

Blue Mountains Gazette - Letters To The Editor

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A Box of Chocolates

Typically, political parties don't win elections; they lose them, as was exemplified by the recent NSW election. This allows the opposition to maintain a low profile, devoid of substantive policies, simply winning by default. For the electorate it is like a box of chocolates – you don't know what you're going to get.

During the campaign, all candidates for the seat of Blue Mountains presented their environmental credentials to a public meeting convened by the Blue Mountains Conservation Society. But, environmentally, the cynical colours of the coalition have been quickly exposed. Firstly, O'Farrell dumped the shadow minister for the environment, and relegated that department to an appendage of his own department. Now they have rolled back protection at Fish Rock and Green Rock, revoked extensions to sanctuary zones in the Solitary Islands, and allowed damaging trawling back into Jervis Bay. And, in pure provocation, they intend to appoint a Shooters and Fishers MP to chair the committee responsible for the environment, heritage, primary industries and energy.

Finally, they were intent on the immoral retrospective legislation to dishonour contracts for the gross feed-in tariff for PV solar generated electricity, until the lack of Upper House support became apparent. Unsurprisingly, they suddenly found that the supposed financial shortfall was a few hundred million dollars less than they had consistently reiterated over preceding weeks.

Clearly, retrospectivity is a game they'll play, and the environment may be facing four years under assault. Good conservation outcomes over the next term will rely heavily upon voters voicing their concerns clearly, and working passionately, together, to achieve common long term goals. This is what is saving our Gardens of Stone from open-cut mining. For the future's sake, we can't afford to be silent.

Peter Green

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