



## The Annual General Meeting of the NVCA

Held on Sunday, February 1st at Stuart Island. We were fortunate to enjoy sunshine, shared food, friendship and frivolity. Anne Smyth chaired the meeting where all committee positions were declared vacant and a new committee voted in. The 2015 NVCA Executive Committee is *President*: Georgette Allen; *Vice President*: Philip Margolis; *Secretary/Treasurer*: Carol Margolis; *Committee Members (4)*: Lyn Orrego, Alyson Shepherd, Sally Cavanaugh and Wendy Wedge and our *Public Officer* is: Joy van Son. The President's Report can be read on page 4.

## It's NVCA Membership Renewal time

NVCA Memberships for 2015 are now due. For your convenience a 2015 Membership Renewal Form is printed on the last page, please fill in your particulars and return it to the Secretary.

New members are always welcome, so make a copy of the form and invite a like-minded friend to join the NVCA. The more NVCA members we have, the more clout we wield when it comes to taking action to defend our local environment, and the better the outcome for our environment.

To those members who have already paid their membership fees, and for the kind donations, thank you for your promptness and generosity. - *Wendy Wedge (Memberships)*

## NVCA Fees can now be paid electronically

You can pay your Membership Fees directly into NVCA's BCU account.

**BCU members** doing a funds transfer will need to quote the *Account No.*: 53152 and S1

*Account Name*: Nambucca Valley Conservation Association Inc.

*Reference*: Your initials and surname.

**Transferring funds from another institution** you will need to quote the *BSB No*: 704328;

*Account No*: 53152 (**no S-type**); *Account Name*: Nambucca Valley Conservation Association Inc. and

*Reference*: Your initials and surname.

## Council Matters - January 2015 by Cr Paula Flack

Significant community opposition seems to be paying off for two important patches of community land. At December's meeting, General Manager Michael Coulter acknowledged the Valla Beach Community Association's resolution to reject the proposal to reclassify the forested block of **community land next to the Valla Beach Preschool**. In view of this and in light of broader strong community opposition to reclassification and sale of this land, Mr Coulter proposed to drop the process of reclassification of the forested land and instead proceed with reclassification of the Valla Beach Hall, Pre School and car park from community to operational land. The matter was deferred to allow the preschool and hall committees time to respond. **Kingsworth Lake Reserve community land reclassification** process is proceeding but Council will have a struggle on its hands if it remains determined to reclassify this wonderful ecological hot spot with a view to selling it off for private development. So far, 42 wetland dependant bird species including three threatened species, have been identified at the lake by birding clubs and a respected bird ecologist. 1 x Black-necked Stork (*Jabiru*) *Ephippiorhynchus asiaticus*, 3 x Latham's Snipes *Gallinago hardwickii* and 3 x Comb-crested Jacanas *Irediparragallinacea* were recorded at the lake in December 2014 and are an exciting discovery. Local and broader community opposition remains very strong and well informed. Also an adjoining land owner (property developer) has claimed rights to access and use of a % of the lake's water and strongly opposes the reclassification or use of water for highway construction. This new complication is being considered by Council and could potentially end in a legal battle.

Council resolved in front of a packed gallery to **not offer the use of Kingsworth Reserve lake water for compaction and dust suppression** during upgrading the Pacific Highway between Warrell Creek and Nambucca Heads. Instead Council has asked for staff to provide a report which considers the option of selling sewerage treatment plant water outputs which are usually dumped into the Nambucca River.

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Council's **Donation Program and Environment Levy Gant Program for 2015/16** are still open to individuals and community groups for environmental improvement/protection/rehabilitation projects. Closing date for applications is 26 March 2015.

Last year Council resolved to proceed with the design of a **constructed wetland at Bowraville Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)** however it has now reversed that decision after being advised by staff that the wetland construction costs were higher than first reported. Bowra STP is an older style trickling filter plant that in recent times has produced a variable effluent quality that does not always comply with Council's EPA licence. Council is obligated to address this failure to ensure compliance of the quality of effluent discharged into the river. Council has now resolved to seek quotes for a Recycled Water Quality Management Plan with a view to maximising the amount of wastewater pumped for reuse so that river discharges are all but eliminated.

The **Fit for the Future Program** is the NSW Government response to the report of the **Independent Local Government Review Panel**. The panel made recommendations regarding merging some Councils and the Office of Local Government (OLG) has since advised that all Council's outside the Sydney metropolitan area will participate in Joint Organisations to deliver functions of regional significance or achieve economies of scale to make a function self-sustaining by 2016. The Panel's recommendation for Nambucca was that the boundaries remain the same and Council participate in the proposed North Coast Joint Organisation which would include Nambucca Shire Council, Bellingen Shire Council, Coffs Harbour City Council and Clarence Valley Council. Each NSW council has been asked to submit a Council Improvement Proposal or Merger Proposal based on the Committees recommendations by 30 June 2015. The State Government's local government reform process has been ongoing for a number of years now and is a moving feast of proposals focused on the 'unsustainability' of local government in particular rural councils. To date there has been no clear direction from State Govt as to what Joint Organisations might look like or how they might work in terms of local representation, governance, service delivery etc. The result has been considerable uncertainty for local government, a fair share of power struggling, and increased workloads for staff and councillors. Council has resolved that it does have the scale and capacity broadly consistent with the recommendation of the Independent Local Government Review Panel and will prepare Council's Fit for the Future submission on the basis of the existing Shire boundaries and membership of the proposed North Coast Joint Organisation of Councils. In the meantime it has also resolved to initiate informal discussions with Bellingen Shire Council to explore any interest in a joint meeting of both Councils to discuss possible amalgamation or other joint activities. Watch this space!

*- Opinions expressed are those of Cr Paula Flack and not those of Nambucca Shire Council.*

## Labor to establish Australia's first Great Koala National Park

The koala is Australia's most loved and iconic native animal, an instantly recognisable symbol of Australia and an integral part of our cultural heritage.

In the state's north, the koala is under serious threat. Without committed action we will be the generation responsible for the regional extinction of the koalas of northern New South Wales.

Koala numbers in NSW, Queensland and ACT have plummeted by a third in 20 years.

Under NSW law koalas are listed as vulnerable to extinction. Koalas in northern NSW and Queensland are on the Federal threatened species list. Habitat loss caused by land clearing and urban development has resulted in koalas disappearing from 75% of their former range. We cannot save the koala with kind words and token actions, we must act to protect its diminishing habitat.

Despite the koala being the second most recognised animal in the world, behind the Chinese Panda, no nationally recognised reserves have been set aside in Australia to ensure the protection of the koala in the wild.

In China reserves covering 1 million hectares of the panda's bamboo forest habitat have been established and provided with World Heritage listing. Visitors from around the world are attracted to China's panda reserves.

A NSW Labor Government will create the Great Koala National Park. This significant new national park will stretch over 315,000 hectares of public land inland from Coffs Harbour from the Macleay River, near Kempsey to Woolgoolga and encompass 140,000 hectares of existing reserves.

It will protect the Bellingen-Nambucca-Macleay and the Coffs Harbour-Guy Fawkes koala meta-populations. The Great Koala National Park will protect public land, both state forests and already existing reserves in the range of these two koala populations. It will create a mosaic of parks.

The Great Koala National Park is estimated to contain 20%, or 4, 500 of NSW's remaining wild koalas. Australia's first Koala National Park will protect eucalypt forest and rainforest.

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Furthermore, the Great Koala National Park is home to 33 other threatened species including the glossy black-cockatoo, spotted-tailed quoll, parma wallaby, yellow bellied glider, Hastings River mouse and long-nosed potoroo. - *Luke Foley, NSW Labor Leader.*

## See Labor's proposed Great Koala National Park policy

Following is a link to the proposed Great Koala National Park the labor party has announcing they will create. Check out the map and see the 170,000ha of state forests they will add to the reserve estate for koalas if they get into office. These hectares contain many of the steep upper catchment areas of the Nambucca River threatened with cable logging and they are the exact areas that, if protected, will also protect our water catchment and supplies! [Great Koala National Park Policy web version.pdf](#)

## NEFA's 'Forests 4 Ever' campaign launched

After 25 years of campaigning to protect the high conservation value forests of North East NSW and working towards ecologically sustainable forest management, the North East Forest Alliance (NEFA) has revised its position.

The Forest Agreements for upper and lower north east NSW have not delivered a Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative reserve system or Ecologically Sustainable Forest Management. Their 20 year period expires in 2018 and logging of forests on public land must end. We believe that this will be in the best environmental, social and economic interests of the community. The policy was adopted unanimously on 17th January 2015.

The 'Forests 4 Ever' campaign has been formulated over the last few months with several meetings and online discussion. It was adopted with the agreement of 10 NEFA regional co-ordinators.

- *NEFA media release, February 2015.*

## NSC Vegetation Mapping and Koala Habitat Study

Nambucca Shire Council is working with the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) under the state government's Saving Our Species Koala 'iconics' program on an exciting project to investigate the status and locations of Koalas within the coastal part of the shire. OEH is also undertaking CLASS 5 vegetation mapping as part of the project.

The study will examine Koala distribution through an analysis of existing Koala records and carry out field surveys to determine Koala activity. The results of the study will inform council's regional and strategic planning. - [www.ourlivingcoast.com.au](http://www.ourlivingcoast.com.au)

## Stop aerial spraying of state forests now

The people of Bellinger Shire are deeply concerned about a proposal to undertake aerial spraying of State Forests in the Bellinger Valley in NSW. They see this practice as a threat to the health of local waterways, fragile eco-systems and people's health. The Bellinger Valley is an important refuge for wildlife. The NSW Government is being called upon to STOP aerial spraying NOW and declare Bellinger Valley forests a Koala Sanctuary. - *Sue Lennox, Bellinger.*

To sign the petition go to <https://www.change.org/p/the-hon-rob-stokes-mp-stop-aerial-spraying-of-state-forests-now-starting-in-bellinger-river-valley>

## NSW Govt. suspends AGL's Gloucester licence

Communities throughout NSW are alarmed at what's happening in Gloucester. In a dramatic turn of events, the NSW government has suspended AGL's licence to operate its Waukivory Pilot Project to mine coal seam gas (CSG) in Gloucester, pending the result of an investigation launched on January 28.

The suspension came just a day after AGL said it was "voluntarily" suspending work at the site after it had detected banned carcinogenic benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene (BTEX) chemicals in flowback water from two of the four wells and an above-ground storage tank.

Regional coordinator for Lock The Gate Steve Phillips said: "AGL's alarming pollution monitoring results in Gloucester highlight the risk fracking poses to our precious water resources.

"Chief Scientist Mary O'Kane warned the Baird government that many unanswered questions remain about the risk coal seam gas fracking poses to our land, water, and communities. But the government allowed drilling to continue in Camden, Gloucester and Narrabri, and pushed ahead with a flawed Gas Plan that failed to implement many of the Chief Scientist's recommendations. "Communities throughout NSW are alarmed at what's happening in Gloucester and will now redouble their efforts to protect land and water in the lead up to the NSW election.

"We call on Premier [Mike] Baird to freeze all coal seam gas activities in NSW until there has been a full investigation into BTEX detection at Gloucester and until the Chief Scientist's recommendations have been fully met." - *Kathy Fairfax, Saturday, January 31, 2015*

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## NVCA President's Annual Report, 1st February, 2015

NVCA's recent year has been quiet, in that we have not engaged in any major campaigns – as an organisation. However, our stalwart members have been very busy and effective in supporting specific campaigns, in conjunction with allied groups, throughout this last year.

I speak of Lyn Orrego's work on the Koala Study, the results of which are reflected in the significant report despatched by Ashley Love, Dave Scotts and others. This scientific research has undoubtedly informed the recent announcement by Opposition Leader, Luke Foley, MP of Labor's proposal for a Great National Koala Park. Well done, and thank you, Lyn! ... as well as Ashley, Dave and the people at Bellingen Environment Centre!

Executive member Wendy Wedge attended the launch of the Koala Report, and was proud of NVCA's contribution (via Lyn, and Paula).

We have continued our input, by way of member involvement and energy, to our local 'Lock the Gate' group – Lock the Nambucca Valley. That group remains strong and active.

We supported Lock the Nambucca Valley at the Nambucca River Festival in November, which was a great success for our community, and brought renewed focus to our river, and problems faced by our water catchment in general.

Throughout the year, our meetings have been regularly attended by the core group of committee and general members. Thank you to all our membership! We would warmly welcome any members who have time and energy to join us, at our monthly meetings.

Re our executive committee – our faithful Carol again carried out the duties of Treasurer, as well as Secretary, while Phil, as Vice President, provided his stable viewpoint and valuable perspective on documents going out, in our name. The contribution made by Phil and Carol can never be over-estimated. Their tireless energy forms the foundation of our administrative output, by way of correspondence, input on submissions, etc. Thank you Phil and Carol!

Other research and input has been provided and much appreciated by Doug Blackwell, as well as his peaceful demeanour and generous heart, along with lovely Allyson, not to mention their fantastic healthy snacks, at our meetings! Thank you, Doug and Alison!

Our bi-monthly NVCA News has gone out, as always, via the magic technology employed by Wendy, our Newsletter Co-ordinator. Every edition is a goldmine (*inappropriate analogy?*) of information, highlighting issues of importance to the environment, as well as reporting on any 'wins' gained by community-based groups and organisation working for a greener and kinder world. The Bowraville Technology Centre (BTC) continues to donate the computer time for Wendy to produce our Newsletter. Thank you to the BTC! Wendy also oversees NVCA's website. Thank you Wendy!

This year our very long-serving member, and for so long Committee member, Maureen Gallagher, has chosen to move to Coffs Harbour. You will be sadly missed, Maureen, and we all wish you loving nurturing friendships, in your new home. This means Wendy will now be our mail collection person. Notwithstanding that so much of NVCA's correspondence is transmitted via e-mail, the business of maintaining the postal collection remains important and necessary, and much appreciated. Thank you, Wendy!

Of course, limitless thanks go to our tireless member, Councillor Paula Flack, who provides us with comprehensive Council reports which are most helpful with valuable information regarding current projects of Council, funding available, issues of importance coming up on Council's agenda, etc. Thank you Paula!

This year NVCA has made submissions supporting the NSW Nature Conservation Council's initiative to have a review conducted into the management of the Environment Protection Authority.

We also wrote submissions to Nambucca Shire Council on the Draft Community Facilities and Public Open Space Study, proposing that Faringdon Fields be returned to the Aboriginal Community in accordance with Council resolution back in 2008; and a submission to Council re the proposed reclassification of Community Land at Valla Beach; and provided support to residents of Kingsworth Lake Estate, Nambucca Heads, regarding Council's proposed reclassification of the Community Land area around the lake at Kingsworth Estate. Council has resolved to reclassify the Kingsworth Estate Community land to Operational, leaving stakeholders to 'fight a rear-guard action' on that issue.

Similar proposals are afoot regarding Community Land at Valla Beach, and we remain vigilant, with our focus being on 'No change'. We believe there is no need to reclassify our Community Land to Operational, in order to sell it to the developer of the adjoining land! This position was put to Council in a submission, as well as a delegation to Council meeting, late last year.

This year we have also provided support, via Lyn Orrego for a campaign to stop cable logging on Mid North Coast catchments. We have joined with the North Coast Environment Centre, North East Forest Alliance, and the Bellingen Environment Centre to stop this proposed catchment destruction. NVCA is providing support for a film which will highlight the danger of cable logging, and showcase the areas which would be devastated by such irresponsible practices, if the proposed trials go ahead. Watch this space! Thank you, Lyn and all those in the above organisations.

Thank you to our general membership, for your continued faith in what can be achieved by a small group such as ours. Your ongoing loyalty is much appreciated. Thank you also, to Joy van Son, in continuing as our Public Officer.

Appreciation also goes to Rudy van Drie, for taking the position of NVCA's delegate at the meetings of the Nambucca River Creeks, Estuaries and Coastline Management Committee. Thank you, Rudy!

I offer my personal thanks to each and every member of our 'band', for your acceptance of my foibles, your love and mutual respect for one another, and your generous giving of time, energy and other resources to our cause.

May we continue, and flourish! Thank you, one and all!

Sincerely, Georgette Allen. President, NVCA.

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## 2015 NVCA MEMBERSHIP FORM

### **Member Details:**

Name/s:.....

Address:.....

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Phone No: .....

Email Address: .....

Your area of Expertise or Interest: .....

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I would like to be on the e-list:  YES  NO

*The e-list enables members to become more personally involved in local conservation matters by receiving information on upcoming submissions and petitions.*

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### **Membership Options:**

Single \$8  Family \$12  Group \$18  Donation \$.....

I/We enclose the following amount:\$.....

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### **Please assist by ticking one or two boxes below.**

*The more of us sharing the load, the lighter it is for us all, the more fun we have, and the better the environmental outcomes.*

I/We would like to volunteer for **occasional** assistance with:

#### **The Serious Stuff:**

Submissions  Campaigns  Surveys  Surprise Me!

I am very busy but please put me on the "Ring and Ask Me At The Time" List.

#### **The Fun Stuff:**

Market Stall  Garage Sale  Annual Dinner  Food Fair  Cooking

I am very busy but please put me on the "Ring and Ask Me At The Time" List.

I/We would like to volunteer skills in: .....

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*I have read the NVCA Aims and Objective and The Constitution of the NVCA (see page 6) and I agree to abide by these.....*

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*Please mail to:* The Secretary,  
Nambucca Valley Conservation Association Inc.  
PO Box 123,  
Bowraville, NSW, 2449

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# THE CONSTITUTION of The Nambucca Valley Conservation Assoc.Inc.

Reviewed and adopted 28 October 2005

## 1 CONSTITUTION

The Nambucca Valley Conservation Association Inc. (NVCA) has adopted the Model Rules for Incorporated Associations, as set out by the New South Wales Department of Fair Trading, in accordance with the Association Incorporation Act (1984), Regulation 1985, Clause 10, with the following additions:

- 1.1 The office bearers of this Association to be President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer, with a minimum of two and maximum of four committee members.
- 1.2 The executive of this Association to be President or Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and at least one committee member.
- 1.3 A quorum of this Association shall consist of three executive members and two ordinary members.
- 1.4 Annual membership to be set for single, family and group and be reviewed at each Annual General Meeting.
- 1.5 That each member signs an Application for Membership of the Association, binding them to abide by the objectives and operating protocols of the Association.
- 1.6 The executive of NVCA reserves the right to refuse or terminate membership.

## 2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 To respect the natural environment and its biodiversity.
- 2.2 To raise awareness of the intrinsic value of a healthy environment and its role as our life support system.
- 2.3 To campaign to promote environmental health and protection at a local, regional, state and national level to the best of our abilities.
- 2.4 To raise awareness of local and broader issues affecting the environment, through direct communication, NVCA newsletter, meetings, fundraising events and the media.
- 2.5 To promote the principles of ecologically sustainable development and land management including the marine environment.
- 2.6 To encourage the community to participate in local issues which relate to ecologically sustainable development and environmental health.
- 2.7 To remain informed about current issues and trends in environmental health, conservation and natural resource management.
- 2.8 To participate in Local, State and Federal Government processes relating to environmental management.

## 3 OPERATING PROTOCOLS

- 3.1 **New Memberships**  
All new membership applications to be considered for approval at the next general meeting of the Association.

- 3.2 **Delegation to campaign on behalf of the NVCA**

Members may seek and receive delegations to pursue issues on behalf of the NVCA as long as:

- a) The President and Secretary or if one is unavailable, another member of the executive, or  
a general meeting has approved a position by resolution on the issue to be pursued;
- b) Correspondence issued on behalf of the NVCA, including email has been approved by the Secretary or two executive committee members other than the author; the media protocol is followed and the member reports back to the executive committee or a general meeting on a regular basis regarding progress, outcomes and propose or further actions required.

- 3.3 **Media Protocol**

Members may issue media releases on behalf of the NVCA on the basis that two executive committee members other than the author have agreed to:

- a) the wording of the media release, the timing of its release and the strategy for promoting it,
- b) the outlets to which it will be sent and
- c) any spokesperson to speak to the release.

- 3.4 **Reimbursement of Expenses**

Approval for reimbursement of expenses must be given by at least three members of the executive committee. Payment is not assured and will be dictated by available funds.

- 3.5 **NVCA Resource library**

- 3.6 Members may access the resource library by making arrangements with the Secretary.

- 3.6 **Equipment Inventory**

The executive to review the status of equipment inventory annually.

## 4 THE e-LIST POLICY

- 4.1 e-List contact details are not for general distribution.
- 4.2 e-List contact details are only to be accessed by an executive member.
- 4.3 Only members who request to be on the e-list will be included.
- 4.4 e-list addresses to be 'CCd' when posted.
- 4.5 Size of emails and attachments to be kept to a minimum.
- 4.6 Number of emails to be monitored to avoid member overload.
- 4.7 e-list members will receive: Minutes of monthly meetings, Electronic petitions, Submissions and Campaign updates.

## 5 FACEBOOK PROTOCOLS - Adopted 29th July, 2011

An NVCA Facebook presence/page was established at the NVCA Facebook Workshop on 14<sup>th</sup> April, 2011. The following protocols apply to the management of this page and postings to it:

- 5.1 **Management:**

The page and postings are to be managed by an administrator elected at the Annual General Meeting each year.

The Administrator must also be a member of the NVCA Committee.

The Administrator will carry out the management of the page and postings in line with NVCA protocols.

- 5.2 **Process for Postings by NVCA:**

Any draft by an NVCA Ordinary Member can be posted by the Administrator if it has first been viewed and accepted by 2 Committee Members, in line with NVCA's longstanding Media Release Policy.

Any draft by a Committee Member or the Administrator can be posted by the Administrator after being viewed and accepted by 1 other NVCA Committee Member.

An exemption from the above protocol applies only to matters which are small, factual and in line with NVCA's policies and carried motions – for example: to answer a query about time, date and place of an NVCA event.

- 5.3 **Posting content:**

Posts are to meet the criteria that they are suitable for publicly representing NVCA, and do not contain defamatory or inflammatory language or intent.

Posts should not include personal information such as name or contact details of any person who has not expressly given their permission.

Posts should not include personal opinions.

- 5.4 **Policy re accepting or rejecting 'friends':**

All requests to be 'friends' are to be accepted in good faith, unless and until posts prove at odds with NVCA's own objectives.

## 6 PROCEDURES FOR NVCA REPRESENTATIVES - Adopted August, 2011

The following procedures are to be followed by NVCA Representatives unless otherwise advised by the executive:

- 6.1 Each NVCA Representative is to be the contact person for the committee to which they are appointed.
- 6.2 email or hard copies of agenda and minutes received by the representative are to be forwarded, with **important matters highlighted**, to the NVCA Secretary for distribution to the NVCA Executive for input/feedback.
- 6.3 As soon as possible after attendance at a committee meeting, the representative will provide a **briefing note** to the secretary, preferably by email, outlining any items relevant to the NVCA, to be tabled at the next NVCA meeting.
- 6.4 When possible, the representative will attend the relevant NVCA meetings to discuss the matters from the previous committee meeting, and seek feedback/support in preparation for next committee meeting.
- 6.5 When necessary, an alternative representative will be appointed and be responsible for the above procedures/responsibilities which apply to representatives.