



Keneally fails to deliver Debus promise of permanent protection

There were expectations at our May Forum that Planning Minister Kristina Keneally would make good on Bob Debus' 2005 promise to protect forever the 446ha of Crown Land in the Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment. It wasn't to be – but there was some good news. The Minister announced via press release that there would be no development on four crucial sites in the Oxford Falls Valley for at least 10 years and until further studies are undertaken by council. They are Oxford Falls West, Red Hill, Lizard Rock and Cromer Golf Club.



A catchment worth conserving ...

Friends supports the Minister's actions, which are based on independent recommendations from the Planning Assessment Commission. The Commission says the sites do not meet sustainability criteria, particularly in relation to transport, access, housing diversity and some environmental and land use conflict restraints. The role of Oxford Falls Valley as a sub-catchment for Narrabeen Lagoon is important and the bushfire hazard in the area is significant. The Government's draft North East Subregional Strategy states that there is no necessity for the development of non-urban lands – that is, lands not already identified on the Metropolitan Development Program. An additional 10,300 dwellings will be required in Warringah by the year 2031, but this target can

Lagoon photo courtesy Bruce Wilson & Richard Green.

be met mostly through infill development in the existing urban area. The Sid Londish proposal for a retirement living facility at Oxford Falls was too far advanced to be included in the Commission's review of Oxford Falls Valley, but the Minister will send the proposal to the Commission when the Department of Planning had completed its assessment.

Lack of infrastructure to support housing is protecting the bushland at the moment, but we need a Regional Park established to protect the area permanently. The bushland supports threatened ecological communities and species, contributes clean air and improved water quality, contains significant Aboriginal heritage value and provides community recreational opportunities. Angus Gordon, former Chairman of the Narrabeen Lagoon Restoration Project and current *Friends* Committee member spoke for many at the conclusion of the May Forum on the planning process – "It is quite apparent that rather than fiddling round the edges, the Planning act needs a complete rebuild – probably returning it to what it originally was. Until this happens community input will continue to be significantly disabled."



Sustainability is theme for August 24 Forum

Friends has a special family event planned for our next community Forum. You'll hear inspiring presentations by school students on what happens at their schools demonstrating sustainable living in the Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment. There will also be presentations by community members and a representative of local business. Special start time for this Forum only is 6.30pm. Children and parents are welcome. Put it in your diary now and check our website for more information as the date approaches. Our AGM will also be held at this meeting. Will you consider running for office? Call Judith Bennett on 9905-2135 for details.

Lagoon Pathway a reality

Friends salutes Jim Somerville for his successful championing of a multi-use pathway around Narrabeen Lagoon. A \$4m Federal Grant, awarded last month, will enable the pathway to be built. As former Warringah Administrator Dick Persson said, "Without Jim's persistence, this project would have never got off the ground."



Jim Somerville - "There'll be a bridge right here"

Here, in Jim's words, is the inside story ...

"The idea of a multi-use path around Narrabeen Lagoon has been around for about 20 years. Tom Webster and David James were strong advocates. Opposition came from the Sydney Academy of Sport. Ironically, their Mission Statement says *We want more people, more active, more often!*

It was only when I was able to convince the NSW Government Whip Gerard Martin that with 3 cabinet ministers in favour, their Sports Minister was mistaken in supporting the Academy, that we got some action. Gerard Martin ordered a site visit for March 3, 2008 - Minister West was so impressed with presentations by Rob Stokes, Brad Hazzard, Dick Persson, David James, Judith Bennett and Tony Carr, that he over-ruled his Academy staff.

Warringah Council should be congratulated - the initiative of Suzy Lawrence and David Kerr secured the \$4m Grant from the Federal Government. With funding assured, the path will at last become a reality - but don't hold your breath! With pedestrian bridges needed over Deep, Middle and South Creeks, it will not open until 2011."

New dates for bushwalking tag-along tours and kayaking

To fully understand why beautiful Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment needs continuing remediation and protection from further development, you need to experience it first hand. *Friends* invites you to participate in our free activities program.

Bushwalks with Warringah Deputy Mayor Conny Harris - catchment traverse from Oxford Falls to Deep Creek on Sun June 14 at 10am, Sat Aug 1 at 9.30am and Sat Sept 12 at 9am. To register email conny.harris@warringah.nsw.gov.au

Tag Along Tours with Jacqui Marlow - you'll be driven to the most significant sites. Prius cars provided by Bill Buckle Toyota. Sundays June 21 and Aug 30. Email jacqui.marlow@optusnet.com.au

Spring Awakening on Narrabeen Lagoon - guided bird walk at 7am followed by breakfast courtesy Warringah Council then paddle to the Coastal Environment Centre. Back by noon. Hire kayaks for only \$48 per person. Sundays Sept 6 and Oct 11. No previous kayaking experience necessary. Email tonycarr@ozemail.com.au

Trees or townhouses? Your support makes a difference!

To: Friends of Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment
P.O. Box 845, Narrabeen, NSW 2101

YES! I enclose \$20 (unwaged \$10). Please enrol me as a member. My membership cheque is made payable to **Friends of Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment**. All applications for membership are subject to the approval of the committee.

I wish to make a tax deductible donation of
 \$250 \$100 \$50
 other amount \$..... to the campaign.
My donation cheque is made payable to **NPA-Narrabeen**.

Please print - Name:

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Address:

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..... Postcode:

Phone:

Email:

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It will be most helpful to have your email as we often use email to communicate with members.

www.npansw.org.au

Friends of Narrabeen Lagoon Catchment Inc is a sub-committee of National Parks Association. Enquiries: Judith Bennett Phone: 9905 2135 Email: sydney.educ@npansw.org.au