



Newsletter March 2012

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2012 is off to a good start with a win in the Land and Environment Court for the Coastwatchers and South East Region Conservation Alliance appeal against the approval conditions for the Dargues Reef Gold Mine at Majors Creek. In total we won forty six new safeguards in a pre-hearing agreement with Cortona Resources Ltd in addition to those won by Eurobodalla Shire Council. New routine and regular monitoring of both water and vegetation health downstream of the mine site means we can now be more confident that there should be no significant effect on the water quality or river base flows in the Deua River catchment. Mandatory publication of results of the monitoring on the company web site should inform the Eurobodalla community of any problem and the actions that need to be taken.

Since the New Year, your Committee has made written submissions on the NSW Planning System Review Issues Paper and the proposed Jervis Commonwealth Marine Reserve. Coastwatchers also made a deputation to the Joint Regional Planning Panel (Southern Region) who visited Batemans Bay to hear opinions from the community on the current Bunnings Development Application for Surf Beach Industrial Estate.

At the quarterly meeting on Saturday March 24 we will investigate the effects of predicted climate change trends on food security for Australia and the Eurobodalla region in particular (details elsewhere in newsletter). I hope many of you can come to join in this important discussion.

Sheila Monahan

DARGUES REEF GOLD MINE WIN by Sheila Monahan

Outcomes

In February the NSW Land and Environment Court issued a Modified Project Approval for the Dargues Reef Gold Mine which endorsed the changes negotiated with Cortona Resources Ltd by the NSW Environmental Defender's Office on behalf of Coastwatchers Association and South East Regional Conservation Alliance (SERCA).

Twelve key changes provide additional safeguards for the natural environment in and around the mine. The Court itself added two more environmental safeguards. Newly won key changes include preservation and monitoring of base flows and stream health for Majors and Spring Creeks; assessment of potential impacts of groundwater drawdown on vegetation both within the project site and the State Conservation Area; measures to ensure that hydrology impacts are consistent with modelling and that the hydrology of the tailings storage facility is kept under continued monitoring. An off-site biodiversity strategy will also be implemented, together with extension of the biodiversity offset to protect and enhance an important endangered ecological community. Measures to ensure that animals cannot enter the tailings storage facility are included.

The more extensive and regular water monitoring requirements represent very significant additional safeguards for the environment. All monitoring results are to be made public on the Mine website within 28 days and will be reviewed by the independent expert to be employed by the Eurobodalla Shire Council for this purpose.

Eurobodalla Council's separate negotiations have also ensured that the management and monitoring of water quality will be more stringent. The two settlements have achieved a win for both the environment and the community.

COASTWATCHERS QUARTERLY MEETING
Saturday 24 March 2012 at 2pm
Tomakin Hall

Guest Speaker and Panel Dr Karin Geiselhart with Carolyn Wells, Stuart and Fiona Whitelaw

The quarterly meeting will feature Dr Karin Geiselhart who will speak on climate change and potential effects on food security in our area. This will be linked to the need to protect our arable land. Dr Geiselhart will also join the panel of people deeply involved in community gardens and sustainable agriculture in our shire who will answer questions from the audience.



Thanks

The Coastwatchers Association wishes to thank Corrina Novak, Megan Kessler and Kirsty Ruddock from the NSW Environmental Defenders Office for their tireless efforts and dedication to our appeal. Their professional and supportive responses to our queries and concerns have been very much appreciated. This included a telephone conference with our Committee of Management in December and a visit in person from Corrina and Megan in January.

We also wish to thank members of the Araluen Valley Agricultural Producers and Protectors of the Ecosystems Coalition (AVAPPEC). In particular Jackie French, Robyn Clubb and Penny Hayman provided tremendous support in many ways but especially through provision of detailed local knowledge of the area and collection of donations to pay our costs. Their knowledge, energy and enthusiasm for supporting the case seemed to be boundless.



Celebration **SAVE THIS DATE** Saturday 28 April 2012

Shortly you will all be invited to a celebration dinner of this win, which is being planned for Saturday 28th April. The well known author and conservationist Jackie French will be speaking on the year long struggle with Cortona and the Department of Planning to achieve these important safeguards.

Community Representative

In February we wrote to the Department of Planning asking for a Eurobodalla Community representative on the Dargues Reef Community Consultation Committee. The guidelines for the mine stated that, there should be a Eurobodalla community member who can represent the concerns of a variety of interest groups and is able to keep the community informed on issues relating to the mine's operations and environmental performance. Council voted against having a community representative as they say the staff member from their water section is all that is necessary. It will be interesting to see what the Department decides.

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO THE RESERVE NEAR YOU by Jenny Edwards

Council is considering selling "excess" public land in 57 areas, including subdividing off blocks from bush reserves. These areas can be seen on Council's website www.esc.nsw.gov.au. Go to **On Exhibition** in the right hand box, then look at the written document, **community land planning proposal**, and the photo-maps, **planning proposal mapping**. Unfortunately only a few of the maps show the exact areas being considered for sale or alternate use – usually hatched in yellow – so you may need to phone or visit Council to get more information. Comments are due by 10 April. Please contact Jenny Edwards 4471 5032 before 28 March with your concerns for, and local knowledge of, particular sites.



Example from the planning proposal maps

Lot 41 DP 1061842,
Bunderra Circuit, LILLI PILLI
6.095Ha

ZONING

Current LEP Zone: 6a1
Proposed Zone Current LEP :2g
Proposed Zone Draft LEP: R2

STRATEGY LINK

Recreation Strategy : No

INTERESTS

Interests Changed : Yes

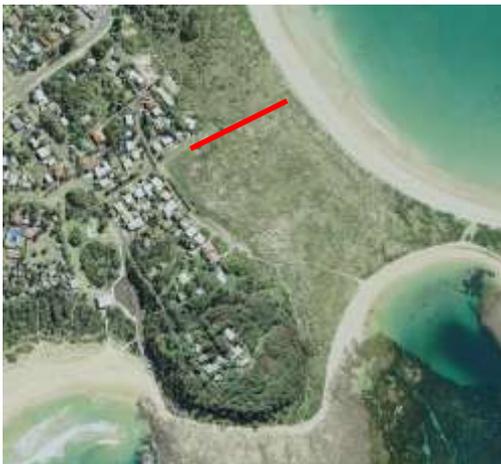
S117 DIRECTIONS

2.2 Coastal Protection (C)
3.1 Residential Zones (C)
4.4 Planning for Bushfire (C)
6.2 Reserving Land for Public
Purposes(C)

INTENTION

Amalgamate with property 12
from Table 1.
Subdivide and sell with
remaining land returned to
public reserve.

ACCESS THROUGH BROULEE DUNES by Jenny Edwards



Council is also asking for your comments on construction of a gravel-surfaced vehicle track through the dunes from Bayside Street, Broulee to the island end of North Broulee beach. Coastwatchers argues that the track is unnecessary as alternatives are available. It will damage vegetation, probably introduce more weeds and weaken the dunes' ability to protect inner areas. Since nearly everyone who enters the water uses the other end of the beach, it would make more sense and be less expensive to upgrade the short track near the toilet block (already identified for disabled access) and get permission for the surf lifesavers to use their vehicle on the roads – something that has already been granted for some streets.

AUDIT BACKS NEED FOR MARINE PARKS by Jenny Edwards

The Independent Scientific Audit Report into Marine Parks in NSW reaffirmed the crucial role that marine parks and sanctuaries play in protecting the unique marine life of NSW. It stressed the science is there to prove that sanctuaries work to increase fish numbers and sizes and recommended maintaining the current system of marine parks and increasing protection in the Hawkesbury (Newcastle to Wollongong) and Twofold Shelf (Far South Coast) marine bioregions

Some fishers have been lobbying for moving sanctuary boundaries so that when fish numbers build up people are then allowed to fish the area. The Audit report said this is likely to “undo decades worth of ecosystem recovery.”

The audit recognised the destructive impacts of commercial trawling, called for further research into recreational fishing catches, and highlighted opportunities for improving the health of coastal and estuarine habitats, by better managing coastal land use and reducing land based pollution.

Some recommendations are potentially problematic, depending on how they are implemented -- eg. stronger integration of socio-economic considerations in marine park planning, and a single agency for managing the marine and coastal environment.

Once again we wait to see if the government will put science before politics and act positively to build on the benefits of protecting and restoring our marine and coastal environments

GREY NURSE SHARK REVIEW by Jenny Edwards

In spite of overwhelming support for more protection for these harmless and endangered sharks the government is reluctant to reinstate protective measures that it removed last year, let alone do anything more positive in the way of protection. How many sharks will be sacrificed for the votes of the Shooters and Fishers Party?



Photo by Bill Barker

QUESTIONS TO THE MINISTER RE OUR LEP by Jenny Edwards

A group of landowners and developers have been trying to muddy the waters with misinformation about the new Local Environmental Plan (LEP) which is now with the state government waiting Ministerial approval.

However, Council's decision to defer implementing the E3 Environmental Management zone in the LEP was a big disappointment. We now have to wait until a Rural Lands Strategy is done before many areas of environmentally important land can be better managed. The rest of the plan has gone to the Minister but the wording of the resolution was confusing so we wrote to the Minister asking if he has to abide by Council's decision to defer E3.

Our letter also asked –

- Should submissions from people who are neither residents nor ratepayers be considered?
- Should the LEP be consistent with strategic plans such as the Eurobodalla Settlement Strategy and Draft Eurobodalla Community Strategic Plan? If not why not?

Continued

- Can Council be compelled to complete the Rural Lands Strategy within 2 years as promised?
- What happens if Council does not receive a \$150,000 grant they are counting on to do the strategy?
- Is there any proposed E3 land that is not covered by the current Rural LEP?
- How will input from the wider public be given equal weight to that of landholders and developers when the Rural Strategy is being done?

KOALA SURVEYS, HABITAT MAPPING AND PILOT STUDY BEGIN by Keith Joliffe



The first Eurobodalla Koalas field survey will be at Tinpot on Wednesday 21st March, weather and 4WD road conditions permitting. It's our own local version of an eco-adventure with a real and positive purpose. Thanks to the Coastwatchers Environment Fund, transport and accommodation subsidies are available for volunteers travelling from outside the Shire. Anyone willing and fit enough to help look for scats

and record eucalypt types in this and other quite remote locations should contact Keith Joliffe on 0427 546 156.

In conjunction with the field surveys, a GIS map of potential habitat will be made, using layers like vegetation type and koala records. Volunteers interested in learning or applying their existing knowledge of ArcGIS software should also contact Keith, who will help you create a role for yourself in a team of enthusiasts living and working from Bermagui to Batemans Bay and even Canberra. If you wish, there's capacity to work remotely from home in this exciting digital aspect of the project.

Finally, anyone with an academic bent can become involved in the Eurobodalla Koalas pilot study. People interested in koala matters generally, ecological theory and methodologies, predictive habitat modelling, statistical methods or editing are encouraged to discuss the pilot study with Keith. An early draft has already gone out for the first stage of peer review, and it contains some fascinating contemporary references.

Koala: Origins of an Icon
by Stephen Jackson

Jacana Books, an imprint of Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, 2007.

From a review by Dierk von Behrens

This cute, cuddly cousin of the wombat, successfully coexisted for millennia with Australia's Aborigines, but was brought to the brink of extinction by the fur trade as late as 1927. In 1924 alone 'the colossal total of over two million were exported from the eastern States.'

The book achieves its aims of highlighting both the variety of complex issues associated with the koala that are not normally discussed, as well as this animal's important role in Australian culture.

BURNING NATIVE FORESTS FOR ENERGY STILL AN ISSUE by Sheila Monahan

Recent market driven changes affecting the native forest logging industry now provide an ideal opportunity to move to plantations for a sustainable supply of wood and paper for Australia.

In July 2011 the Multi-Party Climate Change Committee, chaired by Prime Minister Gillard and including the Greens and Independents Rob Oakeshott and Tony Windsor, agreed to amend the Renewable Energy Target regulations. Native forest biomass would no longer be regarded as "renewable" when burnt to generate electricity. It is an environmentally sensible policy and a crucial step for the move away from native forest wood resources. The regulation passed through Parliament in December.

Continued ...



We can expect continued logging like this (or worse) at Boyne State Forest opposite Murramarang National Park if woodchips are used for electricity generation.

In February Rob Oakeshott changed his mind and tabled a motion to disallow this regulation and permit the burning of native forest wood "waste" for electricity production and be eligible for Renewable Energy Certificates under the Large Scale Renewable Energy Target (LRET) scheme.

While Labor and the Greens will vote against this, numbers in parliament are on a knife edge and some crucial parliamentarians have not yet made up their mind whether to support Oakeshott or ecology. Tony Windsor has just declared he will not support the motion. The vote is expected to be taken during the week 12 to 16 March.

Coastwatchers has signed a joint open letter¹ from the Australian Forest and Climate Alliance to all members of parliament which asks that they act at this critical time for the future of not only Australia's forests but also our climate by not supporting Mr Oakeshott's disallowance motion.

Sixteen leading Australian scientists, researchers and health professionals have also signed an open letter² calling on Mr Oakeshott to reconsider his support for native forest burning power stations.

Andrew Macintosh,³ Associate Director of the ANU Centre for Climate Law & Policy says that this plan can't lower emissions but could increase them; will displace other forms of renewable energy and sabotage the operation of the LRET scheme; and it could cost millions. He concludes 'For bad policy, it is hard to beat.'

Research by Dr Judith Ajani,⁴ an economist at the Fenner School of the Australian National University has shown why in the very near future we can expect very little commodity-based logging of Australia's native forests, as long as governments resist engineering new commercial opportunities for native forest wood.

^{1,2,3,4} **These four documents can be read in full on the Coastwatchers website at:**

www.coastwatchers.org.au

THE MORUYA HUB by Fiona Whitelaw

The Moruya Hub project, run through Sustaining Our Towns, is in its final stages. The Hub project researched opportunities oriented around the creative and sustainable reuse of materials from the waste stream. The Hub project has established SERT, South East Resource Transformation Incorporated, an organisation that will explore and advance some of the activities and enterprises that have already been established as potentially viable. SERT has recently realised a discussion paper, available on the Sustaining Our Towns website: sustainingourtowns.org.au that outlines the most feasible possibilities for the future. These include craft co-operatives, a small tip shop, repair programs and linkages with Eurobodalla Shire Council's proposed arts precinct. Anyone who wants to join SERT and be involved in these activities can contact Fiona on 0457 362 923.

COASTAL MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CMAC) UPDATE by Reina Hill

The *Batemans Bay Coastal Zone Management Plan* (BBCZMP) to be undertaken by Umwelt Environmental Consultants includes beaches around Batemans Bay, covering a shoreline of about 15km, seaward of the Clyde River Bridge, from Maloneys Beach in the north to Caseys Beach in the south.

The project includes areas that are likely to be affected by coastal processes, now and into the future, focussing on the following areas:

- Maloneys Beach
- Long Beach
- Cullendulla Beach
- Surfside
- Timbara
- North Batemans Bay (Wharf Rd)
- Batemans Bay CBD and Hanging Rock
- Marina Area
- Corrigans Beach
- Caseys Beach.



A taste of things to come? Mossy Point wharf underwater.

The recent *Eurobodalla Shire Scoping Study* identified areas in the Bay at high risk of erosion and inundation and requiring updated coastal hazard studies and geotechnical studies at locations identified as "bluff/cliff slope stability" hazards.

The Study also recommended an updated wave climate study of Batemans Bay to understand wave climate, wave refraction effects and degree of exposure at the various beaches within the Bay.

These studies are being undertaken as matter of priority before commencement of the BBCZMP.

Other important recommendations of the Scoping study are that, future developments between Surfside and Cullendulla Beach should consider the high rate of erosion occurring along Cullendulla Beach and that, Emergency Action Plans should be implemented in locations described as inundation prone areas, including Corrigans Beach caravan parks.

It is envisaged that the BBCZMP will be completed and available for public comment by the end of 2012.

Due to the resignation of the north side representative on CMAC there was a call for a replacement representative. To date there has been no announcement regarding an appointment, but a decision should be made soon and a report will go to Council before the next CMAC meeting in April.

CLEAN BEACHES 2012 - A Keep Australia Beautiful program

In keeping with previous years, these awards will look for strong partnerships between community organisations, local government and individuals. There will be a series of workshops in the Northern and Southern region again this year, which will be advised closer to the time.

The key dates for 2012 are:

Entries Open: 1 June

Regional Workshops: 5-15 June

Submissions Close: 10 August

Judging Week: 24-28 September

Regional Presentation will follow in November when dates and locations are decided.



Long Beach Landcare do battle with cape ivy

Now is the time to be talking to other groups to see what they are doing. Many coastal communities are benefiting from partnerships, and achieving great results through community commitments and working collaboratively.

The categories for this years Awards include:

- Overall Cleanest Beach Award
- The Friendly Beach Award
- Litter & Waste Management Award
- Water Conservation Award
- Young Legends Award
- Community Partnership & Action Award
- Environmental Protection Award

For more information contact Yolande Presland

phone 02 9633 3380, Mobile 0409 463 227, Email ypresland@kabnsw.org.au

NEWS IN BRIEF

Commonwealth Temperate East Marine Reserves

Coastwatchers' submission on the Federal government's proposal for marine parks in Commonwealth waters off NSW asked for no-take (Marine National Park) zones in reserves near the coast – no new ones were planned.

We also asked for a sanctuary zone to be created to include the continental shelf and canyon complex off Batemans Marine Park. We supported the declaration of a marine reserve off Jervis Bay but said it should be extended to cover part of the continental shelf. It should also be zoned to have an adequate area of each key ecological feature (such as Canyons on the Eastern Continental Slope, Shelf Rocky Reefs and the Tasman Front and Eddy Field) in a no-take zone.

In the Coral Sea reserves mining and exploration for gas and minerals will be banned from all zones. We asked that this apply in the Temperate East region as well

Hoggs head north

Graham and Margaret Hogg, long time members of Coastwatchers (Graham was Treasurer from 1991 to 1998) have moved to Brisbane to be nearer family. Our loss is Brisbane's gain but we wish them well.

GetUp's survey - Top 10 Issues (February 2012) Do you agree?

1. Investment in renewable energy
2. Protecting Australia's native forests
3. Stopping harmful coal seam gas mining
4. Fair treatment of refugees and asylum seekers
5. Protecting the Murray Darling Basin
6. Constitutional recognition of indigenous people
7. Ending corporate donations and reducing the influence of lobbyists
8. Ensuring humane treatment of factory farmed animals
9. Safe and legal access to abortion
10. Poker machine reform

Dredging the Clyde River bar

The proposal to dredge the entrance to Clyde River, Batemans Bay seems to be on hold, at least temporarily. This could be because of threatened legal action from a group at Long Beach who want the sand spoil used to replenish their beach instead of Corrigans Beach. Coastwatchers decided not to get involved in the dispute, instead we will monitor the results of the dredging and sand deposition if they go ahead. Meanwhile it will be interesting to see if increased river flows after our recent heavy rain have made any difference to the bar.

2012 local government elections

We would love to hear of candidates who support the things Coastwatchers stands for. Ecologically sustainable development may be an overused and much abused term but it encapsulates our aims and objectives. Unfortunately, most of the present councillors don't seem to understand what it means, or if they do, they choose to ignore it.

Please let us know as early as possible if you intend to stand or if you hear of someone else who does.

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

Thanks to all those members who have made a donation to our Environment Fund. The money is very much appreciated as it will help rebuild our finances after an expensive year. Since grants are so hard to get we rely on your generosity to help pay our printing costs and to fund special activities such as the Koala Project.

Tax deductible donations of \$2 or more can be made by --

Cheques or money orders made out to

The Coastwatchers Assoc. Inc Environment Fund and posted to
The Treasurer, PO Box 521, Batemans Bay 2536

Or you can pay by EFT or direct deposit to

Bank : IMB Ltd
BSB: 641 800
A/C Name: The Coastwatchers Association Inc. Environment Fund
A/C No: 200 271 717

Please tell the bank to say the **name of the donor** on their statement. It helps if you email our book-keeper to let her know too
b-kidd@bigpond.com

COASTWATCHERS COMMITTEE 2011-12

President	Sheila Monahan	02 4473 6204
Vice Pres.	Reina Hill	02 4472 8566
Treasurer	Keith Joliffe	02 4473 8519
Secretary	Fiona Whitelaw	02 4474 5615
Committee		
Judy Bourne	0420 827 592	Brian Versey 02 4472 7384
Sub-committees	John Perkins	02 4478 6428
	Anthony Mayne and Linda Chapman	02 4471 7208
Public Officer/cmtee	Jenny Edwards	02 4471 5032
Internet Operations	John Allen	02 4471 2512

PO Box 521, Batemans Bay NSW 2536
Email coastwatchers@netspeed.com.au
Website www.coastwatchers.org.au



If undelivered return to;

The Coastwatchers Association Inc,
PO Box 521
BATEMANS BAY NSW 2536

COASTWATCHERS COOPERATE WITH THE FOLLOWING GROUPS:

- Broulee Community Association
- Congo Area Association
- Eurobodalla Landcare / Dunecare
- Friends of Durras
- Friends of the Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Gardens
- Long Beach Landcare
- Maloneys Residents Association
- Nature Coast Marine Group
- South East Region Conservation Alliance
- Tomakin Community Association
- Tuross Lakes Preservation Group

Coastwatchers is a member of -
The NSW Nature Conservation Council
Conservation Council ACT Region and
Climate Action Network Australia



Coastwatchers

Eurobodalla's environment and climate action group

ABN 66 003 550 939

EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Members can receive the newsletter by email and save our association paper, time and postage. The email contains a link to a choice of full or text-only PDF files that you can download when convenient. For more information, or to subscribe, send a message to coastwatchers@netspeed.com.au

COMING EVENTS

Sat 24 March Coastwatchers Quarterly meeting
Tomakin Hall at 2pm

Sat 28 April – Dinner to celebrate gold mine win
Invitations to be sent soon