

NVCA News

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NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2009 ~ Produced by the Nambucca Valley Conservation Association Inc.

Annual General Meeting - Sunday, 7th February 2010 at 11am

Venue for the meeting and following lunchtime picnic is the Robert Lowden Park at Valla Beach. Turn at Henderson Street to Jones Street to the end of Cockburn Street. Follow the pathway (not the vehicle access) from the carpark to our picnic area. Bring partners, togs, towel, walking shoes and a plate of food to share.

A trusted friend as a new member, or inactive member for a more active role, is very welcome.

In the event of wet weather, meet at Robert Lowden Park for details of an alternate venue.

Our new website - www.nvca.org.au

NVCA member and website designer Ben Whitaker, has just about completed our new website. The site is still being fine tuned so our old site will continue to exist for a while longer. Check it out and let us know what you think. If you are in need of a website email Ben at b9music@gmail.com

Council Matters

Council's long awaited draft **Local Environment Plan** is on exhibition for only 8 weeks until 18 Dec. This is an unacceptably short period for such a significant and complex document. NVCA is preparing its submission with a focus on requesting an extension of at least 4 wks, the need to include a Tree Preservation Order clause, climate change clause, climate change risk mapping, habitat and climate change retreat corridor mapping. Environmental implications of the transition from old zones boundaries and categories to new ones will also be given close consideration. NVCA will strongly oppose the inclusion of the old 1(C) land in the new Large Lot Residential zone in addition to the rural residential land identified in Council's Rural Residential Land Release Strategy 2009. This massive over supply of rural residential land has occurred following concerted lobbying pressure from speculative developers and poses a threat to viable agricultural land and native vegetation.

Council deferred its decision as to whether an operating **piggery at Tewinga** requires a DA, pending a site inspection in Jan 2010. Meantime rural residential neighbours continue to suffer unacceptable odour pollution. Given the enormous rains this year it is likely that significant polluted runoff from the 200+ pigs has entered the SEPP 14 wetland downstream of the property. Cllr Flack's motion requiring staff to commence assessment of the property and operation to ensure compliance with all relevant regulations with regard to social and environmental impacts was lost, despite Council's own legal advice that it is the authority responsible for ensuring compliance.

Scotts Head residents were out in force at the last meeting to voice their opposition to the Department of Lands grand **Master Plan for the Caravan Park**, reserve and community land. Council resolved to defer any decision and to workshop other options before letting DoL know its preferred course of action.

Disappointing, the NVCA's was the only submission on the **State of the Environment Report**. NVCA's extensive submission was given consideration with many points raised being taken on board in either this or the next report.

A major **overhaul plan for the foreshore at River St Macksville** opposite the shops is to go on public exhibition. The \$400k concept plan proposes a number of significant changes for the area, many for the better. However NVCA opposes Council's proposal to cover some of the costs from the environment levy. Once again ratepayer's environmental levy contributions are to be put to infrastructure such as viewing platforms and jetties which do not provide a benefit to the natural environment. This is contrary to the spirit and intention of the environment levy. Other funding sources are available for such work. NVCA encourages members to view the concept plan and make a submission opposing the use of environment levy money for such a proposal, while other areas of denuded and degraded river bank are crying out for revegetation.

A **2 lot boundary adjustment at Scotts Hd headland** south of the township, to enable the creation of a cliff top building site has been approved without a Species Impact Statement despite it being the **habitat of the Endangered Population Glycine Clandestina**. This extremely rare tiny twiner has been declared in immediate danger of extinction by the NSW scientific Committee and is unique to the Nambucca only ever being identified at this headland site! Growing along the cliff top site is the threatened species Themeda grass and a number of threatened fauna species records exist. A very disappointing outcome.

On a positive note, Council has held a **Climate Change Risk community workshop** as part of preparing its climate change risk assessment process.

To bring councils **Code of Meeting Practice** into line with the Local Government Act requirements council has introduced **time for a Public Forum** during each fortnightly meeting. This gives members of the community an opportunity to raise issues with Council which are not on the agenda. We heard our very first Public Forum at the last meeting with a delegation of Parents and Citizens committee representatives raising concerns about the hike in pool fees for the schools learn to swim programs. This Forum provides an opportunity for NVCA to raise ANY issue it wishes with council whether they want to hear it or not!!

- Compiled from the notes of avid council watchers.

Climate Change Websites

Vote Earth - Cast your vote for Earth now on the new Vote Earth website! Your vote will contribute to a global mandate for action on climate change, to be presented to world leaders at the UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen. It's easy to have your say on climate change! Just add your vote for Earth to the online ballot box, then use the tools and downloads to spread the word and get others voting too. www.earthhour.org

Changes for Negotiation - Prime Minister Rudd and Minister Wong announced the Government's proposed Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme changes for negotiation with the Coalition. Details at: www.climatechange.gov.au/media/whats-new/Proposed-CPRS.aspx

Confused about Carbon? - Carbon Workshops by Sustainable Infrastructure Australia cover the basics of what a Green House Gas inventory is, how it is developed and what reporting will be required of business by government. They also cover emissions trading, Australia's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme and provide guidance on developing robust carbon management strategies. For more information: www.siaustralia.com/images/stories/Carbon-Management-Syd-Melb-Bris.pdf

Wind Farms - The Environment Protection and Heritage Council is releasing for public feedback draft National Wind Farm Guidelines which cover all phases of wind farm development (shadow flicker; noise; impacts on landscapes; impacts on birds and bats; and electromagnetic interference). Submissions are due by 16 December 2009. The draft guidelines and submission template can be found at www.ephc.gov.au/taxonomy/term/25

Climate Change Risks to Australia's Coasts - This report provides the first continental scale mapping of residential buildings at risk from climate change. It also details the risks to coastal infrastructure, services and industry in Australia as a result of climate change. View the report, video and fact sheets at: www.climatechange.gov.au/media/whats-new/climate-change-risks-to-australias-coast.aspx

A Snapshot of Future Sea Levels: Photographing the King Tide - More than 250 people participated in photographing our foreshores in January 2009 when NSW experienced a king tide. See these images and learn more about tides, sea levels and climate change at: www.environment.nsw.gov.au/climatechange/kingtide.htm

Coasts and Climate Change Council - The Coasts and Climate Change Council has been created as a seven-member council to be chaired by Professor Tim Flannery. The Council will engage with the community and stakeholders and advise the Government in the lead up to a Coastal Climate Change Forum. This Forum to be held in early 2010 will bring together all levels of government to develop a strategy for coastal adaptation. www.climatechange.gov.au/en/minister/wong/2009/media-releases/November/mr20091114.aspx

World Wide Views on Global Warming - This project, initiated by the Danish government, involved participants in 38 countries considering the same vital questions on climate change and telling their leaders what they want to see prior to crucial decisions being taken in Copenhagen, Denmark in December 2009. In Australia, one hundred people were randomly chosen from all States and Territories to broadly reflect the national demographics of age, ethnicity, income, family type, education and gender. Find out more about the process and outcomes at: www.views.org.au/results

Visit the Climate Change Action Pack: <http://www.lgsa-plus.net.au/climatechangeactionpack>

- Amy Lovesey amy.lovesey@lgsa.org.au Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Project Officer, Local Government Association of NSW and Shires Association of NSW

Be Foodwise - Not a foodwaster

Analysis of the latest figures indicates that Australians are throwing out 3 million tonnes of food waste every year. That's equivalent to 145kg of food waste for each Australian. Australians are now spending \$5 billion a year on food that we buy but don't eat. Some experts believe that we're throwing away at least 20% of the food we buy. That's the equivalent of buying 5 bags of groceries and throwing one away. Given the cost of today's food, that's clearly not sustainable for the family budget.

Going beyond the cost of food waste, our wasteful habits are simply not sustainable for the environment. When food waste rots in landfill it produces methane, a greenhouse gas that's 20 times more potent than the CO₂ pouring out of your car's exhaust. When we throw away food, we also waste all of the resources, fuel and energy that were used to get that food from the paddock to our plate.

So what's the solution? Despite the popularity of cooking shows, there is still a poor understanding among Australians of how to purchase, prepare, store and freeze food. The FoodWise campaign aims to change that. Wasted food is a waste of money - if we don't mend our ways, we'll be eating ourselves out of an environment which is able to sustainably support future generations of Australians. Join the Campaign at - foodwise.come.au

Red Gum protestors found Not Guilty

In Deniliquin Local Court recently three protestors arrested at the Red Gum blockade in June were found not guilty on all charges of trespass and obstruction.

"Represented by Ken Averre of Counsel and the Environmental Defender's Office, the defendants argued that Forests NSW were logging illegally in River Red Gum forests and therefore the charges laid could not be upheld" said Ms Carmel Flint, one of the three acquitted.

"The Magistrate made a clear finding on the evidence that a Part 3A approval under the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 is required for the logging operation and had not been obtained.

He concluded, therefore, that the logging was unlawful.

"This highlights an extraordinary and on-going breach of environmental law in the River Red Gum forests - logging is still occurring in these areas to this day.

"Globally significant wetlands are being subject to irreparable environmental damage contrary to the law.

"The finding of the court shows that Forests NSW must now get its house in order. They should cease logging operations in River Red Gum forests until such time as they obtain a proper environmental approval.

"The NSW Government must now take decisive action on River Red Gum and protect large areas in National Parks.

"Victoria has just created four new Red Gum National Parks whilst NSW continues to destroy theirs in breach of the most basic environmental laws" Ms Flint said. - *NCC Media Release, 1st December 2009*

NVCA Planting Group

The NVCA has taken up an offer by Nambucca Valley Landcare to do revegetative planting at selected sites and in return receive a financial donation. The first planting day was successful and enjoyable with 350 young lomandras being planted along the riverbank at Upper Missabotti. The day was a scorcher and the planting wasn't as easy as it could have been but it was made manageable by numerous dips in the river and a sumptuous spread put on at lunchtime by property owners, Anne and John and son Cameron. The small group of planters are very willing to share the workload with anyone interested in spending a few hours in the great outdoors amongst charming company. Email wendycwedge@yahoo.com.au if you'd like to join us.

No labels, No safety testing

A report compiled by Friends of the Earth reveals that at least 104 food, food packaging and agricultural products containing nano-ingredients are now on sale internationally. These include diet replacement milkshakes, cooking oil, tea and fortified fruit juice; food additives sold for use in processed meats, soft drinks, bakery and dairy products; long-life and antibacterial food packaging; and antibacterial kitchenware. In light of the evidence that many nano-ingredients used in these products pose new toxic risks for humans and the environment, Friends of the Earth is calling for a halt to the sale of nanofoods until they can be shown to be safe.

Back in 2004 the world's oldest scientific body, in its report "Nanoscience and nanotechnologies: opportunities and uncertainties", the United Kingdom's Royal Society, said that given serious early warning signs of nanotoxicity, nano-ingredients shouldn't be allowed in products until they pass new safety testing by independent authorities. Since then, scientists have gathered more and more evidence that nanomaterials now in use by the food industry – like nano silver, nano titanium dioxide and nano zinc - can be toxic to humans and the environment (see our new report for a summary of some of the key findings). Yet Australian laws do not require food companies to conduct new safety tests on nano ingredients before putting them in foods if these ingredients have previously been used in larger form. This leaves many – if not most – nano-ingredients effectively unregulated.

It is impossible to know how many nanofoods are now on sale in Australia, because companies are not required to label nano-ingredients – and they are certainly not choosing to! Despite having big budget nano research programs, companies like Kraft, Nestle, Unilever and Pepsi Co. refuse to say publicly whether or not their food now contain nano. We do know that packaging for Cadbury chocolates, antibacterial kitchen wipes and cleaning sprays, and refrigerators sold in Australia by Samsung, Hitachi and LG Electronics now contain manufactured nanomaterials. We also know that the nanofood additives and ingredients reviewed in our report (click here for the text only version) are found in foods in Europe and the USA, but we have no idea whether they are also found in Australian foods.

Friends of the Earth Australia is calling for a halt to the sale of nanofood, food packaging and agricultural chemicals until new laws are enacted to ensure their safety, nano ingredients are labelled so people can choose whether or not they want to eat nanofoods, and the public is involved in nanotechnology decision making.

- <http://www.foe.org.au>

Rees gives Murray's River Red Gums last-minute reprieve

In his last significant act as premier, Nathan Rees announced the creation of a massive new national park along the Murray River to protect much of the state's remaining river red gum forests from logging.

The surprise decision - made before the Government received a final scientific report on the issue - is a significant win for environment groups, but has left the timber industry seething.

The 42,000-hectare national park near Deniliquin, in the state's south-west is seen as an attempt by Mr Rees to shore up his environmental legacy and as a parting swipe at right-wing elements of his party.

Mr Rees also brought forward \$30 million in funding to implement former prime minister Paul Keating's vision to return the Barangaroo site at Darling Harbour to its natural state, a plan Mr Rees had put off for three years.

The new national park, created from the Millewa group of state forests along the Murray River, follows research showing decades of logging has had a devastating effect on the river red gums, which are also under severe drought stress.

"Over 8 per cent of NSW is now protected in perpetuity in the form of national parks and reserves," Mr Rees said. "Part of that legacy is my commitment that mining and hunting will not be permitted in national parks ... I add to that legacy today by acting to save the habitat of our precious river red gums in the Riverina."

The Wilderness Society described the decision as "a fantastic outcome for the environment". The National Parks Association of NSW said the forests had suffered from the twin impacts of logging and a lack of flow down the Murray River, and the decision made it much more likely that the forests would survive.

Logging bans in the region have been fiercely opposed by the state's timber industry, and Mr Rees announced a \$48 million package to "assist local forestry businesses to exit the industry, and assist other operators in the region to better manage their forestry business practices".

A NSW Forest Products Association spokesman, Russ Ainley, said Mr Rees "has left many hardworking and tight-knit communities totally devastated".

The decision to create the park was based on an early version of a report prepared by the Natural Resources Commission. The final report is not due for completion until December 21.

Mr Rees also pledged yesterday to confirm an existing ban on hunting in national parks, in opposition to a controversial proposal by the Shooters' Party.

Ben Cubby and Josephine Tovey – Sydney Morning Herald - December 4, 2009

but . . . Red Gums are still in urgent need of your help

There is now massive pressure being brought to bear on the new Premier, Kristina Keneally, to reverse the decision by former Premier Nathan Rees to create a large new national park along the Murray River. It's important that her office is flooded with emails urging her to deliver in full, on the decision announced by the former Premier. Send an email to Premier Keneally now!! This is the most important moment in the Red Gum campaign. Your help is urgently needed to cement this historic reserve outcome. Send an email to the Premier, [by clicking here](#), or going to www.npansw.org.au/web/conservation/western/redgum/elobbyNSW.htm and urge her to implement the outcome in full. - *Carmel Flint (NCEC)*

~ ~ ~ ~ ~ *Seasons Greetings* ~ ~ ~ ~ ~
*Wishing you, your family and friends, a safe and enjoyable Christmas,
and all the very best for a happy and healthy 2010.*
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