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BUSHRANGER

Newsletter of the
Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society Inc

August 2020

Next meeting 7.30 -9pm

8 September 2020

Zoom or meeting place details will be emailed

Do join us. We need Facebook/IT skills, editors, architects and writers who love the environment

Contents

Spring Wildflower walk Nth Head – book in

Longueville Park upgrade – have your say

Crown Land plan – our submission

Golf course or Sport & Rec – report

National Park walks – report

Narrabri Gas project - CSGW report

Spring Wildflower Walk in North Head, Manly 10am- 1pm, Sunday 6 September



Guided by Meron Wilson, lead bush regenerator with Hornsby Council, and assisted by Society plant experts.

North Head Sanctuary is a haven where natural heritage and Australian history combine with spectacular ocean and harbour views, a photographer's delight! Walkers can also stop at the café and Visitor Centre.

Book via the Society website and Eventbrite from **Friday 28 August**. Limited to 20 walkers due to Covid safety.



View from North Head - nationalparks.nsw.gov.au

Sport & Rec Precinct for LC Golf Course?

As the Lane Cove Golf Course is surrounded by bushland on three sides, including 'Bushland Park' with its rare and critically endangered species of *Hygrocybeae* (fungi) there were very many aspects to consider when writing the Society's submission on the Proposal for a 'Sport & Recreation Precinct' on the Golf course precinct to meet the 16 August deadline. It can be found on our website: lanecovebushland.org.au/Submission_LCSportRec_Golf

Thank you to all the members who sent a submission to Council and copied us in, numbers do matter. There were two Saturday morning consultations at the Golf Club run by Council. They were well attended with many well prepared, vocal residents speaking from the floor, all disagreeing with the proposal to shorten the golf course by creating a Driving Range and Putt-Putt area near River Road.

Longueville Park Upgrade: have your say

Longueville Park playground is located on the foreshore of the Lane Cove River on Stuart Street, just up from the ferry. The Society is preparing a Submission.

The feeling amongst members at our last Zoom meeting was that due to its beautiful location, it should not be cluttered with bright plastic play equipment, but retain a more natural, peaceful ambience and pay homage to the Aboriginal heritage (evidenced by now faded rock engraving).

Community consultation is now open until 7 September 2020 and you are encouraged to make a submission:

CouncilConsultations/LonguevilleParkPlaygroundUpgrade

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DRAFT 'STATE SIGNIFICANT PLAN FOR CROWN LAND'

The Society is concerned to conserve and protect Crown Lands both in our local area and across the state. Our Submission (20 August) to the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's 'Draft State Strategic Plan for Crown Land' (SSP for Crown Lands) is concerned that Crown Lands not be exploited for development or degraded by overuse, but conserved as a breathing space for urban communities and the preservation of biodiversity in rural areas.

The very order of the priorities indicates the preference in the SSP for commercial and economic development of Crown Land rather than preservation of plant and animal biodiversity. The statement: to "strengthen and support evolving communities" is just another term for commercial and economic development.

We noted that urban bushland barely receives any attention in the draft SSP for Crown Land, yet it is extremely precious in the increased densification of urban areas. 'Green Space' is a general term covering a range of definitions and uses from parks to sports fields, but green space is not necessarily natural bushland which needs special attention.

The choices in the SSP for Crown Land were insufficiently specific when Crown Lands are so diverse and range from urban and rural areas or from land that can be valuable to

degraded. The very first priority should be an audit of Crown Lands so it is clear what they actually are.

The 'Outcomes', we supported in particular were:

- Support for and restoration of environmental values on Crown Land;
- Management of Crown Land to build resilience in a changing climate;
- Prioritising the use of Crown Land for green and open space in urban areas;
- Contribute to the ongoing recognition of native title rights, and to
- Explore co-management of land to generate mutual benefits and collaborate with Aboriginal groups.

In 2016 Crown Land Management legislation transferred 'local' (as distinct from 'State Significant') Crown land to the control of Councils and required them to each prepare a Community Land Plan of Management (CLPOM). In Lane Cove, about 20% of community land is Crown land, much of which contains our most environmentally sensitive areas, including 'Bushland' as defined in the Lane Cove Bushland Management Plan. This LCBMP, together with the Open Space Plan, are more comprehensive than the CLPOM.

Lane Cove National Park - Guided Bushwalks



With perfect weather, the walk in Lane Cove National Park on Sunday 2 August, guided by geologist John Martyn (of STEP Inc.) was a delight. John is author of maps and books including the *'Field Guide to the Bushland of the Lane Cove Valley'*. He was assisted by Society plant experts Ron Gornall and Leon Horsnell and Bushwalk Committee members. Linda Falardeau and Kate Moppett greeted participants at the start. They were so effective in the planning and management of the 'Covid Safe' walk, that we had a wait list of 44 people.

John's explanations of the Gondwanan plant connections and beautiful rock patterns were a highlight, for example, the 230 million year old 'slump fold' rocks we passed.

On the Fiddens Wharf Track - Lane Cove National Park



On Sunday 16 August, Matt Springall, professional guide and lead bush regenerator with NSW National Parks guided the same LCNP walk for the 'waitlisted people' who again enjoyed great weather and were thoroughly delighted by the knowledge they gained.

A mixture of long term members and new people responded to the posters and an email sent out by Lane Cove Council. Both guides volunteered their time for the Society and we are so grateful for their kindness in sharing their expertise with us. **The new Society Bushwalk Committee has really excelled, thank you!**

Lane Cove Coal & Gas Watch @ the Narrabri Gas Project IPC – Sally Kennedy

The Lane Cove Coal and Gas Watch is a local grassroots organisation made up of supporters who are concerned about risky coal mining, coal seam gas and fracking and is a subcommittee of the LCB&C Society.

The NSW Planning Department recommended that Santos' coal seam gas project of 850 gas wells near Narrabri in north west NSW be approved. The Dept. referred the decision on this proposal to the State's Independent Planning Commission (IPC) who held a public hearing into the project on 20-24 July and took submissions.

The Coal and Gas Watch made two presentations to the Narrabri Gas Project IPC commissioners on Friday. Lane Cove locals Suzie Gold and Winnie Fu's speeches are on the LCBCS website. Winnie made reference to the fact we are a subcommittee of *the Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society*. I encourage you to read and watch the strong, powerful arguments put forward: <https://lanecovebushland.org.au/lane-cove-coal-and-gas-watch/>

Over 400 people presented to the commissioners with only 3 or 4 in favour of the project. The range of issues raised and detailed has been staggering - farmers with properties on the boundary of the project site, experts on water, wells, economists discussing the energy market, doctors discussing the health impacts, lawyers outlining the precautionary principle and how it should be applied here, measurement details of the depressurisation of the aquifers, Aboriginal representation, the biodiversity values of the Pilliga, Knitting Nanna's, the Country Women's Association, NSW Farmers, the Australia Institute, Siding Springs Observatory to discuss the impact on dark skies, farmers explaining how insurance companies will not provide cover if the CSG industry is involved, the Wilderness Society, the ex-NSW fire commissioner,

climate change scientists..... and I'm only scratching the surface.

The overwhelmingly impression was that people knew what they were talking about. The presentations could explain how no progress had been made by Santos to resolve any of the issues first outlined and documented from the early environmental impact statement 4 years ago, that the chief scientist's recommendations had not been implemented. That consent conditions for the initial pilot wells had not been met and could therefore not be relied on for production wells, evidence of the poisoning of aquifers. Evidence of misrepresentation of the facts in Santos' impact statements- You get the drift!!!

And little old Lane Cove Coal and Gas Watch has been a tiny part of this unprecedented response and public outpouring. I have to admit I burst into tears after I heard Winnie's speech!



Winnie Fu (front)