



*in Dharawal
Re* ✓
July 88

National Parks Association of NSW

Macarthur Branch
P.O. Box 792,
Campbelltown, 2560

PRESS RELEASE

GOVERNMENT SELL-OUT ON KOALAS

Just over a month ago, the Minister for Environment, Tim Moore, used his powers under the National Parks and Wildlife Act to invoke for the very first time an Interim Protection Order to protect a colony of koalas at Wedderburn on the outskirts of Campbelltown. Now, with what seems to be undue haste, the Government is planning to lift the Order to allow a contentious sub-division to go ahead. This is despite the Order being originally placed for a period of 12 months to provide "a breathing space ... during (which) further options will be canvassed to permanently protect the koalas."

The National Parks Association, Macarthur Branch, supported by Campbelltown City Council, has been pressing for the Government to acquire at least that part of **the** sub-division which includes known koala habitat. This would amount to about ¹²~~10~~ out of 26 blocks. There has been no thorough survey of the area, however, to determine the actual extent of the koala habitat. This is something that the NPA believes should be done as a matter of urgency, before any firm decisions are made about the future of the area. Such a survey should ideally be done by the National Parks and Wildlife Service, however should they be unwilling to do the job, then the NPA is prepared to undertake the task during the period of the Interim Protection Order. Once determined, all koala habitat should then be included in within the proposed Dharawal Nature Reserve to ensure the long-term survival of this important population.

The Greiner Government seems unwilling to part with any money to do this, despite their admission that koala numbers are dwindling throughout the state and that those remaining mostly live outside National Parks or Nature Reserves and are therefore vulnerable. Their cost-saving solution is to draw up voluntary covenants with owners of private land who would "volunteer to protect environmentally important parts of their land." In this instance we believe relying on the goodwill of future owners of these blocks is just not a good enough safeguard for the future of our koalas. Therefore, because the NPA believes it is imperative that these areas be

brought into public ownership, and the Government is not prepared to come to the party, then it is now up to the public to raise the required monies by public subscription. At least then the Government may be willing to meet us on a dollar for dollar basis.

Donations can be made to: KOALA FUND
c/- NPA
P.O. Box A96,
Sydney South. 2000.

All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

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