



MAY - 1987

NEXT SOCIAL MEETING - FRIDAY, MAY 22ND, 1987

AT 8.00 P.M.

MONTROSE TENNIS CLUB PAVILLION

Cheryl Martin

(Secretary, Save the Dandenongs League)

"CAN A WORLD CLASS NATIONAL
PARK BE ACHIEVED IN THE
DANDENONGS?"

Cheryl will speak on aspects of land protection measures from Europe which could be applied in the Dandenongs.

SPINULOSA

WHAT YOU MISSED AT THE LAST M.E.G. SOCIAL EVENING

Around thirty people from far and wide (even inner suburbs) enjoyed an extremely interesting talk by Latrobr University botanist, David Cameron, at the April M.E.G. social evening. The subject was "The Significance of Reserves for flora conservation", and was the first public presentation of this renowned speaker's innovative techniques for judging reserves' conservation values and their implications for management. Not only was it interesting for laypeople, but the audience included professionals involved in land management who will be able to put the new techniques into practice.



MONTROSE ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 7, MONTROSE, 3765

WEEDING DAY - MK. II

The pouring rain on 2/5/87 completely spoilt the planned weeding at the Laversha Reserve (at the end of Kirkwood Crt.) Nevertheless, Graeme Lorimer and Johan Kruize dug out, pulled up and cut down hundreds of pines, pittosporums and boneseed plants. There are plenty left, and a second assault will be launched at 2 p.m. 23rd May, 1987, at the end of Kirkwood Court.

The weeds are all sizes, so everyone can help, from little kids to Paul Bunyan.

Bring gloves, and (if you have them) hatchet, axe and/or mattock.

BE THERE !!

MONROSE RECREATION RESERVE PROGRESS

TRACT Consultants have finished their report on the recreation reserve, and after making a few changes at Council's request, we will be invited to look at the report and discuss it with Council.

We should anticipate the possibility that MEG may be permitted to take responsibility for regenerating part of the reserve - an exciting prospect, but one which would demand a major commitment by MEGGERS.

A.G.M. IN JUNE

The MEG Annual General Meeting will be held at the Montrose Tennis Club Pavillion, 8 p.m., 26th June, 1987. The Committee must change, if only because our constitution prevents Graeme Lorimer from continuing as president into a fourth year. And the committee needs help - we haven't had a vice-president since June 1986! Please nominate for the committee - it only requires a few hours of your time during each month.

M.E.G. SHOW - 1987

The general concept of M.E.G.'s 1987 show has been discussed at past business meetings, and more specific plans are to be made at the next BUSINESS MEETING on JUNE 4TH at the Venn's house ("Laura House", Lower View Road, Montrose). Then we'll need many helpers, mostly people who can liaise with other groups we'd like to contribute to the show. You're asked to volunteer at the end of the Annual General Meeting (26/6/87), when jobs will be distributed.



Letters or other copy for the next newsletter are very welcome. By the 15th of the month to Tanya Tankard 40 Browns Rd., Montrose 3765.

SUMMARY OF MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING HELD 7/5/87

Minutes of Last Meeting - Matters Arising.

1. Weeding at Laversha Reserve - postponed to 2 o.m. Saturday, May 23rd.
2. Dandenongs National Park Consultative Forum meeting postponed to 12th May.

Correspondence:

OUT TO:

1. Shire of Lillydale, Submission re. Amendment 205 to Shire of Lillydale Planning Scheme (see page 5ff.)

IN FROM:

1. Neil Pope M.L.A. re. National Parks (Dandenong Ranges) Bill.
2. Upper Yarra and Dandenongs Environmental Council. Notice of A.G.M.
3. Shire of Lillydale, Olinda Creek (Lilydale Lake Project) Preliminary Environmental Assessment.

Treasurer's Report

Receipts \$132.14 Payments \$354.00

General Business

1. Tom Grucza reported on meetings he has attended with the Shire Bicentennial Committee discussing the Lilydale Lake Project.
2. Cheryl Martin, Secretary of Save The Dandenongs League will be the speaker at our May meeting. Her subject will be "People and National Parks in Europe".
3. Tract Consultants' report on Montrose Recreation Reserve has been received by Council.
4. Our June meeting will be our A.G.M. and will be also a planning meeting for our 1987 show.
5. NEXT BUSINESS MEETING - to be held at the Venn's house, Laura House, Lower View Road, Montrose.

CONSULTATIVE FORUM DANDENONG RANGES PARKS MANAGEMENT PLAN

by Tanya Tankard

On Tuesday, May 12th I represented MEG at a Consultative Forum for the Dandenong Ranges Parks Management Plan held at Knox Shire Offices.

24 delegates from a variety of State Government, Local Government and interested community groups attended the meeting and lively and informative discussions took place. Among those present were representatives from the S.E.C. who discussed the pros and cons of underground power lines, and a new, less-expensive alternative - bundle cable - which is a single, very thick cable, which would be strung on existing power poles. The advantage of this cable is that it is much harder than multi-thin lines, and therefore less susceptible to damage by surrounding foliage. Presently

with armed poles, and S.E.C. requirements to clear 3 feet on either side, great corridors of forest have to be cleared around lines. Bundle cable would require far less clearance and breakdown would be greatly reduced. This, as well as underground cable, is presently being considered for parts of the Dandenong Ranges Park.

A most informative and sensitive outline of the points to be considered when planning for Landscape and Land Capability of a Park covering such diverse community needs and requirements as the Dandenong Ranges Park, was given. The difficulties of having a Park in a heavily populated area, the effects of 2 million tourists annually, consequences of domestic animals -dogs, cats horses living in such close proximity; the unsuitability for development of much of the forest - e.g. much of the western slope is extremely steep causing serious erosion problems.

Frustration was expressed by many over:

- Too many departments running the Dandenongs.
- Inability of Councils to agree on management.
- Too many signs - Cheryl Martin of Save the Dandenongs League counted 661 signs on the Tourist Road.
- Overuse of Grant's Picnic Ground - need to move kiosk as it creates litter, draws inappropriate number of tourists to such a sensitive area.

The Dandenongs Business Group was represented and expressed a need for an information centre for Tourists, similar to the one at Philip Island. They would like to see the bus tour people supplied with information on all aspects of features of the Dandenongs, including restaurants, shopping etc.

Much was said about :

- the potential use of the Nicholas Paddocks to join the two park areas together, providing a valuable means of linking the forest areas. With regeneration and planting the Nicholas Paddock could become a young forest area, and would give animals and birds much needed access between the two areas. Native animal carnage on roads was discussed.
- the greater problem local residents pose to the area than do the 2 million tourists who pass through each year. Tourists, it was said, generally stop in one spot for a Barbeque/Picnic, perhaps a Devonshire Tea or visit to an Antique Shop, but few venture far into bush areas. Far greater destruction is caused by residents planting introduced species of plants (including introduced natives), dogs, cats, horses (the food chain of which causes a great weed problem), cutting down of mature trees (loss of Mountain Ash at an amazing rate); destruction of forest floor by 4 wheel drives and trail bikes.
- the need for a 'total' look essential if we are to maintain a continuous forest cover. We must guard against the gradual intrusion of structures on the skyline. The distant view of the Ranges should be considered - it is unaesthetic to have obvious demarkation. There should be planning to maintain approaches to all sides of the ranges.
- the need for adequate staff of Rangers to care for the park.

The following is MEG's submission to Council on AM 205

Mr. Warwick Heine,
Chief Executive Officer,
Shire of Lillydale,
Anderson Street,
Lillydale, Vic. 3140

Dear Mr. Heine,

PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT 205

Montrose Environmental Group compliments Council on its preparation of Amendment 205. We are pleased to see effect given to the Regional Strategy Plan, and offer the following suggestions:

Schedule numbering

The duplication of the label "Schedule 1" for the maps and for sites of botanical and zoological significance is likely to cause unnecessary confusion. We suggest renumbering and adjustment of paragraph 2 of the frontispiece to suit.

Vegetation

The protection afforded natural vegetation by the amendment is good, provided it is enforced. We would suggest the addition of two species to schedule 5 of p.156:

Cortaderia selloana Pampas Grass
and Coprosma repens Mirror Bush.

The former is a serious and rapidly escalating problem in the neighbouring council of Croydon, and is becoming so in parts of Lillydale. The latter is similarly invasive to its fellow New Zealand import, coprosma robusta, which appears in schedule 5; we recommend they both be included.

By the way, salix is misspelt as slalix in the schedule.

Animals

Protection of vegetation is an important method for protecting animals through the planning scheme, and in that respect we compliment Council. A second method is through declaration of Sites of Significance, as Amendment 205 does in sites Z1 to Z8 on p.122. (Note that these have been wrongly labelled 21 to 28). We have not had time to fully review each site, but our attention is drawn to site Z3.

To label site Z3 as "Yarra Brae Estate" is misleading because the area covers the western part of Yarra Brae, a length of

river frontage, and all but the southernmost part of Stane Brae. Information on the excellence of mammal and bird populations of Stane Brae are available from the Save Stane Brae Committee, and indicate that area Z3 should be extended slightly to cover all of Stane Brae.

The amendment might also be improved by giving some protection to dead trees, since they are extremely important for the nesting of marsupials, parrots and cockatoos.

Land subject to Amendment 125

Amendment 125 was the subject of great scrutiny by the Review Panel for the Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Regional Strategy Plan, and many recommendations were made in Chapter 10 of the Panel's report in October 1981. We suggest that Amendment 205 implement more of those recommendations, particularly with respect to those areas adjacent to Leversha Reserve which the new zoning maps indicate as IND.B and RUR.LL2.

To quote the Review Panel,

" The panel is concerned to preserve that land surrounding the northern and eastern boundary of the retarding basin in the vicinity of Bright Road and Stradbroke Road. The land is unsuitable for urban or residential development, containing extremely steep slopes, significant stands of vegetation and valuable habitat." (Vol.1, p.160).

The panel therefore recommended zoning for a reserve extending from west of the proposed IND.B land near the quarry, to east of what is now the Leversha Reserve (see p.151 in Vol.1 of their report). We support that recommendation.

A primary purpose of zoning for a reserve to the southeast of the quarry was clearly to provide a buffer to protect the amenity of surrounding land uses, which must now include the visual amenity of a proposed National Park. Instead, Amendment 205 does just the reverse: Industrial (Extractive Buffer) zoning, by "preserving the option of future exploration" and "recovering all of the winnable mineral deposit", protects the quarry owners from limitations which the amenity of surrounding land uses dictate. This is a serious anomaly.

To the east of Leversha Reserve, Lot 4 at the end of Gratten Road was also recommended for reserve zoning. With the exception of the northernmost part, that land represents excellent habitat with probably equal floristic value to the adjacent reserve.

For these reasons and for others covered in the Review Panel report, we suggest revision of Amendment 205 in line with the Panel's recommendations for Amendment 125.

Containment of urban growth

Amendment 205 makes no reference to containment of urban growth and it has therefore been difficult within the time available to us to assess how well it addresses the relevant section of Statement of Planning Policy No.3:

2.1 "Any net increase in the total provision for residential development in the Policy Area shall be contained within the aims of this Policy. There shall be no net increase in the total provision for residential development in the Dandenong Ranges; and no significant increase in the Upper Yarra Valley and the southern foothills, beyond that provided for in proposals approved or exhibited at the date of adoption of this Policy.",

where "Dandenong Ranges for the purpose of this policy is bounded generally to the north by the 150m contour...".

We would like to see a professional appraisal of the amendment in this context, for we see no excuse for permitting expansion of the urban sprawl when there is no corresponding growth in Melbourne's total population.

Two particular features of the amendment which raise concern are the proposed expansion of shopping centres in Lilydale and Kilsyth (p.104) and the liberal use of Residential (Development) zoning, both of which beg justification in light of Statement of Planning Policy No.3. We would like to look at the detail of these points after seeing a comprehensive account of net increase or decrease in provision for residential development. If there is any net increase, there are areas where we think Residential (Development) zoning ought to be changed.

Conclusion

We hope this submission will help Council refine Amendment 205, and we are happy to discuss the points we have raised. If any hearing is held in connection with these points, we would like the opportunity to participate.

Yours sincerely,



Graeme S. Lorimer (Dr.)
President.