

LOWER BLUE MOUNTAINS CONSERVATION SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

MARCH 1976

The President:
Mick Dark,
58 Anu Rd.,
Glenbrook.
Ph. 391764

The Secretary,
Bob Chapman,
83 Cross St.,
Warrimoo.
Ph. 536107

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

In reply to a request for information by the Total Environment Centre, we sent a list of known developments proposed for the Mountains area, which may harm the environment.

A major expansion of coal mining activity is proposed for west of the Mountains, which will result in increased traffic through the Mountains, and will also pollute part of the Wollangambe Wilderness.

There are several developments proposed along the cliff edges near Katoomba and Blackheath. Unless properly controlled, these would lead to visual pollution.

Sewerage treatment is a major problem. Some of the older plants in the Upper Mountains are not operating efficiently, and are pouring polluted water into the Cross River. New sewerage schemes in the Lower Mountains will also increase pollution - particularly as they get older. The scheme at North Springwood will run into a virtually unpolluted stream. Linear development of the Mountain towns makes sewerage schemes here very much more expensive than in the flat, grid-like developments around Sydney.

A garbage pulverizer is being considered for Lawson. This has both advantages and disadvantages, as shown in a later article. We plan to make the proposed pulverizer and possible alternatives a subject for discussion at our May meeting.

HAWKESBURY VALLEY SEMINAR

A symposium on Planning the Future of the Hawkesbury River Valley will be held at the Hydro Majestic on the weekend of 20-21st March.

HAWKESBURY VALLEY SEMINAR (CONT.)

The two day seminar is being organized by the National Trust in Cooperation with the Hawkesbury River Association.

The primary aim of the symposium will be to prepare recommendations on which the development of the area can be based. It is important to treat the whole valley and all its catchment as one entity, since an action in one part can easily affect some other part. The Blue Mountains are a most important part of the Hawkesbury Valley since they form the headwaters of much of the drainage into that river.

General subjects for discussion at the symposium include "Use of Resources", "Roads, Pipes and Wires", and "Options for Future Development". A book covering the symposium will be published later.

Nick Dark will be attending the symposium as a representative of the Society, and will probably report details in the next News Bulletin.

OUTING TO BILPIN AREA

This outing was scheduled for the weekend of 6-7th March, but heavy rain the week before caused us to cancel it. We now plan it for the weekend 27-28th March. If you cannot come for the whole weekend, you are welcome to come either day. Meet at the Mountain Lagoon turnoff on the Kurrajong Road (near Bilpin) at 10 a.m. either day.

MEETING VENUE

Next meeting was scheduled for Friday 9th April at the Red Cross Hall, Springwood. However, hire of the Red Cross Hall has become too expensive for our Society to afford for most occasions. We may transfer our meetings to the Springwood Fire Brigade Hall, Macquarie Road, Springwood. The Fire Brigade Hall is not available on Fridays, so our meetings would then be on say the second Thursday of the month, provided there is general agreement on this change.

The April meeting would then be on Thursday 8th April instead of the Friday.

GARBAGE DISPOSAL

Garbage disposal is becoming an increasing problem in all areas, as the amount of rubbish increases and the traditional dumping areas become unavailable.

GARBAGE DISPOSAL (CONT.)

New regulations in N.S.W. require that garbage dumps be fenced and manned, and that the garbage be regularly covered with soil. This is very expensive, so the Blue Mountains City Council is considering a garbage pulverizer, which would be installed at Lawson.

The pulverizer produces material which can be spread readily without use of heavy equipment, yet takes up less volume than normal garbage when packed. The pulverized garbage is relatively odour-free, does not attract vermin and is less fire prone than normal garbage. Because of the new regulations on normal tips, the pulverizer is also likely to be cheaper than maintaining these tips. If the present tips were continued, Council would probably have to charge for their use. This would only encourage people to dump rubbish on the nearest available bushland.

The disadvantages of the pulverizer are that it will increase truck traffic along the highway and concentrate all rubbish in the headwaters of Bedford Creek which flows through the National Park to the Hawkesbury River. Unless a properly organized pick-up service is provided, it would also be less convenient for local residents. Local protests over closing the tips indicate the people feel strongly about this matter.

Concentration of dumped rubbish at Lawson could be eased by several ways.

By recycling parts of the rubbish such as the steel and aluminium cans and bottles, and by composting the organic parts, valuable portions of the rubbish could be extracted and sold to reduce overall costs. This would involve building more expensive separating equipment; it has been done elsewhere and should be investigated for here.

Alternatively, people could be encouraged to recycle some of their own garbage; separate bottles and cans to be delivered to local collection points, and compost the organic materials. This could reduce by 75% the amount of garbage to be collected and dumped.

Another alternative would be to burn the rubbish in a power generator. Much depends on the costs of the various projects, but these costs should also be weighed against the environmental damage otherwise caused.

CARRIAGE DISPOSAL (CONT.)

At our May meeting, we hope to discuss this matter with Alderman P. Quirk. If we can come to a satisfactory conclusion we may be able to influence Council's decision. As with all our meetings, this will be open to all visitors: a wide cross-section of views will lead to good discussion.

SUMMARY OF COMING EVENTS

Weekend 27th-28th March

Outing to Bilpin area. Meet at the Mountain Lagoon road turn off on the Bell Road near Bilpin at 10 a.m. If you can only make it on the Sunday, meet at the same place at the same time.

Thursday 8th or Friday 9th April

Next meeting 8 p.m. Bob Chapman will show slides of the Broken Hill-Flinders Ranges area.

Please Note: if Thursday - Springwood Fire Brigade, Macquarie Rd, Springwood; if Friday - Red Cross Hall Springwood, Macquarie Road, Springwood.

Thursday 13th or Friday 14th May

Meeting. Discussion on rubbish disposal in the Blue Mountains, with Alderman Peter Quirk.

Thursday 10th or Friday 11th June

Meeting. Colin Powell will show slides of W.A. in particular the Kalbarri National Park.

Visitors are most welcome to all meetings.