

Campaigning for nature

Our Campaigns Team harnesses community power to stop destructive coal and coal seam gas (CSG) projects, protect native forests and wildlife from logging and land clearing, protect marine sanctuaries, and reform the broken planning system.



Election 2015



Wins

- ✔ **GREAT DRIPPING GORGE PROTECTED** from coal mining (near Mudgee)
- ✔ **GREAT KOALA NATIONAL PARK** on North Coast, and Sydney Marine Park becomes NSW Labor policy
- ✔ **GARDENS OF STONE SAVED** from open-cut coal mine proposal (near Lithgow)
- ✔ **10/50 URBAN TREE-CLEARING CODE** reviewed and curbed
- ✔ **FULL PROTECTION RESTORED** to 20 marine sanctuaries
- ✔ **CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME** to be introduced by 2017
- ✔ **12 CSG EXPLORATION LICENCES** cancelled
- ✔ **ENVIRONMENT MOVEMENT'S ELECTION** platform broadly adopted by NSW Labor
- ✔ **BAN ON CSG DRILLING** in the Pilliga backed by NSW Labor

Member Groups

152 OUR MEMBER GROUPS across NSW are the heart of NCC and the body and soul of the environment movement in NSW

15 COMMITTEES and WORKING GROUPS on forests, planning, mining, marine, water, Crown lands, climate change, sustainable population, and governance

11 EXECUTIVE MEMBERS Don White (Chair), Jamie Hanson, Megan Kessler, Cilla Kinross, Jim Morrison, Annie Nielsen, Rob Pallin, Noel Plumb, James Ryan, Jane Smith, John Turnbull

112 REPRESENTATIVES on statutory committees

Chair's report

Our 60th anniversary in 2015 has been an opportunity to reflect on the environment movement's achievements over the past six decades.

Thanks to the vision and tenacity of the wonderful people who make up our movement, we have made great gains. Decades of struggle have delivered strong laws that prevent pollution and protect our unique native plants and animals. We have also secured a reserve system covering millions of hectares of land and sea.

There is still, of course, much work to do, but I have great confidence because scores of new groups and thousands of individual supporters are swelling our ranks. In the past year, our Member Group list topped 150 and our community of online supporters reached 88,000.

This testifies to the deep connection people have to nature, and to their desire to protect the astonishing natural beauty and wildlife that is our common legacy. It is also a tribute to the hard work of so many people – Member Groups, volunteers, committee representatives, and staff – as well as the generosity of our donors, the wise counsel of the Executive, and the leadership of CEO Kate Smolski.



I thank you all.

Chairman, Professor Donald O. White

CEO's report

Years of dogged campaigning by Member Groups, staff and volunteers bore fruit in 2014-15, with some momentous wins for the environment.

Two of the sweetest victories were the protection of Great Dripping Gorge and the Gardens of Stone, beauty spots that coal companies had threatened to destroy. We also celebrated the return of full protections to 20 marine sanctuaries, and the cancellation of 12 coal seam gas licences over much of the state.

In addition to our advocacy work, we have had great success engaging communities to reduce their environmental impact and enhance wildlife habitat. Our Power Savers Team helped 1010 households cut electricity bills, while our Healthy Ecosystems Team worked with landholders and Aboriginal communities on more than 36,000ha to improve fire management and wildlife habitat.

As ever, we achieved these results by working as a team, within our organisation and in the wider conservation community.

I am inspired by the people who make up this great movement – the Member Groups, volunteers, Executive members, representatives, and staff. I thank you all for your tireless efforts to ensure nature in NSW gets the respect and protection it deserves.

Chief Executive Officer, Kate Smolski

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Restoring wildlife habitat

Our Healthy Ecosystems Team helps landholders manage fire, control feral animals, remove weeds, and restore wildlife habitat.

30 BRISTLEBIRDS LEFT ON THE NORTH COAST (POPULATION AT RISK OF EXTINCTION) – WE WORK WITH LANDHOLDERS TO IMPROVE HABITAT TO GIVE THE BIRDS A FIGHTING CHANCE

36,041 HECTARES OF LAND AND WATER better managed

22,547 HECTARES OCCUPIED by landholders in our Hotspots Fire Project

317 PEOPLE attended our 20th anniversary Bushfire Conference

100 EMUS LEFT ON THE NORTH COAST (POPULATION AT RISK OF EXTINCTION)

4,000 HECTARES OF EMU HABITAT in Clarence Valley being improved through Upper Coldstream Biodiversity Project

1,000 HECTARES CLEARED OF LANTANA

1 SNIFFER DOG TO FIND EMU NESTS

Energy efficiency

Our Sustainable Living Team works with communities to help them reduce their environmental impact and energy bills through our Power Savers program.

95% POWER SAVERS PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION RATING

1,010 WORKING FAMILIES REDUCING THEIR POWER BILLS

71 HOMES RECEIVED FREE SOLAR HOT WATER SYSTEMS

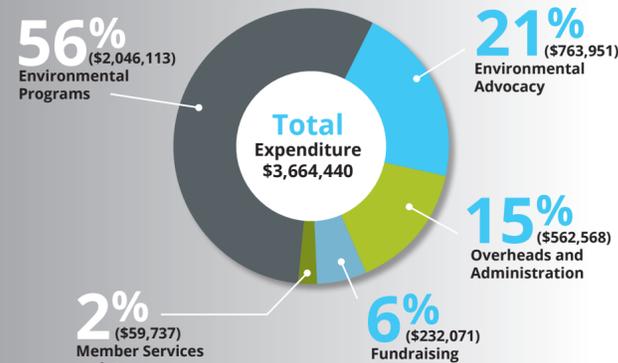
Our donors

\$20,000+ Diversicon Environmental Foundation, McKinnon Family Foundation*, Stephen Whately*, Graeme Wood Foundation*, The Sunrise Project*, **\$5,000+** Australian Communities Foundation, Rachel Fitzhardinge, Colin & Barbara Hindmarsh, Lane Cove Bush Regenerators Co-operative, Robyn McKeown, Mullum Trust*, Alan Pert, Libby & David Salkeld, Julian Tertini, Bill Wilson, Running Water Fund*, Melliodora Fund*, Digger and Shirley Martin Fund*, **\$2,000+** Geoff Giles, Megan Kessler, Patrick McEntee, Mollie Rowell, David & Kate Roser, Belinda Webster, Philip Weate, Don White, Sharnie Wu & Richard Stiles, Fairer Futures Fund*, **\$1,000+** Terry Barratt, John Dalrymple-Hay, John Dorman, Ming Chung, Ruth & Evan Griffiths, Andrew Hall, Janet Harwood, Alan Hill, Ros Madden, Joy & Murray Scott, Margaret Newton, Jim Sloan, Richard Zoeller, Sustainable Population Australia (NSW Branch), Unitarian Church, \$500+ Lee Andresen, Julie Antill, Paul Barnett, Jean Brennan, Tom Brennan, Barbara Briggs, Jennifer Broughton, Nick Butcher, Fraser Campbell, Libby Clements, Conscious Collective, Halina Czernuszyn-Robinson, David and Jennie Sutherland Foundation, Thomas Ebersoll, Peter Elliston, Malcolm Gilfillan, Robert Greig, Happy Herbs Company, Conny Harris, Norman Harris, Annie Hawker, Louise Hicks, Michael Jones, Rob Jung, Craig Kingston, Lane Cove Bushland & Conservation Society, Marcelle Lawrence, Maralyn & Tom Lawson, Tosca Looby, Helen McCauley, Macquarie Group Foundation, Richard Maguire, Jonathan Milford, Anna O'Grady, Dr Susie Linder-Pelz, Annie Nielsen, Robert Pallin, Noel Plumb, Rochelle Porteous, Patricia Ryan, Warren Salomon, Ruairidh Cameron Smail, Michael Smith, Jonathon Spicer-Bell, Ralph Stanford, Gordon Stenning, Norma Stuart, Diana Unger, Ann Waterford, Graham Whiteley, Lorraine Whiteley, Beth Williams, Vera Yee.

WE HEARTILY THANK OUR DONORS, WHOSE GENEROSITY ENSURES WE CONTINUE TO BE A STRONG VOICE FOR NATURE IN NSW.

* For the Community Organising Fellowship

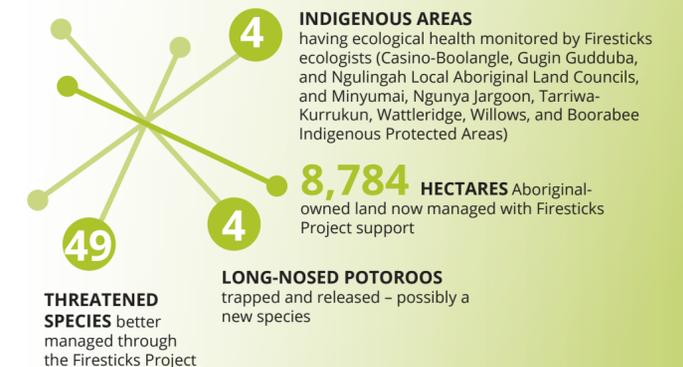
Financial review



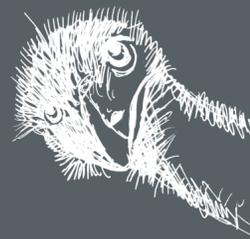
*The full audited financial accounts are at nature.org.au.

Aboriginal engagement

The Firesticks Project works with Indigenous communities to restore wildlife habitat and Indigenous cultural values.



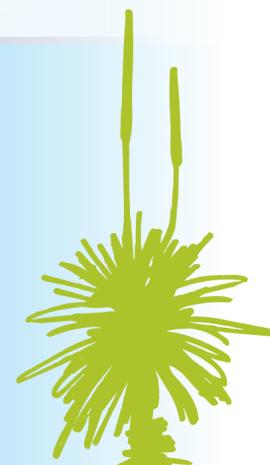
60th ANNIVERSARY YEAR



We've been busy!



Nature Conservation Council
The voice for nature in NSW
2015 ANNUAL REPORT



About us

The NSW Nature Conservation Council is the state's peak environmental non-government organisation. Since 1955, we have strived to create an ecologically sustainable society that respects and protects nature through advocacy, education, community empowerment, research, and habitat restoration. We stand with all those who believe our wildlife, forests, rivers, and oceans deserve protection.

Get involved
nature.org.au

The voice for nature in New South Wales

Coal and gas

- 1 Sydney's water catchment**
At risk: Water supply for 4.5 million people, rare coastal swamps
Threat: Longwall coal mines seeking expansion
Action: Supporting local communities, lobbying, petitioning, alliance building, research, media
Status: Decisions pending
- 2 Gardens of Stone**
At risk: Gardens of Stone, iconic rock formations, threatened species
Threat: Expansion of Coalpac open-cut coal mine
Action: Campaigning, media, lobbying, submissions
Status: Forests saved, expansion rejected, Coalpac liquidated
- 3 Warkworth Sands Woodlands**
At risk: Village of Bulga, critically endangered woodlands, endangered Regent Honeyeater
Threat: Expansion of Rio Tinto open-cut coal mine
Action: Supporting local communities, media, petitioning, lobbying, alliance building
- Status:* Expansion is being fought through the courts and planning system
- 4 T4 Coal Terminal**
At risk: Community health, our global climate
Threat: Coal dust from proposed new coal loader and coal supply chain
Action: Media, lobbying, submissions, testimony at public hearings
Status: Approved 2015
- 5 Pilliga Forest**
At risk: Threatened species habitat, rare woodlands, groundwater
Threat: Development of up to 850 CSG wells
Action: Media, lobbying, supporting local communities, submissions
Status: The fight continues, ALP has ruled out the project
- 6 Leard State Forest**
At risk: Rare woodlands and wildlife
Threat: Whitehaven open-cut coal mine
Action: Media, lobbying, submissions
Status: The forest is now being cleared

Forests and wildlife

- 7 8 Logging in reserves - Brigalow and Nandewar Conservation Areas**
At risk: Forests in conservation reserves
Threat: Proposals to allow commercial logging in reserves
Action: Submissions, lobbying, regional media
Status: Government decision is pending
- 9 Logging in reserves - River Red Gum Reserves**
At risk: Forests in conservation reserves
Threat: Proposals to allow logging in reserves
Action: Submissions, lobbying, profile raising
Status: Government decision is pending
- 10 Great Koala National Park**
The vision: A vast network of National Parks and reserves to protect iconic koalas
At risk: Koalas face local extinction without decisive action
Action: Strategy development, lobbying, media, alliance building
Status: Great Koala Park is now ALP policy, government is uncommitted
- 11 10/50 urban land clearing rules**
At risk: Thousands of landmark urban and regional trees
Threat: Indiscriminate tree clearing under new bushfire safety rules
Action: Media, lobbying, submissions, member group support, rallies
Status: Government restricted the rules, but threat remains
- 12 Ballina koalas**
At risk: Core koala population on the North Coast
Threat: Pacific Highway upgrade will destroy key habitat
Action: Submissions, lobbying, regional media
Status: NSW Government decision is pending
- 13 Northwestern koalas**
At risk: Critical koala population
Threat: Shenhua Watermark open-cut coal mine will destroy 800 hectares of koala habitat
Action: Regional media, research, lobbying, submissions
Status: NSW Government decision is pending
- 14 15 Land clearing - western NSW**
At risk: Woodland habitat for native species, water, and soil health
Threat: Weakened land clearing controls and scrapping of the Native Vegetation Act
Action: Alliance building, lobbying, submissions, policy development, media
Status: New draft Biodiversity Conservation Bill is due late 2015
- 16 Great Southern Koala Forest**
At risk: South Coast koala population is crashing and faces extinction
Threat: Native forest logging
Action: Supporting local campaigners, media, profile building
Status: Campaign continues

Crown lands

- 17 Travelling Stock Routes**
At risk: Fragile network of Travelling Stock Routes (TSRs) that are wildlife corridors between remnant bushland
Threat: Privatisation and degradation of many TSRs
Action: Lobbying, media, submissions, alliance building
Status: Threat continues
- 18 Crown Lands**
At risk: Vital pockets of biologically important bushland on Crown Lands
Threat: Privatisation of Crown Lands and transfer to local councils
Action: Lobbying, media, submissions, alliance building
Status: Threat continues
- 19 Crown Lands**
At risk: Vital pockets of biologically important bushland on Crown Lands
Threat: Privatisation of Crown Lands and transfer to local councils
Action: Lobbying, media, submissions, alliance building
Status: Threat continues

Aboriginal engagement

- 24 Willows Boorabee IPA**
Vision: Managing Country for cultural and ecological outcomes
Collaboration: Monitoring sites, species surveys, ecological burns, fire planning
- 25 Ngunya Jargoong and Minyundai IPA**
Vision: Managing Country for cultural and ecological outcomes
Collaboration: Monitoring sites, species surveys, ecological burns, fire planning
- 26 Watteridge IPA**
Vision: Managing Country for cultural and ecological outcomes
Collaboration: Monitoring sites, species surveys, ecological burns, fire planning
- 27 Ngulingah Lands**
Collaboration: Species surveys
- 28 Casino-Booallange Local Aboriginal Land Council**
Vision: Managing Country for cultural and ecological outcomes
Collaboration: Monitoring sites, species surveys, ecological burns, fire planning
- 29 Gugin Gudduba Local Aboriginal Land Council**
Vision: Managing Country for cultural and ecological outcomes
Collaboration: Monitoring sites, species surveys, ecological burns, fire planning



Conferences

- 20 Regional Conference**
Where: Bellingen
When: May 2015
Attending: 80 people
What: Local community members discussed local and statewide issues including forests, woodlands and the marine environment
- 21 Koala Conference**
Where: Bellingen
When: May 2015
Attending: 30 people
What: Leading koala conservationists gathered to halt the decline of koalas and establish koala reserves
- 22 Annual Conference**
Where: Sydney
When: October 2014
Attending: 120 people
What: NCC's annual policy-setting forum
- 23 Bushfire Conference 2015 (20th anniversary)**
Where: Surry Hills
When: May 2014
Attending: 320 people
What: Opportunity for leading bushfire experts to discuss the theme: *Fire and Restoration: Working with Fire for Healthy Lands*

Water

- 30 Cliefden Caves**
At risk: Extraordinary network of limestone caves, water resources
Threat: Plans to build a dam on the Belubula River
Action: Submissions, lobbying, media, alliance building
Status: NSW Government still considering dam
- 31 Water management**
At risk: Macquarie Marshes, an internationally significant wetland
Threat: Water extraction for agriculture
- Action:* Lobbying, supporting local communities
Status: Threat persists
- 32 Water management**
At risk: Narran Lakes, an internationally significant wetland
Threat: Water extraction for agriculture
Action: Lobbying, policy development
Status: Threat persists

Energy efficiency

- 33 Energy efficiency - Sydney**
Program: Power Savers energy efficiency program
Vision: Helping people reduce their energy bills, carbon emissions, improve comfort
Action: Conducted 821 home energy audits, installed 49 home solar hot water systems
Status: Carbon emissions reduced, thousands of dollars in savings
- 34 Energy efficiency - Hunter Valley and Central Coast**
Program: Power Savers energy efficiency program
Vision: Helping people reduce their energy bills, carbon emissions, improve comfort
Action: Conducted 144 home energy audits, installed 18 home solar hot water systems
Status: Carbon emissions reduced, thousands of dollars in savings
- 35 Energy efficiency - Illawarra**
Program: Power Savers energy efficiency program
Vision: Helping people reduce their energy bills, carbon emissions, improve comfort
Action: Conducted 45 home energy audits, installed four home solar hot water systems
Status: Carbon emissions reduced, thousands of dollars in savings

Marine

- 36 Cape Byron - marine sanctuaries**
At risk: Vital protected areas for marine life
Threat: The government wound back protection in marine sanctuaries
Action: Lobbying, petitions, letter-writing, film nights, media, campaigning
Status: Full protection restored to 5 marine sanctuaries, campaign continues
- 37 Solitary Islands - marine sanctuaries**
At risk: Vital protected areas for marine life
Threat: The government wound back protection in marine sanctuaries
Action: Lobbying, petitions, letter-writing, film nights, media, campaigning
Status: Full protection restored to 3 marine sanctuaries, campaign continues
- 38 Port Stephens - marine sanctuaries**
At risk: Vital protected areas for marine life
Threat: The government wound back protection in marine sanctuaries
Action: Lobbying, petitions, letter-writing, film nights, media, campaigning
Status: Full protection restored to 4 marine sanctuaries, campaign continues
- 39 Sydney Marine Park**
Vision: Protection for Sydney's marine environment and lifestyle
Action: Lobbying, media, alliance building, profile raising
Status: Sydney Marine Park is now ALP policy - government is considering greater protection
- 40 Jervis Bay - marine sanctuaries**
At risk: Vital protected areas for marine life
Threat: The government wound back protection in marine sanctuaries
Action: Lobbying, petitions, letter-writing, film nights, media, campaigning
Status: All sanctuaries in Jervis Bay restored
- 41 Batemans - marine sanctuaries**
At risk: Vital protected areas for marine life
Threat: The government wound back protection in marine sanctuaries
Action: Lobbying, petitions, letter-writing, film nights, media, campaigning
Status: Full protection restored to 2 marine sanctuaries, campaign continues

Habitat restoration

- 42 Workshop: Living with Koalas and Fire**
Tweed Shire, August 2014, 30 participants
- 43 Eastern Bristle Bird conservation**
At risk: Only about 30 Eastern Bristlebirds left in the state's north
Threat: Changed fire regimes are shrinking Bristlebird habitat
Action: Working with landholders to restore habitat
Status: Suitable habitat is being increased
- 44 Workshop: Using Fire as a Restoration Tool**
Willoughby LGA, October 2014, 28 participants
- 45 Workshop: Bushfire Committee Reps**
Yellumundee Regional Park, May 2015, 30 participants
- 46 Hotspots fire workshop**
Bowman River, 39 landholders, 2598ha
- 47 Hotspots fire workshop**
Woodenbong, 34 landholders, 8498ha
- 48 Hotspots fire workshop**
Mulloon, 35 landholders, 5797ha
- 49 Hotspots fire workshop**
Murrumbidgee-Bermagui, 42 landholders, 890ha
- 50 Hotspots fire workshop**
Trunk Creek, 20 landholders, 4577ha
- 51 Hotspots fire workshop**
Bowen Mountain, 23 landholders, 187ha
- 52 North Coast Emu Conservation**
What: Upper Coldstream Biodiversity Project
At risk: The last population of North Coast Emu
Threat: Loss of habitat, weeds, predation by feral dogs, foxes, cats
Action: Working with 40 landholders to restore habitat, protect nest sites, monitor emu numbers
Status: Lantana cleared from 100s of hectares. Dealing with feral predators next focus.
- 53 Great Eastern Ranges**
Vision: A continuous corridor of wildlife habitat from Cape York to Victoria along the Great Dividing Range
Workshop: Dorrigo, Northern Tablelands, 50 participants