



CONSERVATION COUNCIL

ACT REGION

Yellow Box Dispatch 1 May 2015

Our World Environment Day Dinner is fast approaching. Early Bird Bookings close COB Monday 4 May.

Book now — 7pm, Saturday 30 May, National Arboretum Canberra. Our guest speaker is Judy Horacek, author and cartoonist, and our MC is David Pope, editorial cartoonist Canberra Times. Catering is by Janet Jeffs and Ginger Catering and will feature seasonal and local food. Music will be provided with sweet jazz from the Coventry - Zeylmans duo and there will be live and silent auctions. See photos below from 2014 event.



Executive Director's message

Dear Members, Friends and Supporters

Welcome to our monthly report on some of the environment and conservation activities in the ACT and the region undertaken by the Conservation Council and others. We have changed our timing so that Yellow Box Dispatch is delivered at the beginning of the month to come rather than at the end of the month that's been.

We are looking forward to our major fundraising event for the year – the World Environment Day dinner on 30 May (see above and below). Please [book now](#) or if you would like to volunteer to assist in preparation or on the night please contact info@conservationcouncil.org.au as soon as possible.

Over April the Conservation Council had meetings with ACT Shadow Minister for Urban Services, Alistair Coe, mostly discussing cat containment, and Minister for the Environment, Simon Corbell, discussing a range of issues including the Nature Conservation Act, Integrated Conservation Agency, biodiversity offsets and cat containment. We also met with Minister Rattenbury and again discussed cats, transport issues and biodiversity offsets. Having discussions with politicians outside of the heat of an election year means we can look at delivery rather than promise.

A current key focus for the Conservation Council is to wrap up some matters we have been working on over the last few years and to look at our strategic direction for the next five years —

remembering of course 2016 is an ACT election year.

We have also had very good Environment Exchanges this year with more to come. Our next is on Biodiversity Monitoring (see below).

Regards

Clare Henderson
Executive Director



Environment Exchange – 28 May – Biodiversity monitoring

We were very pleased the new Nature Conservation Act, passed in the Assembly, last November requires the Conservator to prepare, implement and report every two years on a Biodiversity Monitoring and Research Program. We are now keen to be part of shaping what this looks like. So our Environment Exchange on 28 May, 12 noon till 2.30pm will bring together academics, government officials and members groups in order to:

- provide an overview and discussion of ways forward for biodiversity monitoring and research in the ACT
- enable scope for community input into the ACT Biodiversity Research and Monitoring Program, and
- outline the role of community groups in biodiversity monitoring and research

We hope this event will develop understanding of and acceptance (ownership) of the ACT Biodiversity Research and Monitoring Program by the ACT environment community. Pass this information to group members and other interested people. [Please book on our website](#). We provide lunch and will accept small donations (large ones too). All Environment Exchanges are held at the [Allan Barton Forum, Level 2, ANU College of Business & Economics, Building 26C, Kingsley Street, Acton](#).

Our Environment Exchange on 25 June will be on Renewable Energy.

Our April 2015 discussion on proposed West Belconnen development (Riverview)



There was good attendance and active engagement in the 23 April Environment Exchange on the proposed residential development at West Belconnen and traversing the border into NSW. The project has proposed construction to commence in 2016 concluding 2054 and there are many social, environmental and other considerations associated with the development site and neighbouring areas. There

were three presentations [all published on Conservation Council website](#).

Professor Boyden of the Frank Fenner Foundation spoke on biosensitive futures and noted that big changes are needed. He said that the Riverview proponents had been very good at taking up the key points of biosensitivity.

The Ginninderra Falls Association through Chris Watson and Robyn Coghlan expressed its hopes that there would be an eventual nature reserve or national park in the area with the falls as a feature. They pointed out that although the Ginninderra Falls are located in NSW they would be mainly used by ACT people as there is no direct access from NSW.

Riverview presented through David Maxwell and Tony Adams and looked at a large range of issues. They have engaged consultants to map and plan the project well before the construction starts including looking at threatened species and their habitat, planning for transport, stormwater management, landfill site reuse, establishment of nature conservation areas including maintaining connectivity, long-term governance for conservation management.

The discussion touched on many issues and there were many questions. Two particular matters were identified for future workshop discussion topics (not necessarily Environment Exchanges): water sensitive urban design and the Riverview development; offsets on offsets - how can they happen?



Although the Conservation Council has not formed a final view on the project we are pleased with the willingness of the proponents to engage early with the community and to develop plans to address issues raised. Riverview is already preparing management plans for conservation areas; this is a stark contrast with ACT government development at Molonglo where they are developing before conservation plans are finalised and made public.

Riverview will seek rezoning approval in the ACT soon and through NSW later in 2015 with construction proposed to commence in 2016 in the ACT section.

Eastern Broadacre consultation

The ACT Government is again consulting on the Eastern Broadacre, [an area which extends from the Majura Valley to Hume and includes Symonston and the Jerrabomberra Valley](#). It is proposing to release lands for employment generating development to grow the economy. Proposed activities could include industrial, broadacre commercial, tourism, recreation and transport related activities. We are very pleased this process is taking place via a Strategic Assessment under the Federal Environment laws (the EPBC).

A strategic assessment means all of the area and all environmental matters can be considered together. The recent ACT Government consultation did not, however, take account of several areas of Federal



land or the airport, all of which we propose should be part of the strategic assessment.

The Conservation Council is concerned that the drawn out consultation process, which has been going on since at least 2004, will not take account of the conservation, heritage and amenity issues that have been raised by the community over many years. We are also concerned that the Government has not adequately reported on how previous consultations have affected its plans, if at all.

We have sought a briefing from EPD on these issues and await a positive response.

At this stage the Government proposes to have a draft strategic assessment for public comment by the end of 2015.

Events

World Environment Day dinner

What: Dinner with seasonal and local food prepared by Janet Jeffs and Ginger Catering with Judy Horacek as guest speaker and David Pope as MC. Music, auctions, heads and tails.

When: 7pm, Saturday 30 May

Where: National Arboretum Canberra

Tickets: [Book now](#) \$90 early bird by 4 May else \$95



Environment Exchange – Biodiversity monitoring



What: A discussion on biodiversity monitoring in the ACT

When: 12noon-2pm, Thursday 28 May

Bookings: Please book [here](#). We provide lunch and will accept small donations (large ones too).

Where: All Environment Exchanges are held at the [Allan Barton Forum, Level 2, ANU College of Business & Economics, Building 26C, Kingsley Street, Acton](#).

A Passion for Peace

What: A fresh, life-enhancing perspective on WWI commemorations – Premiere performances of 'A Passion for Peace' by Canberra composer, Glenda Cloughley

When: Final performance 7:30pm Saturday 2 May.

Detail: The dramatic choral work is inspired by women seeking a sustainable peace 100 years ago and will be the highlight of Canberra's Festival for Peace. In 1915, 1200 women from 12 warring

and neutral nations met in The Hague for the only peace conference of the First World War. This International Congress of Women – who met in the same week as the Anzacs' Gallipoli landings in April 1915 – passed visionary resolutions aimed at ending the war and establishing permanent peace. Their resolutions subsequently informed the establishment of the League of Nations and the International Court of Justice, as well as heralding other advances in international human rights law.

Other media: Canberra Times 'A Passion for Peace': <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/canberra-life/a-passion-for-peace-by-a-chorus-of-women-20150420-1molms.html>

Who: Musical direction by Johana McBride, performed by A Chorus of Women with others including Arawang Primary School Choir and soloists Louise Page, Christina Wilson and Angela Giblin.

Where: Albert Hall, Canberra

Tickets available: www.chorusofwomen.org Gold pass available, children under 12 free

Information: Sarah Stitt 0432 867 017 sarahstitt@grapevine.com.au



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