* – still occur on planet Earth ***outside*** of Antarctica.

Over 8 million hectares (larger than the island of Tasmania) of the Wrangell – St Elias / Kluane region in the US and Canada respectively – a region of glaciated valleys, immense icefields and some of the highest mountains in North America, are now contained in these national parks. Not only is most of this figure deemed wilderness by both governments, it *is* wilderness. By any definition! No humans have lived there (its very severity, both climatic and objective danger alone, has determined this) – or affected it (apart from some of the de-glaciated very edges perhaps). Additionally, vast areas of the Canadian Arctic, Arctic Alaska, and Greenland are wilderness. People should not confuse the fact that, whilst there are many Inuit communities in Greenland (small and localised), they are all located on the *edge* of the world's second largest ice cap – the margin of the hospitable world. Over 1.7 million hectares of the Patagonian Ice Caps (both north and south - not including the *non-iced* areas on the edges of these ice caps) are wilderness. Almost the entire Fiordland National Park in New Zealand is wilderness (the Maoris having lived on the fringes only). And, of course, as stated already, some areas of Tasmania – in particular our alpine areas.

The 'scholars' who claim wilderness does not exist would appear to be ignorant of geography, as much as anything. For example, Tim Low in ***The New Nature*** makes the mistake of claiming "the fantasy of primal landscapes denies the obvious truth that wilderness everywhere (except Antarctica) was inhabited and managed by people". This view is ill-informed

Photos this page by C. Bell

and un-researched, and the most elementary research into the above examples will refute this. It seems that too many people claim wilderness doesn't exist because either it is fashionable to do so, or they are simply ignorant of the planet they inhabit.

But herein lies the paradox: not only is wilderness a place where *no humans* have lived, it is also a place where they *have*! But in order to clarify this statement, we need to specify what *type* of people we are talking about, and what those people *did* within those respective 'wildernesses'.

Some years ago, observing country from the air I had not seen previously – Red Point Hills in Tasmania's Southwest National Park – I was disturbed momentarily by what looked like a maze of human tracks randomly spreading over the button-grass plains; I quickly realised my mis-reading of the landscape and recognised the culprits: furry animals! Wombats over indeterminable years have created a series of not-altogether-insignificant paths over what is, by any definition, a wilderness (indeed any wild landscape with large animal populations viewed from the air will reveal their trails). In one second's evaluation it was apparent that the mark of nomadic hunter-gatherers – even firing – is not a great deal different than, no more destructive than, the wanderings of wombats. Is it not true that Aborigines – or indeed any other nomadic hunter-gatherer group – devoid of *modern* (industrialised) tools were like any other animal wandering over the land - a part of the interconnectedness that links the actions of animals to land? It is important to note in this context that wandering nomads / hunter-gatherers are different than *sedentary indigenous peoples* who create much more marked and discernable impacts on the land. And there are many disquieting examples where such sedentary cultures destroyed the environment they so utterly depended upon, the classic example being Easter Island.

"herein lies the paradox: not only is wilderness a place where no humans have lived, it is also a place where they have!"

Wilderness, then, is *absolute* (Antarctica, Greenland, Arctic Alaska and Canada, alpine Tasmania, etc) ***or*** *relative*. Much of Tasmania's non-alpine wilderness, and indeed much of the *world's* wilderness, is relative. In Tasmania's case, Aborigines moved over and modified much of the landscape. A crucial point here is that no-one in

the wilderness movement has ever claimed that wilderness is an area that has never had people. On the contrary, the Wilderness Society in the United States, The Wilderness Society in Australia, and the Tasmanian National Parks Association, all acknowledge the history of indigenous peoples and their 'close association' with land – and are comfortable with the seeming paradox of a 'relative wilderness'.

Having illustrated the difference between an absolute wilderness and a relative wilderness, their individual 'worth' is a matter of degree, and perhaps, a matter of subjectivity. Whilst it could be said that an environment/habitat/landscape which has never had any human presence/modification is more 'valuable' than one that has – for an ultimate reference point if nothing else – one does not negate the other. Indeed the danger is that by valuing an 'ultimate' reference point over a partly modified one we are, by inference, suggesting that the latter is an inferior one, and hence, not quite worth preserving. This would seem to be a convenient pro-development assumption to reduce the extent of 'proven wilderness', by their definition, to zero.

Wilderness – if we can safeguard it against the forces that threaten to destroy it – is here to stay, both as a concept, and, as a place. But in order to zealously protect these remaining wild places, we will need to be not only more vigilant than ever in demanding they remain inviolate; but also that we are 'clinical' in the word's usage, that the concept is not debased by relegating it to a general term for all landscapes.

There can be no compromises now in wilderness preservation. We have been compromising the Earth for the last 10 000 years, and it is well past time to respect that part of the planet that has been minimally compromised! Whether we are talking about Greenland or Aboriginal-altered Port Davey / Bathurst Harbour – absolute or relative – these types of landscapes are way beyond any trivial or self-serving, demeaning logic that attempts to negate the veracity of wilderness as a reality. As the human condition deteriorates, as edifices crumble and our civilisation realises the future face of our planet will be vastly different to the one we now view as normal, the recuperative power of wilderness for a future human community will become ever more valuable in restoring what might remain of our humanity as members of a living Earth.

Wilderness is wilderness, Nature is Nature, and, as concepts, they are cheese and chalk. Inseparable as they may be by association, they will forever remain separate entities.

RECENT TNPA FUNDRAISING

TNPA has staged two fundraising events so far this financial year – a Slide Night at the Stanley Burbury Theatre, and a wine sale.

The slide night was made possible by Peter Berechree, who volunteered to show us the pictorial record of the recent trip he and his partner made, all the way along the Andes from the north of South America to the very south. It was an amazing and challenging trip, and every weekend cyclist in the audience was stunned by the degree of planning and stamina required to complete such a tour. And every weekend photographer was similarly stunned at the landscapes revealed by Peter's camera.

During a break in the presentation, supper was provided by the TNPA Management Committee who had been baking, baking, baking in readiness for the evening. The audience, as in previous years, clearly enjoyed the opportunity to try out the homemade cakes and biscuits with a cup of tea or coffee.

Over $2,000 was taken on the night, with some costs (the hire of the theatre, and reimbursement of tea, coffee, milk, etc), and we were pleased to donate some of the takings to a small school in Peru which Peter has been supporting for some years. Overall, we were able to add over $1,200 to our bank account from the evening.

Thanks to all TNPA members and their friends who came along and enjoyed the evening!

Our other fundraiser was organized by our then Public Officer, Greg Wood. He arranged with Prospect Wines for the opportunity for members to order high quality cleanskin wines, with a percentage of the sales going to TNPA. Thirteen members took advantage of the opportunity and overall, 2,241 bottles were ordered. From this activity, TNPA raised $540.

Many thanks, Greg, for your work on this fundraising event.

Patsy Jones

TNPA 2010 AUTUMN WALKS

Photos this page by B. Johnson
NB: Our wonderful walk organiser Bec Johnson is pictured above [ED]

The TNPA's Autumn Walks (previously known as the Great Tasmanian Bushwalk) included seven walks over a month, mostly in the SE of the island, with the exception of our loyal representative in the Blue Tier, Lesley Nicklason. We had a total of 102 people on the seven walks, all of whom have now had a good earful about the TNPA and the valuable work that we do!

Lesley Nicklason in the Blue Tier deserves huge thanks. Despite being a busy working mum, she's led a walk for us every year since the TNPA's walks started. She does a great job of raising awareness of the threatened forests of the NE Highlands. Here's what she wrote of her walk;

> *"Hi, we had a sensational walk on Sunday, 23 people, great weather, and more fungi than you could poke a stick at!"*

Much thanks also to John Cannon, who handles almost all the promotion we need, by plugging the upcoming walks on his page in the Sunday Tasmanian. He also led a wonderful walk to Gunners Quoin.

Thanks to Duncan Kerr's office for free printing of the walk related documents.

Thanks also to Pam Fenerty, Catharine Errey, Rosemary Bruce, Heather Chauncy and Rob Hill, for sharing the places they love to walk to.

Here's what Pam Fenerty wrote of her walk;

> *"The walk is fantastic. Nine of us stroll out to Crescent Bay past the deep mystical Maingon Blowhole, with 2 metre swells powering onto the beach at Crescent Bay. It's a perfectly still day, moderate cloud level, but surprisingly hot, so we give Mt Brown an upward glance only, and instead have afternoon tea on the beach, then a magical walk along the sand, with those dumping waves on one side and the towering dunes for which this area is renowned, on the other. The views of Cape Raoul, Mt Brown and Tasman Island are sensational. Overall our walk takes a relaxing three and a half hours.*
> *Let's do it again next year!"*

Chauncy Vale Wildlife Sanctuary is amazing for its cultural and natural heritage, and Heather Chauncy, who guides the walks, is a treasury of historic anecdotes and local knowledge. The caves walk is a great walk for kids, and Flat Rock is a superb place to look at some wonderful mature open Eucalypt forests, which are not widely protected. Walks here always book out early!

We are always looking for walk leaders. If you have a favourite walk and some experience leading walks, please contact Bec Johnson. Or, come along on a walk, meet new people, and help represent the TNPA.

Bec Johnson

TNPA UPDATE

The Buttongrass Ball 2010 & The Overland Track

The Buttongrass Ball has become an annual fundraiser for the TNPA, for which we are very grateful to the band, the VerandahCoots (Julie Edwards, Stuart Graham and David Miekle), and the dance caller, David Wanless. The 2010 Buttongrass Ball was the 11th!

The 2010 Buttongrass Ball, held in late November, was a wonderful evening of dances, with music by the redoubtable VerandahCoots. The Ball was well attended by Hobart folk-dancing stalwarts, plus a few newer but regular attendees of the Ball. While numbers were down on recent years, the numbers were well suited to the hall with adequate space to spread out and gallopede, polka, … furiously as required, with no incidents.

The theme (usually related to a special natural area in Tasmania) for this year's Ball was *The Overland Track*. This celebrated Tasmania's highest mountains and Lake St Clair, drawcards for tourists since the late 1800s-early 1900s, and the natural environment that saw the some of the earliest advocacy for the land reservation for long term natural values protection. Advocacy that succeed in securing the reservation of the Cradle Mountain – Lake St Clair area, known colloquially as *The Reserve*, in the early 1900s.

The spectacular long distance Overland Track winds through the mountains from Cradle Mountain to Lake St Clair, passing through well known overnight stops such as Waterfall Valley, Lake Windermere, Pelion Plains, Kia Ora, du Cane Gap, Windy Ridge and the Narcissus Valley.

The Overland Track itself was built in the mid-1930s as a walking and pack track using volunteer labour. Prior to that there had been access to the Cradle Mountain, Lake St Clair and Upper Mersey-Forth River divide at Pelion, with trips often guided and supported by well-known Tasmanians such as Gustav and Kate Weindorfer (at Waldheim) and Paddy and Lucy Hartnett (in the du Cane-Pelion area), and Albert Fergusson (at Lake St Clair).

Many of the dances at the 2010 Buttongrass Ball featured local place names – for example the Mt Oakleigh Dash and Pelion Waltz (my all time favourite). These dances are part of a suite of dances known as the Overland Track Suite created by David Wanless, Cathy Hutchinson and two mainland friends when they walked the Overland Track a few years ago. These dances were launched early this year and are a wonderful collection that celebrates and perpetuates the cultural heritage of the area, an area that has been used for long distance travel from the north of Tasmania to the south for thousands of years, starting with regular Aboriginal use of this route and region. The other dances on the programme were mainly traditional Tasmanian dances recently collected by keen local musicians and dance callers.

The hall, as usual, was beautifully decorated by the corps of regular helpers, and this year featured new images related to the theme. The bush theme was echoed beautifully by the VerandahCoots extraordinary rustic 'verandah' set – an amazingly realistic verandah that needs to be painstakingly erected (and dismantled) for each performance from many pieces of timber and painted canvas, and then populated with verandah chairs, tables, a 'put together' piano, potted plants, tea pots, cups and saucers, bird houses, plaster animals, and innumerable other objects one might find on an old country verandah. David Wanless also highlighted the theme by dancing in his bushwalking gaiters. Several pots of buttongrass lent by Plants of Tasmania (an annual service) also helped set the mood for the Buttongrass Ball and its Overland Track Theme (thankfully there was no mud!).

Thanks are due to the large number of people who made the 2010 Buttongrass Ball happen and are too numerous to mention by name. Your efforts however are always appreciated and make each Buttongrass Ball, as well as every monthly dance, a very special event.

Anne McConnell

Photos by A. McConnell. L-R: The Verandah; the VerandahCoots; TNPA display on the Overland Track.

By Anne McConnell

Three Capes Track Proposed Development

TIMELINE

The Three Capes Track development proposal on the Tasman Peninsula is now almost four years old – and it still has a way to go to become a reality. In this time hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent on the project, a large proportion of these dollars being spent on promoting the walk concept – a concept that the TNPA finds problematic at many levels in its current form.

We thought readers might be interested to see just how the proposed development has progressed since it was initially conceived, so we have developed the following *TIMELINE* of the development. (A summary of the project and recent actions is contained in the President's Pen article, page 1 of this issue). Readers are forgiven for any doubts that might arise about government process and transparency!

Mar 2006	Tasmanian *Great Bushwalk Scoping Study* (Planning for People, 2006) completed for government (not publicly released) (see text box for a summary of findings on walk opportunities on the Tasman Peninsula).
Jan 2007	TNPA learn of the proposed Three Capes Track development.
Feb 2007	TNPA writes to the Minister expressing concerns about key elements of the proposal – recommending instead an alternative *Two Capes Walk* using the existing Tasman Coastal Trail.
May 2007	*Three Capes Track Feasibility Study* released (as per the original proposal) – this is the first public information about the concept – no call for public comment.
mid-late 2007	TNPA reviewed the Feasibility study and wrote to the government to express concerns with the proposal; also met with Scott Gadd, then Secretary of the Department – no response to the TNPA's concerns. TNPA works with the Peninsula Environmental Network to raise awareness of the issues with the Three Capes Track proposal – produces Two Cape Iconic Walk proposal and pamphlet.
Feb 2008	The *Draft Tasman National Park and Reserves Management Plan 2008* is released for public comment. The Draft Plan contains numerous changes which allow for the proposed Three Capes Track (3CT).
Mar 2008	The TNPA and 248 others provide submissions on the *Draft Tasman National Park and Reserves Management Plan 2008* to the RPDC. Only 8 submissions gave unqualified support for the proposal, while 209 submissions were opposed to the 3CT and to changing the Tasman National Park MP to allow 3CT to proceed. But in Jan 2009 the RPDC does not recommend against the 3CT.
Apr 2008	*Economic Impact Analysis for Three Capes Track* (Syneca 2008) completed for PWS (not publicly released). TNPA obtain a copy and have concerns about some of the assumptions that the findings rest on.
Jan 2009	PWS release a pamphlet summarising the Three Capes Track proposed development – still no more detail than the May 2007 Feasibility Study (but walkers will now walk east, not west).
Mar 2009	TNPA launch their *Keep The Capes Wild* postcard campaign, and start an information campaign through Salamanca Stalls and a series of meetings with government, local government, politicians and tourism operators. TNPA works with the Tasmanian Conservation Trust and Environment Tasmania on this issue.
Early-mid 2009	The PWS take interested local council members on a helicopter flight from Lake St Clair to Windy Ridge Hut [the one there has been so many complaints about] to look at the type of hut to be built on the 3CT.
Jun 2009	The Greens and Liberals ask Michelle O'Byrne some tough questions about the 3CT proposal and costs in the budget estimates hearings. Government admits that the cost of the proposal is now about $30 million, not the $15-18 million originally envisaged – vindicating TNPA's alternative costing of at least $25 million.
Mid-late 2009	PWS announce they will spend $200,000 on commercial expressions of interest for the Three Capes Track development in 2009-10 (while existing PWS infrastructure is closed due to a lack of funds for repair).
Early 2010	TNPA lobbies all major parties for a Two Capes alternative with boosted day walk opportunities in the lead up to the election.

Mar 2010	The Tasmanian 2010 Election – only days before the election the Federal government announce they will partly fund the 3CT; at the same time the Greens environment spokesperson announces that the Greens support the proposal 'in principle' (later found not to be the case – but with the comment causing considerable damage to getting alternatives looked at).
Apr 2010	TNPA continue the *Keep the Capes Wild* postcard campaign, and continue meetings with new parliamentarians (and still going!).
Dec 2010	The Three Capes Track proposal is still there with no more detail than in the 2007 Feasibility study – • there is no finalised revised Management Plan that allows for the Three Capes Track, • there is still no Business Plan (although 2/3 of the funds have been secured), no Environmental Impact Assessment and no actual detail of the proposed development, but • there is a Three Capes Track Project Manager employed by the PWS, and as at Jan 2011, a position for a Track Construction Supervisor had been advertised. Note –Over this time period there have been four Ministers for Parks – Paula Wriedt, Michelle O'Byrne, David O' Byrne & now Brian Wightman; and there has been one major departmental reconfiguration.
Early-mid 2011	*The public release of an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposal is expected (see Buttongrass, Jan 2011).*

The Origins of the Three Capes Track proposal

The Three Capes Track proposal came out of a scoping study for additional Great Walks in Tasmania - the *Great Bushwalk Scoping Study* by Planning for People (2006). This study was not released publicly, but the government recently released a copy to the TNPA at our request.

Readers might be interested in the findings of this scoping study which, in relation to the Tasman Peninsula concluded:

1. *Operators in the tourism industry are confident that there is an apparent growth in demand for long distance bushwalking product.*
2. *People are looking for diversity in their walking experiences.*
3. *The ideal walk would be 3-5 days with diversity in the product option including a range of accommodation options (tents, huts, other) and loop walk opportunities.*
4. *The environment through which the track goes is not important as long as it is spectacular and diverse and that the walk presents a level of challenge but is moderate in difficulty.*
5. *People prefer small groups.*

It sounds to us a lot more like the TNPA's proposal for a Two Capes Iconic Walk (primarily using the existing Tasman Coastal Trail) plus upgraded day walk options, than the government's Three Capes Track!

This impression is reinforced in the *Scoping Study* summary analysis of the Tasman peninsula.

Description:

A magnificent walk along the highest sea cliffs in Australia and through coastal forest and heath with access to beach campsites. The National Park occurs in a narrow coastal strip between the three Capes: Cape Pillar, Cape Hauy and Cape Raoul. Each of these Capes provides outstanding scenic views. The existing walk is 3 – 5 days down the Eastern side of the Peninsula to Cape Pillar. There is an opportunity to develop a range of walks around the Tasman Peninsula which could be linked by marine or vehicular access to areas such as Port Arthur, Cape Raoul, West Arthur Head and Green Head.

Strengths:

- *Consistent with Tasman Peninsula Tourism Strategy which promotes year round tourism*
- *High profile tourism destination*
- *Easily accessible to Hobart and airport*
- *Outstanding and unique coastal scenery*
- *Potential for extensions to current walks*
- *Potential linkages with marine activities such as sea kayaking and ferry options*
- *Links with private ecotourism accommodation near track and other off park accommodation*
- *Possibility of linking in with Port Arthur.*

Weaknesses:

- *No existing commercial operators*
- *Unproven overnight walking product*
- *Narrow National Park in places*
- *Public transport currently takes walkers to the road heads (not into Fortesque)*
- *Limited walking opportunities along beaches – predominantly cliff top walk*
- *Visual amenity of potential and existing logging and re-growth operations*
- *Need to manage Phytophthora.*

Summary Assessment:

The Tasman Peninsula could be developed as an iconic bushwalking area. It has all the necessary elements including a vibrant tourism area which could assist with off-track accommodation. A limitation is the small size of the National Park and reserve areas and their diminished wilderness values.

So – just where did the current Three Capes Walk proposal come from – and how can the PWS and government possibly justify it?

TNPA PEOPLE

Simone Yemm
– currently providing TNPA's secretarial services

I took on the role of secretariat for the TNPA in July 2010. Like a lot of people these days, my life has been full of many different opportunities and experiences.

I am a musician – specialising in the flute as both a performer and teacher. I started playing the flute when I was eight years old, started teaching at 14 and have a post-graduate degree in music performance. I'm also married with three teenage boys to keep me on my toes.

In 2006 I jumped at the opportunity to go back to university and do a Masters in Journalism, which I completed at the end of 2008. I then spent a few years working part-time as a communications officer, while still maintaining my teaching practice. In 2010 the workload seemed a bit overwhelming and I felt my family needed a bit more attention. I decided to look for working opportunities more conducive to family life and found myself in the role of secretariat for the TNPA!

To keep my writing and editing skills up to date, I've also taken on the role of deputy editor for the Tasmanian Greens magazine.

In my spare (??!!) time I love to sing, walk, read and (when finances permit!) travel! The most perfect holiday break involves all four!

Tasmanian National Parks Association Inc

Patron: Peter Cundall

TNPA Management Committee
President: Robert Campbell
Vice President: Anne McConnell
Treasurer: Patsy Jones
Secretary: Liz Thomas
Public Officer: Greg Wood*
Other Committee Members: Jean Elder & Catharine Errey

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Meetings
Management Committee meetings are held one Monday each month at 6:30 pm at Environment Tasmania, upstairs, 100 Elizabeth Street (next door to The Map Shop), Hobart. Members and supporters are welcome. Meeting dates will be advertised in each TNPA Communique or please check with the Secretariat.

*Greg Wood resigned from the Management Committee in December 2010. Catherine Errey has been co-opted as the Public Officer until the 2011 AGM.

Have your say...

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TNPA News

TNPA News is published twice a year. It aims to provide informative articles on issues related to national parks and other reserves, as well as updates on TNPA activities and campaigns. The views expressed in TNPA News are not necessarily those of the TNPA Inc. For this issue, many thanks to Chris Bell, Robert Campbell, Jess Feehely, Bec Johnson, Patsy Jones & Jon Nevill. Original articles in TNPA News may be reproduced, but please acknowledge the author and the source. Contributions for TNPA News No. 15 are welcomed (deadline mid-June 2011). Please send contributions to admin@tnpa.asn.au (attention: TNPA News editor).

This newsletter was correct as at 31 December 2010.

Editor TNPA News 14 - Anne McConnell

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