

The Coastwatchers Association Inc.
Annual General Meeting, 31st August 2019.

President's Report

Welcome to The Coastwatchers Association AGM for 2019.

The Association has continued to support and promote campaigns for protection of the environment and conservation in the face of increasing government actions to weaken environmental protection both terrestrial and in the marine environment. It is disheartening to have all levels of government stripping away the important values supporting our natural ecosystems when the world is under threat from global warming.

The fight against the Rural Land Strategy in Eurobodalla has continued, with Coastwatchers informing and encouraging members to participate in the letter writing campaign, public meetings and presentations to Eurobodalla Shire Council. This issue was signed off by Council in August 2018 but has yet to be signed off by the Minister for Planning NSW due to ongoing unresolved issues with the Strategy, highlighted by the hundreds of letters sent by residents, and representations to the Minister's office.

Native forest logging has continued as a burning issue, with Coastwatchers supporting the Wilderness Society's submission on concerns about the increased logging intensity from the Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals. Local and regional forest campaigns, Corunna Forest, Stop Logging the Corn Trail and Buckenbowra forest have been well publicised and supported by Secretary Joslyn van der Moolen, including a contribution from Coastwatchers to the EDO for a letter to be sent to the EPA., relating to contravention of approvals and buffer zones. Coastwatchers also registered as Stakeholders and sent a submission to the NSW Koala Inquiry.

2019 has been dominated by elections, State and Federal, and Coastwatchers collaborated with other concerned groups to focus on climate change and candidate's environmental credentials. Climate Action Gilmore, was formed, promoting the climate change film "Accelerate", Mark Diesendorf forum, market stalls and letterboxing the candidates scorecard on the environment. This was an inspiring collaboration with 350 Eurobodalla, SHASA, NCMG and Coastwatchers, and was effective in focusing the electorate on climate change and environment issues. Coastwatchers also contributed funds to the Gilmore phone poll, surveying attitudes to the environment and conservation in the electorate, to better target messages on the natural environment and climate change.

On the administrative front, a Special General Meeting was held in November to pass and adopt the amended Constitution in line with Fair Trading NSW model rules 2016. This event was held in conjunction with a successful Spring BBQ at Eurobodalla Regional Botanic Garden. The other good news is the Environment

Fund Committee chaired by John Hicks, with new members. The committee has been active establishing guidelines and contacting all high schools in Eurobodalla inviting them to submit proposals for funding with an environmental/conservation/educational focus. To date 3 schools have had proposals approved and received funding.

The Committee were sorry to accept the resignation from the committee of long serving member June Mills earlier this year. The Association has been well served by our Committee with many competing demands on their time, and I wish to acknowledge, my Vice President Reina Hill for her long experience and wise advice, also Secretary Joslyn, juggling many jobs, Mark Rote for his diligence with the finances, membership and managing the website, Gillianne Tedder and Derek Anderson for their helpful and prompt feedback and suggestions. In closing I wish to thank you for the honour of leading this organisation over the last 12 months. I wish the new Committee strong heart and mind, to keep fighting for our natural world, it is the only one we have.

Barbara Roberts

President, The Coastwatchers Association Inc.

29th August 2019.