



## NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION

### MEET THE CANDIDATES

#### 2011 ELECTION

I thank tonight's conveners for the opportunity to attend and put a strong view on behalf of the community who are denied the effective voice of discontent.

My decision to nominate as a candidate for the State election is a result of my passion for the local area and Royal National Park as a significant part of Australia's heritage and public recreational infrastructure.

For the last 2 years I have been actively campaigning against the Wollongong City Council 7D land reviews and more recently Coal Seam Gas, the protection of Royal National Park and the Dharawal, Garrawarra, and Heathcote State Conservations Areas, including green corridors linking between these areas and the Illawarra Escarpment.

My commitment has included being architect of the first community group Planning Proposal submitted to the Planning Minister for approval and orchestrating over 18,500 submissions to the Wollongong City Councils 7d land review of environmentally sensitive lands around Royal National Park, Helensburgh, Otford and Stanwell Tops.

My issues with the current decision making process is the total lack of transparency and community consultation.

The lack of input from the community, including local councils, is accepted by departments, because the current regime appears hell bent on development, stating that community input would set a precedent that doesn't suit the pro development lobby which has intrinsically galvanized itself to government.

The response of the Department of Planning was - not to accept the first community group planning proposal - because it would set a precedent, as stated by the Sothern Region Director. This clearly shows the government's blatant dismissal of any meaningful community input, consideration or ideas.

The Otford Protection Society's Planning Proposal was based on connecting the current protected areas through green corridors and wildlife escapes. The Barry O'Farrell Liberal proposed plan of connecting Royal National Park and Dharawal State Conservation Area could not be achieved **because individual government departments have not been working together**, for example, railway fencing not being wildlife friendly, no F6 wildlife bridges, advocating gas mining under the Sydney Water catchment, and having BHP mining license's concurrent with an E1 National Park status – **what were they thinking!**

#### **ISSUE 1: GARAWARRA STATE CONSERVATION AREA**

10 years is long enough. Do it now before another government changes its mind and sells it. It is critical to the linking of the surrounding National Parks and State Conservation Areas into one area, fully protected in perpetuity forever for everyone to enjoy.

#### **LOCAL ISSUE BRIEFING 2: COAL SEAM GAS AND LONG WALL COAL MINING**

I have touched on Coal Seam Gas in my introduction. It is viewed by many as "today's asbestos" and I agree with that comment - CSG is not renewable energy. We need caution, not a super fast bullet train ride to another train wreck.

Are past mining practices or long wall mining responsible for the destruction of the Waratah Rivulet?

#### **ISSUE 3: MARINE PARK**

Shouldn't having a National Park on the coast give protection for the marine environment adjacent to that park?

Connecting marine environments down the coast is a similar question to having green corridors connecting conservation areas.

Both issues require enforcement; Marine Parks, size of catch, licensing, etc; Green corridors, appropriate regard for heritage, environment, wildlife corridors, planning regime for both conservation and appropriate development.

#### **ISSUE 4: PROTECTING HIGH CONSERVATION VALUE ABORIGINAL LANDS FROM DEVELOPMENT**

This proposed development is an example of the government bureaucracy of planning running over the top of residents.

Is it appropriate this development is behoved to one developer using Part 3A State Significance? Illegal land clearing can regrow, concrete cannot. Planning controls must be with the local authority that represents the community. Does Minister Kelly not believe Royal National Park and Woronora Dam are not State Significant to want to protect them?

## **LOCAL ISSUE BRIEFING: 5: CONSERVATION CORRIDORS AND ENVIRONMENTAL ZONATIONS**

My track record on fighting for the protection of the area I hope is well recognised by tonight's audience.

I am concerned of rumors of land swaps by National Parks and Wildlife Service with private land owners in return for new development opportunities unless such areas are in the acknowledged designated area for development, for example West Dapto. Any development within the existing defined area would only result in increased pollution and environmental damage – is this happening around our area now?

Current council monitoring of land clearing or land use needs urgent investigation.

In summary, I am pro community consultation and involvement having owned and operated small and medium enterprises for 30 years, plus have a strong amenity for the environment. We need someone prepared to ask questions in parliament and cross the floor when demanded by the issue.

The current system affords the ordinary person in NSW to have NO say.

I was invited to speak on radio 2SM earlier today. "Drill under our water supply and fracc, you damage the water supply forever". This also applies to our National Parks, drill near the water heads of the National Parks, and you risk damaging the park forever.

### **This must never be allowed to happen.**

Government is supposed to protect the people and not sell them out.

I quote Andrew Fisher - 5<sup>th</sup> Australian and Labor Prime Minister:

"Government has to be in the interests of the whole of humanity. It is for the common good, not for speculative purposes".

Being endorsed by John Hatton as the Independent Candidate for Heathcote allows me to make policies for the people by listening to their concerns. I do this in an open and transparent manner, free of political influence, on evidence based research.

My campaign is self funded allowing me to be truly independent.

Before closing I would like to respond to two comments of Mr. McLeay - paraphrased here from night as recalled –

*..... proud to stand on the Illawarra Escarpment, (looking east) and see our beautiful coastline....*

