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***Westernport & Peninsula
Protection Council Inc***



*AGM 10th Jan 2010
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Westernport and Peninsula Protection Council Inc.

Founded in 1971, the programs of the Council are aimed at preserving and restoring what remains of our precious natural environment in Westernport Bay and its hinterland. An important part of our activities to that end is to ensure that proper planning processes are observed by Government at all three levels and that community consultation is a fundamental component of planning. We have achieved a high reputation for approaching such matters through careful study of principles and attention to detail.

Prompting community awareness of important conservation issues has also been high on our agenda for the past 30 years. We continue to explore ways of informing the public of their natural assets and of the current and ongoing threats opposed to them by inappropriate and destructive developments.

The activities of Council are managed by an executive committee of twelve, elected at the annual General Meeting, which is held on a Sunday early in January. Membership is by application and subscription and confers voting rights and a say in the Council's activities. The Committee has the power to coopt additional members during the year.

Additional help on Committee and in a range of other ways is always welcome. Please indicate on the subscription form if you have any special skills or interests which may be helpful in our campaigns.

For further information about our activities please contact:

David Minton (Acting President) 59838 317 Linda Drewitt (Vice President) 59 832 920

Karri Giles (Secretary/editor) 59 832 072 Sheila Kerr (Treasurer) 59 786889

Other members of Committee are: Annabel Richards; Liz Sarrailhe, Richard Cooke, Chris Harford. Felicity Druce, Rosemary Birney. Brian Hitch, Kathie Strickland, Glen Ehmke.

I would like to support the work of Westernport Peninsula Protection Council Inc.

Subscription: (not tax deductible) - subscriptions fall due 1st Nov each year

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The Westernport Peninsula Protection Council Inc Trust is a gift fund listed on the Register of Environmental Organisations under Section 78(1) (a) of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1936.

Inc. no: A0015886H

ABN: 98 461014 730

Please return to: Hon Treasurer, WPPC, Box 9, Hastings, Vic 3915

Westernport and Peninsula Protection Council Inc

Incorporated Association Reg. No. A15886H ABN 984 610 14730 PO Box 9 Hastings Vic 3915

Newsletter March 2009



WPPC Inc AGM

Sunday 10th January 2010

10.30am Balnarring Hall

Guest speaker: Catherine Manning

Catherine Manning is the Immediate past president from Southern Victorian Community Action group. SVCAG is now amalgamating with Blue Wedges Inc. Catherine is a captivating speaker and mother of four. She is actively involved in the campaign against the Port Of Hastings Proposal, and will speak on this and her love of the Westernport Bay Area.

Please attend the AGM Listen to the speaker, renew your subscription and vote on the amendment to the constitution. We welcome any nominations for committee before this date (ASAP).

WPPC Motion for Constitution Alteration and Addition.

The Constitution is under review and correction. Only minor changes are necessary.

Clause 34 (Custody of Records) currently reads:

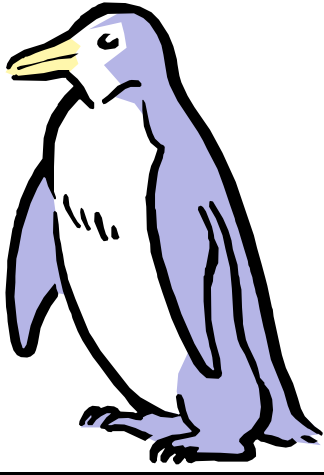
“Except as otherwise provided in these Rules, the secretary shall keep in his custody or under his control all books documents and securities of the Association.”

It is moved that Clause 34 (Custody of Records) be reworded as follows:

- (1) Except as otherwise provided in these Rules, the executive shall keep in their custody or under their control all books, documents, and securities of the Association including electronic data and equipment, and membership records.**
- (2) All accounts, books, securities and any other relevant documents or electronic data of the association must be available for inspection free of charge by any member upon request.**

Moved: K. Strickland, Seconded: A. Richards.

Phillip Island Penguin Update.



The Phillip Island little penguin breeding season is now well underway and expectations are that this year will be a better breeding season than last year. Despite some recent media reports, penguin chicks are doing well and the population is healthy. Dr Andre Chiaradia, penguin biologist at the Phillip Island Nature Park said "What's really pleasing is that on average, the adult little penguins are heavier and healthier than they were at the same time last year. Conditions at sea change constantly and fortunately this year adverse conditions occurred early and well before the chicks had fledged. This means they have a chance to recover before they take to sea and have to feed for themselves".

He went on to say that this was the first time in the last eight years that adults had bred twice in a season showing the health of the population. In the last count, there were approximately 60,000 penguins in the Phillip Island precinct and numbers crossing the beach nightly are greater than last year. Visitors to the Penguin Parade can expect to see plenty of healthy birds and chicks.

Crib Pt Update

So far no Planning Permit application has been submitted by Boral yet. Congratulations to Cecilia Witton who went to visit Peter Garrett with Greg Hunt and Neil Burgess. She got an undertaking from Garrett to accept further information, when gathered and presented, on why a Bitumen Plant could be reconsidered and are classified as a "controlled action". Meanwhile we are all encouraged to write a letter to Brumby.

Below is an email conversation from Annabel and Rosemary Birney to Greg Hunt, (MP)

Subject: Westernport and Bitumen Plant

Dear Greg, Thank you for meeting today at Woolleys Beach to discuss the strategy.

Here are some questions posed by one of our committee. They may be helpful.

How does Greg, as a member of the Federal Opposition, suggests that WPPC could successfully highlight, to both the community and the Governments, the facts that the Victorian Government appointed or sponsored Community Forums, Professional Panels and Review Committees have predominately supported the arguments submitted and argued to the Authorities on conservation issues regarding many Projects (the pipe line, the Frankston By Pass, the Bitumen Plant at Crib Point, the Devil Bend Management Plan that proposes to create a 'feral fish' fishers' fun park out of a proposed Conservation Reserve and the Port development and transport corridor and others) - but that Permission to proceed seems to follow regardless?

This is a difficult question to answer. I would suggest that what you are doing already - i.e. maintaining the pressure on the Victorian Government via Letters, media stories and by enlisting Opposition MPs to raise the issues within Parliament - is the best way to approach this. I am a great believer that persistence does eventually pay off.

How can the EPBC Act be supported and strengthened so that it can be made to truly protect the species and habitat and Heritage areas that it was written to protect?

The EPBC Act, which was introduced by the Coalition Government, contains within it the requirement that it be reviewed at least every 10 years. The first of these independent reviews is currently underway and a final report is due by the end of this month. I believe this important in-built mechanism will ensure that the Act is continually strengthened and improved over time.

What protection was guaranteed at Ramsar when the Australian Government signed the Treaty to protect the habitat of migratory waders? Are there 'enforcement' requirements?

The RAMSAR Convention contains a list of obligations such as the inclusion of wetland conservation in the signatories' national land-use planning. The treaty however does not contain binding regulations and there are no sanctions to enforce the obligations.

How can the Federal Government protect the Crown Land that rings Western Port (the immediate catchment) as this land is the only land that stops some of the pollution and development pressures that threaten the quality of the RAMSAR site of Western Port?

The most important thing the Federal Government can do right now to protect the Western Port catchment is to re-instate vital funding that was cut when it scrapped the Coalition Government's Envirofund. Because of these cutbacks, the Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority has been forced to retrench three workers who carried out vital preservation work within our catchment and worked closely with local Landcare groups.

How does Greg see the Victorian Government's 'fire clearing - knee jerk reaction' affecting the preservation of the coastal vegetation and the habitat qualities on this protective coastal strip?

While I believe the protection of life and property must be paramount, I am concerned that these new regulations might have an undesirable effect on natural habitat.

What protection can Commonwealth legislation give to the Marine National Parks within and around Western Port?

The Western Port Marine National Park is the responsibility of the Victorian Government, which has legislation in place to protect marine species and habitat.

Regards. Annabel Richards (Committee - WPPC)

Please write a letter to John Brumby to overturn Crib Pt bitumen plant decision.

The Hon John Brumby

Level 1

1 Treasury place

Melbourne VIC 3002

Mr Brumby,

Planning Minister Madden approved Boral's Application to build and operate a Bitumen storage and transport Facility on the foreshore at Crib Pt on Westernport Bay. This decision overturns the decision of the VCAT advisory Panel who recommended the application be refused. This also breaks a Bracks election Policy. It means 30 or more double truck movements per day travelling and Frankston - Flinders Road to Stony Point Rd and then Woolleys road. An alternative route is Disney Street Frankston Flinders Rd. Children walking to bus stops, cyclists, pony club riders, bush walkers, fishermen will have to walk beside roads with heavy truck movements.

Boral's Material Safety data sheet states that bitumen is probably carcinogenic (causes cancer). It is classified as hazardous, it is combustible and it may contaminate the soil. The only sandy beach in Crib Pt would be next door to this plant. With pumps, heaters, trucks and tankers noise pollution will disturb residents and native animals. Kangaroos, wallabies, koalas, echidnas and sugar gliders live on the foreshore. Recent evidence suggests Southern Brown Bandicoot do too.

Boral has stated that the plant will employ 2 people. With the Stony Point/Cowes Car ferry proposal now gaining momentum, tourism is set to grow in the area, bringing jobs and business opportunities. These are threatened by the plant. Research on internet sites for ACCC, ABC News and EPA Victoria reveal that Boral have been fined 10's of millions of dollars for activities including Price fixing, pollution, and illegal dumping of industrial waste. Please don't allow Boral to build a bitumen plant at Crib Pt.

Moonlit Sanctuary Visit November 2009



WPPC Inc went to Moonlit Sanctuary in Pearcedale for a social evening Monday 30th November. We got to feed paddymelons, bettongs and wallabies. We viewed sugar, squirrel and feather- tail gliders, quolls, bush- stone curlews, tawny- frog mouths, Tasmanian devils and a hairy-nosed wombat. Being in a small group is recommended, rather than in peak holiday time. We found it extremely delightful to spend some time with these special animals. It was also confronting to reflect on the fact that these animals are under threat in the wild. This makes measures such as fox control obviously very important.

Fox Control. update.

There are some community efforts to co-ordinate a fox control program. Crib Pt foreshore have been a co-ordinating force, organising meetings and trying to get Foreshores on board. Some but not all foreshores from Jacks Beach to the naval base to Pt Leo are doing fox control. There has been a meeting to identify what fox control efforts are being made and which are areas not covered. There will be further meetings in 2010. The area from Sth Beach road to Coolart Extension and from Daveys Rd to Sandy Pt road and the area from Hanns reserve to the Balnarring Foreshore reserve are examples of two areas not in fox control programs. Three fox control contractors are working in the region. There is a focus on protecting Bandicoot populations around Quail Island and at Crib Pt Foreshore. One contractor Virgil has been doing fox control at Crib pt Foreshore, a private property next to Cerberus, Lord Somers Camp, around Quail Island, Properties near Stumpy Gully road, and Carpenters Lane back of Warringine where he is getting a cub a night at present. Jancraft Australia is also doing fox control at Gwenmarlin Estate Flinders which is a group of 12 properties. 6 of whom are parts of a fox control program in conjunction with the Drum Drum Alloc Creek Landcare Group. The six properties contribute \$50 per month for fox control for the length of the programme.

Get together with your neighbours. Employ a contractor for \$50 a month do some fox control using the most humane methods. Rabbits can be dealt with at the same time. Protect native wildlife from extinction.

Jancraft Australia: contact Virgil Janko 0410 663 870

Rod and Rifle Contracting: Paul Cooney 0408 505 717

*Call for photos for our **Website!** Email to gilesea@surf.net.au . Any great photos of Westernport Bay and it's flora and fauna would be gratefully accepted. The committee will devise a website in 2010 so anyone with an interest in doing this is welcome to join the committee. Please nominate now. Ring the numbers above. We are hoping that this will help educate people about the values of Westernport Bay and the Peninsula, and bring new energy to our organisation.*