



Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc

ABN 38 686 119 087

PO Box 29 Wentworth Falls NSW 2782

E-Mail: bmcs@bluemountains.org.au Web Site: www.bluemountains.org.au

Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow

The Hon Tara Moriarty MP
Minister for Agriculture, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for
Western New South Wales
Parliament House
6 Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

21 July 2025

Dear Minister,

Stocking Trout in Wentworth Falls Lake, Wentworth Falls, New South Wales

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society (the Society) is a community-based volunteer organisation with 900 members. Our mission is to help protect, conserve and advocate for the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains.

I refer to my letter to you, as President of the Society, in March 2024 and your letter in reply in May 2024 (**MF24/842 Letter to Annette Cam**).

I wrote asking you to direct the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to stop stocking the Wentworth Falls Lake with trout. I made this request because:

- Trout are an aggressive non-native predator of native fish and frogs.
- The Department identified trout stocking as a serious threat to the World Heritage Values of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area in 2003-2004 (*Freshwater Fish Stocking in NSW Environmental Impact Statement Public Consultation Document*, prepared by the Department in November 2003, an excerpt of which is Attachment A).

- Trout are escaping Wentworth Falls Lake and swimming downstream into the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.
- The threat foreseen by the *Freshwater Fish Stocking in NSW Environmental Impact Statement Public Consultation Document* has now crystallised.

In May 2024 you replied in effect declining to stop the Department stocking the Lake.

Stocking of trout into Wentworth Falls Lake is governed by the *NSW Freshwater Fish Stocking Fishery Management Strategy 2005*. In the absence of that *Strategy*, or of a permit issued under that *Strategy*, stocking the Lake with trout would be unlawful.

The *NSW Freshwater Fish Stocking Fishery Management Strategy 2005* requires the Department to undertake a local environmental review prior to releasing trout into Wentworth Falls Lake (see Attachment B for an excerpt from the *Strategy*). Since the exchange of our last correspondence, the Blue Mountains Conservation Society has lodged a second *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA) application. In response to that GIPA the department has informed the Society that after reasonable searches, it has been unable to locate any documents recording:

1. The environmental reviews undertaken prior to each occasion brown trout were released into Wentworth Falls Lake on or after 1 July 2012;
2. Assessments of performance indicators or reviews of trigger points, including biennial performance reports, relating to the release of brown trout into Wentworth Falls Lake on or after 1 July 2012;
3. Actual or proposed remedial action relating to the release of brown trout into Wentworth Falls Lake on or after 1 July 2012.

As a result, the Society is now confident that it can establish that:

- The Department has not undertaken any local environmental reviews prior to releasing trout into Wentworth Falls Lake for at least ten years.
- The release of the trout in Wentworth Falls Lake was therefore in breach of the *Strategy* and, the Society will argue, of the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*.

It seems probable, based on the lack of documentation related to the stocking of trout at Wentworth Falls, that the Department has failed to carry out any local

environmental assessments required by the *NSW Freshwater Fish Stocking Fishery Management Strategy 2005* throughout the State.

The Society is considering its options, but it would much rather resolve this matter by the Department ceasing to stock Wentworth Falls Lake with trout. I therefore request that you direct the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to stop stocking the Wentworth Falls Lake with trout effective immediately. I would be grateful for either your prompt written acceptance or rejection of this request.

Please to contact me if I you have any queries regarding this letter at president@bluemountains.org.au or on my mobile 0450 215 125.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. Cam'.

Annette Cam
President Blue Mountains Conservation Society
president@bluemountains.org.au

cc Ms Trish Doyle, Local Member, Blue Mountains