

Proposed National Parks for the Sydney Region

by Helen Latham*

In October 1995 NPA's Sydney Branch completed its report and map *Proposed National Parks Additions in the Sydney Region* which outlines the NPA's proposals for new parks and reserves and additions to existing National Parks, Nature Reserves and State Recreation Areas within and adjacent to the Greater Sydney Metropolitan Area.

Branch contributions

It was prepared by Helen Latham, with contributions from the six NPA branches of Sydney, South Sydney, Macarthur, Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury-Cumberland and the Central Coast.

Study area

The study area is situated within the National Parks and Wildlife Service of NSW Central Administrative Region, with further divisions into Central, Northern, North-Western, Western and South-Western subregions. Individual proposals are discussed in terms of their location, size, land tenure and electorate; their geology, flora and fauna; their cultural heritage values (both Aboriginal and European); the reasons which warrant their reservation; the threats to their conservation value; and a summary of the proposals' evolution. (Some proposals have been the subject of very long campaigns). All are illustrated on individual locality maps.

Central region

Proposals within Central Region include new Berowra Valley, Maroota and Woronora River Valley National Parks; nine proposed Nature Reserves on the Cumberland Plain (Castlereagh, Hawkesbury, Hoxton Park, Kemps Creek, Longneck Lagoon,

Marayong, Narellan, Shanes Park and South Creek/ADI St Marys, and additions to existing Nature Reserves at Agnes Banks, Mulgoa and Windsor Downs; five other new Nature Reserves (Calangara, Dharawal, Dyarrabin, Newington/Silverwater and O'Haras Creek) and additions to the existing Muogomarra Nature Reserve and Garrawarra State Recreation Area.

Northern region

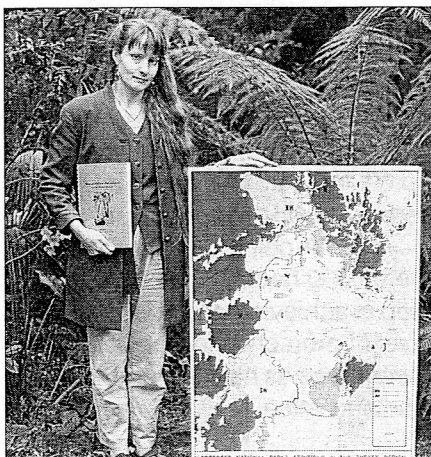
Proposals within Northern Region include a new Strickland Nature Reserve; and additions to Bouddi, Brisbane Water and Popran National Parks.

North-western region

Those within North-Western Region include additions to Blue Mountains and Wollemi National Parks; and within Western Region—additions to Blue Mountains and Kanangra Boyd National Parks.

South-western region

Proposals within South-Western Region include a new Bargo River National Park and Nepean State Recreation Area; and additions to Blue Mountains National Park, Gulguer Nature Reserve and Bents Basin State Recreation Area.



The report's primary aims are to promote the expansion and consolidation of the present National Parks estate to form a 'greenbelt'

around the city and contain urban sprawl; to establish appropriate boundaries and thus afford more complete and effective catchment protection; and to more adequately conserve those habitat types which are not based on Hawkesbury Sandstone.

The report is complemented by a master map of the Greater Sydney Metropolitan Area which shows the proposals' locations in the five subregions, their relationship to the existing National Parks estate and State Recreation Areas, and how they would infill gaps in the current 'greenbelt'.

Updates

It is anticipated that both the report and map will be periodically updated as they do not yet represent the NPA's complete reserves proposal, but rather highlight immediate priority areas for conservation. It is also acknowledged that alternative reserve categories to those suggested may be equally acceptable in some instances.

Lobbying assistance

It is hoped that this identification of important remnant bushland areas will guide the NSW Government in establishing more and appropriate conservation areas in the Sydney region. Copies of the report have been sent to State Government and to the NPWS. It should likewise be of assistance to local NPA branches in lobbying for the protection of conservation areas in their regions. Finally, it is also hoped to inform the public about the essential importance of Sydney's regional biodiversity, and to highlight the long-term commitment of many conservation groups in attempting to conserve precious environmental resources.

*Helen Latham, pictured, is an environmental consultant and Sydney Branch Secretary.