



## The NVCA Annual General Meeting

will be held on 8th February, 2014 at the picnic area on Stuart Island — across the causeway and to your left. The AGM will begin at 11am followed by a brief general meeting then lunch. Bring food to share, a chair and a hat. All NVCA members are welcome to join us by the river — see you there.

## Council Matters January/February 2014

**Bellwood 346 lot DA update** - A DA has now been lodged with Council by the developer, for the construction of the highly controversial 'Link Road' between Alexandra Drive and Marshall Way at Bellwood.

**Valla Quarry's Annual Report**, lodged with Council in December as required, identified a number of further breaches including an admission that there had been an incursion into the Stage 2 area in breach of conditions which require it to notify Council and prepare a new Environmental Management Plan prior to commencement. Council has not yet decided to impose fines for the breaches, instead deferring the matter to allow the quarry a month to revise its existing EMP to accommodate the 'variances' prior to making a decision. History repeats itself, they say..... Watch this space.

**Further issues with the dam** - leakage problems have now been identified requiring changes to design and construction and further budget adjustments. On a good note, Cr Flack's efforts to have the dam filled as much as possible from rainfall catchment upstream of the dam to reduce massive extraction from the borefield and protect environmental flows, has paid off. Council applied for a licence variation and have now been advised by the Commissioner of the DPI Office of Water that he is prepared to consider a temporary relaxation of the relevant flow licence conditions for 12 months subject to council preparing a Dam Filling Options Report, seeking feedback on the report from relevant State Government agencies and undertaking consultation with downstream landholders.

Following community delegations from residents and representatives of Lock the Nambucca Valley, Crs Flack and Smyth successfully moved to have Council consider a monthly **water testing program** for 12 months from the bottom of North Arm and South Arm, upstream of the Town Water supply, in the next round of Environment Levy projects. The testing program will monitor for common metals (especially arsenic and antimony) and other compounds, with the results providing strong baseline data to protect the Town Water Supply in the event of any pollution from antimony or other mining activities in the upper catchment. Estimated cost \$8,000.

**DA 2013/150 Grease Arrestor and Oily Water Treatment Plant Waste Grease Trap Plant** on council land by a private operator, at Lot 2 DP 538542, 20 Gumma Road adjacent to Macksville Sewerage Treatment Plant. Previous info was wrong - an EIS has not been prepared so the DA is to be re-exhibited when ALL the information is submitted.

The **sale of approx 290 square metres of Gorden Park** to a neighbouring private property owner is back on the agenda with Council receiving advice from the Crown Lands Department that as the owner of the land, it now supports the sale proposal which will enable the property owners to erect retaining walls to stabilise the very steep unstable section of Gorden Park immediately below their house. However at the Council meeting the property owner openly admitted that it is most likely they would build out into the new area over Gorden Park to gain more sunlight (not to mention amazing water views). Once again the matter has been deferred with Council requesting that CLD representatives come to a meeting to discuss the highly controversial proposal.

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## "UNSEEN", the high-octane thriller

It's a sweeping story, touching the streets of America to the jungles of Borneo. A story which revolves around one man... and the most widely consumed vegetable oil on the planet – palm oil.

All drama and suspense aside, palm oil production is a complex issue. And while right now it is doing enormous damage to forests, people and animals, it doesn't have to be this way. The good news is that palm oil production can be environmentally responsible. Watch the video, find out how and take action at [unseenthemovie.com](http://unseenthemovie.com).

## Map of Life – [www.mappinglife.org](http://www.mappinglife.org)

Earth is host to an enormous number of species of birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians and mammals, but do you know which animals live where? What critters are you likely to find if you explore the local parklands or even your garden? Map of Life is exactly what it says: an interactive map that tells you the animal life found in your area. Just select the zone radius and the type of animal you're looking for, then zoom in and click where you live on the map (it uses Google maps and so works in the same way). The website presents you with a list of the creatures that live in your area, or you can opt to view tiled thumbnail images instead. Click any critter's name or image and you will be taken to the Wikipedia entry or another information page for that animal.

**Council has returned to evening meetings** for both its monthly meetings, now held on the last Thursday of each month and the Thursday two weeks earlier starting at 5.30pm. Public forums are still allowed at the start of each meeting with bookings to be made with Council as early as possible. The subject of a public forum delegation does not have to be related to agenda items for that night. Once again Council will be holding roving meetings at various community venues around the Valley during the warmer months, starting with Argents Hill Hall on 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2104.

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

## Video highlights iconic landscapes and communities under threat

The battles to save six iconic wild places in NSW are the subject of a new video that highlights the devastating impact coal mines and coal seam gas projects are having on local communities and iconic landscapes across NSW.

Icons Under Threat is a short film produced by the Nature Conservation Council to raise awareness of the terrible toll the coal and gas industries are having on communities, wildlife, and stunning natural areas in the Hunter Valley and other parts of the state.

The video is comprised of six mini-documentaries focusing on Leard State Forest and the mighty Pilliga in the state's north-west; Ben Bullen on the edge of the Gardens of Stone near Lithgow; the Great Dripping Gorge near Mudgee in the central west; the village of Bulga and Warkworth Sands woodland in the Upper Hunter; and Putty Valley, in the heart of the Wollemi wilderness.

"Icons Under Threat is being launched at a critical stage in many of these campaigns, when the bulldozers and drill rigs are about to move in," said NCC Campaigns Director Kate Smolski.

"It is all too easy for coal and gas companies to do their destructive business out of the public gaze. Icons Under Threat shines a light on this important issue and highlights how the state government is failing to protect communities and the environment from unrestrained coal and gas development."

Stream the full 15-minute video, or any of the six short case studies, by visiting [nccnsw.org.au/icons-film](http://nccnsw.org.au/icons-film).

*- Nature Conservation Council of NSW*

## EDO NSW Facing Renewed Attacks

Just before Christmas and without warning, the Federal Government told informed the Environmental Defenders Office of NSW (EDO) and other EDOs across the country that it was breaking its four-year commitment to fund EDOs, effective immediately!

This unexpected loss of \$150,000 this financial year and \$400,000 per annum in the coming financial years is extremely disappointing. Taking away such major funding severely limits the ability EDOs to help individuals and communities to address their local environmental issues.

The EDO is determined to find a way to remain a strong voice for communities and the environment but they need to our support. Visit [www.edo.nsw.org.au](http://www.edo.nsw.org.au) to donate so EDO NSW can continue to help communities stand up for their local environment.

A strong message can be sent to hold the Federal Government accountable for their decision by signing the EDO's petition.

## Commonwealth rolls back marine protections

The Federal Government has defied years of public consultation, common sense and compelling scientific evidence by suspending marine sanctuaries throughout Australia's new national network of marine parks.

In NSW waters, a chain of underwater mountains, several deep sea canyons and the stunning Lord Howe Island will lose vital protections. These places are home to whales, turtles, dolphins and tropical reef

## Illegal fishing hotline nabs fishy offenders

A tip off from a member of the public to the Department of Primary Industries' (DPI) Fishers Watch Phonenumber has resulted in the apprehension of four men and the seizure of 11 Yellowtail Kingfish. Yellowtail Kingfish are a highly valuable recreational and commercial species and are listed as a 'priority' species under the NSW Fisheries Management Act.

Anyone with information on illegal fishing is encouraged to contact the Fishers Watch Phonenumber on 1800 043 536 and include as much information as possible including locations, car and boat registrations, type of illegal activity and number of persons involved.

All information relating to bag and size limits can be found on the NSW Fisheries website at: [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries).

## Safer Solutions

There many simple, low cost ways that you can reduce the chemical load in your home. The Safer Solutions website is being developed as the primary source of information for householders who are trying to make their way through the home chemical maze. You can start now to make your home a safer and healthier place. Try buying and using products that don't contain hazardous chemicals. Use the A-Z guide to learn more about common chemicals found in and around the home.

*- [www.safersolutions.org.au](http://www.safersolutions.org.au)*

## What are they spraying?

The weather modification program has continued funding into 2014 ... seen the streaks in the sky, the haze on the horizon?

The *Blue No More* group believe these persistent contrails appearing in our skies are designed to linger in the upper atmosphere to combine with normal moisture, clouds and vapour to create a blanket effect in the theory of reducing global warming. They then believe the nano-sized aerosols are released by rain onto the earth and into our waterways.

To make up your own mind see the documentary on the web "What in the World are they Spraying" at [www.whatintheworldaretheyspraying.info](http://www.whatintheworldaretheyspraying.info) and check out the aussie website at [www.bluenomore.com](http://www.bluenomore.com)

*- Steve Grey Ph. 66559676*

fish. They urgently need protection from fishing pressure. It is time Prime Minister Abbott commit to action, not more reviews. To urge the government to protect our marine life, please sign the Save Our Marine Life petition at [www.saveourmarinelife.org.au](http://www.saveourmarinelife.org.au).

- Nature Conservation Council of NSW

## Land for Wildlife in Nambucca

An opportunity currently exists for Nambucca Valley landholders to join up with the Land for Wildlife Program and enhance the biodiversity of their farm or property.

Nambucca Valley Landcare has received funding from the Catchment Management Authority, through Hastings Landcare, to offer the benefits of this program to landholders in the Nambucca Valley. You don't have to be a member of Landcare to be eligible - schools, public land and parks are eligible to apply.

If you have a minimum of ½ hectare of native vegetation and you would like some support and assistance to improve your wildlife habitat think about applying to join this scheme. Land for Wildlife is entirely voluntary and non-binding and can be integrated into your farming and lifestyle activities. And it is free. You may even want to talk to your neighbours about forming a wildlife corridor.

This program is on offer to a limited number of landholders so the first Expression of Interest (EOI) forms to be received will be assessed first.

An Expression of Interest form is the first step and needs to be received by our office by the 7th March.

Don't miss out, you can contact Joy at Landcare on 6564-7838 or [tryan@nvlandcare.org.au](mailto:tryan@nvlandcare.org.au)

For more reading on Land for Wildlife go to the Community Environment Network website, the lead organisation in NSW for the Land for Wildlife program, at <http://www.cen.org.au/Land-for-Wildlife/> or the Land for Wildlife South east Queensland <http://www.lfwseq.org.au/> is also a good website.

For those members receiving this Newsletter via email an attached PDF was included with the information and forms for Land for Wildlife.

- Joy Vanson, Nambucca Valley Landcare.

## SOMR discovers toxic sediment at Halls Peak

Recently, representatives of the Save Our Macleay River (SOMR) group met with representatives from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Derelict Mines Office (DMO) at Gibsons Open Cut, a large abandoned mine on the Chandler River. The meeting came about because of concerns raised by SOMR over "de-sludging" of containment dams.

Gibsons Open Cut in the Halls Peak area is ranked among the top 50 derelict mines causing environmental concern in NSW. Efforts have been made to contain run off from the site. However if contaminated water and sediments leave the site, it all ends up in the Chandler River, which runs into the Macleay.

SOMR's interest had been sparked by reports about recent explorations by Precious MetalResources which could potentially lead to large new mines in the Macleay catchment.

"When we went up there, we saw newly built dams with very brightly coloured water and we noticed that the dams had recently been 'cleaned' by dredging the toxic sediment and dumping it into a gully where it washes into the river", said SOMR chairman Arthur Bain.

A site inspection by EPA and DM officers found that a contractor had cleaned out the bottom dams which are designed to catch toxic sediments. Instead of carting the contaminated sludge to a specifically constructed holding area, they dumped it in the bush beside the dam." Soil and water samples were taken and SOMR members were assured that a full investigation would take place. The Derelict Mines Office (DMO) will be investigating and asking questions of the contractor who completed the work. Hopefully this will lead to the problem being fixed as soon as possible – preferably before the next big rain.

- Arthur Bain, SOMR Chairman: 6567 2010, [arthurbain@bigpond.com](mailto:arthurbain@bigpond.com)

## NCEC meeting at Tewinga

The NVCA will be hosting the North Coast Environment Council's bi-monthly meeting at the Tewinga Community Centre (2NVR building) on Saturday 15 February from 10 am.

The NCEC is a regional environment body which deals with big picture issues affecting the region and state. Agenda items include reports on logging in public and private native forests, mining, coastal development, State Government policies and legislation, marine reserves, National Parks and Reserves and reports from members groups such as the NVCA. NVCA members are welcome and encouraged to attend. Please bring a plate of food to share for lunch.

## 2014 Membership Fees are now due . . .

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

If you are a BCU member doing a funds transfer, you will need to quote the *Account No.:* 53152 and *S1;* *Account Name:* Nambucca Valley Conservation Association Inc.; *Reference:* Your initials and surname.

If you are transferring funds from another institution you will need to quote the *BSB No:* 704328 and *Account No:* 53152 (**no S-type**) *Account Name:* Nambucca Valley Conservation Association Inc.; *Reference:* Your initials and surname.

For those who still like to do things the way we used to, there's a Membership Renewal Form on the following page.

**The next meeting of the NVCA will be the AGM on Saturday, 8th February at Stuart Island picnic area.**

*for more information:*  
email [nvca@nvca.org.au](mailto:nvca@nvca.org.au)  
*All members are welcome to attend.*

This newsletter produced by Nambucca Valley Conservation Association Inc. Computer time donated by Bowraville Technology Centre.

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## 2014 NVCA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

### **Member Details:**

Name/s:.....

Address:.....

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Phone No: .....

Email Address: .....

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

.....

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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### **To assist the NVCA in its work, please tick one or more of the 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:

Submissions  Campaigns  Market Stall  Surprise Me!

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 Aims and Objectives** of the NVCA (*see [www.nvca.org.au](http://www.nvca.org.au)*)

and I agree to abide by them..... (*please sign*)

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