



Wolli Creek Preservation Society

Update

February 2013

M5 EAST GETS GREEN LIGHT

NICK GREINER'S WESTCONNEX PROPOSAL IS STILL HIGH ON THE STATE GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA AND INCORPORATES THE DUPLICATION OF THE M5E TUNNEL. WIDENING OF THE M5 WEST IS ALREADY WELL UNDER WAY. A SENIOR RTA ENGINEER HAS SAID THERE IS NO OTHER OPTION FOR THE M5E DUPLICATION THAN THE TUNNEL PROPOSAL WHICH DESTROYS 2 HECTARES AND SEVERAL HUNDRED MATURE TREES IN WOLLI BUSHLAND.

Decisions on WestConnex are expected over the next few months and a change of government in Canberra could see an injection of funds to get started. The tunnel duplication is seen as the most likely first stage.

If you care for our bushland or see no sense in new motorway construction ahead of public transport improvements, then be alarmed. We are gearing up again for a round of struggles to stop the M5E tunnel duplication.

Our first need is for a small group of people to be the core organising group for the campaign and to be prepared to devote much of their time to it for at least a year. If you have the passion, energy or ideas, please contact us at info@wollicreek.org.au.

MOTORWAY MADNESS

Community Forum

HOW THE PLANS FOR THE M5 DUPLICATION AFFECT WOLLI CREEK VALLEY

THURSDAY 7 MARCH 7.30 - 9.00PM
CECAL, 15 CLARKE STREET, EARLWOOD
(NEXT TO COLES)

Our First Talk of the year will be a panel discussion about the impact of the proposed WestConnex plans on the Wolli Creek Regional Park.

The panel will include **Bernie Hobbs** from Community Action and the Tempe 2020 campaign, **Gavin Gatenby**, Eco Transit and WCPS campaigner and **Peter Stevens**, WCPS campaigner and Bushcare Coordinator.

Come and join the forum to find out what's proposed and help develop action plans to stop these developments. It promised to be an interesting night. RSVP and further details: info@wollicreek.org.au or 0431 914 553

NSW PLANNING WHITE PAPER



The NSW Government is proposing to release a White Paper on a new planning system for NSW that looks to include serious changes. There's little time left to fight for a fair NSW planning system.

WCPS has joined the Better Planning Network (BPN) that is leading the campaign against the proposed changes. WCPS had a presence at the "Not Happy Barry" rally in November 2012 and is currently collecting signatures on a BPN petition against these changes.

Many community groups fear the power to shape our environment will be handed over to developers. The previous Green Paper did not guarantee that current environmental protections would be retained and also ended the individual's right to comment on neighbouring development applications. For more information check out <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/a-new-planning-system-for-nsw> & <http://betterplanningnetwork.good.do/nsw/pages/news/>.



"A fabulously warm and friendly evening."

Pat Thomas, WCPS member

Annual Dinner

ALMOST A HUNDRED PEOPLE CAME TO THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL DINNER – MANY FAMILIAR FACES AND PLENTY OF NEW ONES TOO.

Our speaker was **Michelle Zeibots**, a motorway planner, who's now on the State Government Transport Advisory Committee. Michelle gave a spirited and funny speech about "How joining the Wolli Creek Society changed my life". It was great to hear her tales of life 'in the trenches' during the first campaign against the M5 motorway through Wolli Creek. She said, "We just need to go over the trenches one more time!"

"How nice to see so many people who I hadn't met before."

Joanna Robinski, WCPS member

The food won high praise this year and the raffle prizes were highly sought after. An all time record of 476 raffle tickets were sold. Thanks to all who helped make it such a good night, in particular Deb Little.

KAYAK TRIP

IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE RIVER CANOE CLUB AND SUPPORT WITH CATERING FROM WCPS MEMBERS, DEB AND PETER ORGANISED TWO KAYAK TRIPS IN SEPTEMBER AND FEBRUARY.

Kayakers met at the River Canoe Club on Cooks River, then enjoyed gliding past mangroves and cliffs in the lower reaches of Wolli Creek. They paddled up to Turrella Reserve to stretch their legs and take in the view from the top of Nannygoat Hill. These kayak trips are one of our most popular events and fill up fast. The plan is to run another three or four trips this year but dates are dependent on tide levels and are yet to set. To be informed at the earliest moment ask to be registered by email to info@wollicreek.org.au or ring 9554 3176



Help us!

WE HAVE REGISTERED A SITE FOR CLEAN-UP AUSTRALIA DAY ON SUNDAY 3 MARCH. PLEASE JOIN US TO REMOVE RUBBISH FROM OUR UNIQUE BUSHLAND.

WHERE

Meet in the grassy area along Bray Avenue, Earlwood. Nearest street is Richard Avenue. From the intersection of Bray and Richard Avenues, walk towards Bardwell Park Station then down into the grassy area on your right, until you see the TVT sign post.

WHEN

From 8.30am to 12 noon. Gloves and rubbish bags will be provided, but if you bring your own bag and gloves it will ensure that we don't run out.

All volunteers need to be registered to participate.

REGISTER ONLINE

<http://www.cleanupaustralia-day.org.au/register/?Big+Bend>

You also fill out a form on the day, but it helps us to know numbers if you can register online. Contact Ute Foster
T 0431 618 340
E fosteru44@gmail.com

In the Valley...



FLYING-FOX RESCUE

Record temperatures on two torrid days in January made life very hard for the Wolli flying fox camp.

Flying-foxes are under severe stress when temperatures reach 40°C, and begin to die at 42°C. On 18 January, the temperature reached 45.8°C at Observatory Hill. Many Flying foxes skimmed Wolli Creek to drink and try and keep cool. A WIRES volunteer was kayaked across Wolli creek to the camp by WCPS member Gavin Gatenby. Twenty heat-stressed and dehydrated juveniles were rescued. WIRES volunteers, supported by other WCPS members, re-hydrated them by syringing water into their mouths and misting them to cool them down. Unfortunately many other young and adult Flying-foxes will have died on those days.

WCPS has donated to Inner-West WIRES to support the wonderful work they do in relation to Flying-fox rescues and subsequent care. Contact us at info@wollicreek.org.au for info about how you can donate.



Above: Grey-headed Flying-fox taking a drink from the creek. Photo: Gavin Gatenby.

Left: Help came in time for these dehydrated Flying-foxes. Photo Deb Little.

Inset: A Flying-fox gets rehydrated by a WIRES carer. Photo: Deb Little.

Valley walks



Photo: Laura Zusters

BUSHTUCKER WALKS

Les McLeod, Discovery Ranger with National Parks, led two walks through Wolli Creek, sharing his knowledge of bush food and love of the bush.

Les is a great character, with a cheeky grin and a twinkle in his eye when telling a joke. He showed us all how to make a 'bush bandaid', how to wash our hands with Acacia leaf, plus make a Lomandra leaf whistle.

We tasted Dianella seeds and Mountain Devil (*Lambertia formosa*) nectar and learnt that a rub of Bracken fern on your skin will keep mozzies away. A good chew on the base of a Lomandra leaf will give you a sip of water and Sarsparilla (*Smilax glycyphylla*) leaves are good for colds, sniffles and hayfever. We stopped for lunch at Girrahween Park and Les, who is also a chef, fed us hot damper and johnny cakes, topped with his home-made Port Jackson Fig and Strawberry jam. Delicious!



Photo: Petra Hanke

BIRD WALK

Experienced birdwatcher Alan Leishman led another of his annual informative and entertaining walks in the Valley from Bardwell Park to Turrella Reserve.

Alan was generous with his knowledge, such giving us tips on recognizing birds by their 'jizz' and offering advice on the best binoculars for budding bird watchers to buy. He taught us to sit still and wait patiently for birds to come and what to watch about their behaviour. His knowledge of birdcalls was impressive too.

INDULGENCE WALK

True indulgents gathered for lunch at 'the Café' at the Bardwell Park RSL last October.

Led by Dorothy Luther, they then took a leisurely stroll through the bush, accompanied by stories of the various occupants of the valley, both human and animal. They admired the scenery, enjoyed the cool of the small creek gullies that drain into Wolli Creek and appreciated the results of bushcare work. Another short indulgence was enjoyed in a local café in Bexley North. Let's hope this delicious afternoon is the start of a fine tradition.



Photo: Helen Aitken

MORE WALKS

There will be more guided walks through the valley this year. Starting with one from Bexley North to Waterworth Park on Saturday 30 March. Look out for emails about these or register your interest E info@wollicreek.org.au T 0431 914 553

NIGHT WALK

A group of intrepid souls set out on a November evening to explore Wolli Creek Valley's nightlife. But instead of hitting the cafes and bars, they headed into the bush and hung out with the night critters there.

Under the guidance of NPWS Ranger for Wolli, Libby Lindsay, the night walkers started the evening with the spectacular fly-out of the Grey-headed Flying-foxes. They then covered their torches with red cellophane to minimise disturbance to wildlife and slowly made their way along the track from Turrella Reserve, looking and listening for wildlife. A number of sleeping birds were seen, frogs and owls heard, and insects felt, but no other mammals sighted. Member Rex Flemming, who was first in to book for this night walk, said the walk "Was just great. We should do them more often". We hope to be able to offer another night walk this year.

Photo: Deb Little



RAILCORP LAND CLEARING

A HEAVY-HANDED RAILCORP CONTRACTOR, HIRED TO CLEAR VEGETATION UNDER THE POWERLINE RUNNING FROM BRAY AVE TO SUPPLY THE RAILWAY, HAS REMOVED FAR MORE THAN REQUIRED AND LEFT A HIDEOUS SCAR IN THE BUSH.

Many native shrubs including Kunzeas were chopped down and stumps were cut high, causing trip hazards. The cut vegetation was dropped in situ, blocking a section of the Two Valley Trail walking track and has now opened up the area to further weed invasion. Following WCPS and NPWS intervention, RailCorp has had the contractor clear up the mess left behind and has undertaken to tidy up the upper part of the site and to plant a large number of local natives in place of the cleared vegetation. These will be low-growing and unlikely to threaten the wires ever, hopefully eliminating the prospect of any future vandalism on this site.

CORPORATE BUSHCARE

We want to say a really big thank you to all those who put in time supporting our two corporate bushcare days with Jemena volunteers. Not only did we get a good number of extra volunteer hours contributed, but we also added substantially to bush restoration funds, which is most welcome at a time when our grant support is low. The Undercliffe Track now has a whole lot of new plantings of native tubestock in what was the original walking track, widened and compacted by Sydney Water trucks during sewer re-lining.

CALENDAR

Bush regeneration: Feb 23; Mar 2, 10, 13, 15, 16, 23; Apr 6, 10, 14, 19, 20, 27; May 4, 8, 12, 17, 18, 25; Jun 1, 9, 12, 14, 15, 22. Details of locations from WCPS or website calendar.

Bat counting: Third Friday of each month, just after sunset. Come along to see the fly-out or join in the counting. For up-to-date details, join the bat group email list by contacting bats@wollicreek.org.au and come along to see the fly-out or join in the counting

Bird surveys: Ten teams are doing regular monthly surveys of bird species and numbers present. They work to their own timetable, but we can get you involved on a team if you contact WCPS.

Committee Meetings: Feb 25, Mar 25, Apr 22, May 27, Jun 24. Inner south-west CDO, Suite 1, Ground Floor, 11–13 Hartill-Law Avenue Bardwell Park. All members are welcome to attend the meetings, notification to WCPS essential due to security at the building.

Sunday 3 March – from 8.30am – *Clean Up Australia Day*. See page 3 in this *Update*.

Thursday 7 March – 7.30–9.00pm – *Motorway Madness Community Forum*. CECAL Hall, 15 Clarke St. Earlwood. See front page of this *Update*.

Saturday 30 March – 9.00am start – *Guided walk from Bexley North to Waterworth Park*. To register **E** info@wollicreek.org.au **T** 0431 914 553.

Thursday 2 May – 7.30–9.00pm – *Bennelong's Story*. Illustrated talk by Dr Peter Mitchell. CECAL Hall, 15 Clarke St. Earlwood. To register **E** info@wollicreek.org.au **T** 0431 914 553.

Thursday 6 June – 7.30–9.00pm – Two illustrated talks from the Sydney Fungal Studies Group – *Intro to Fungi*, Donald Glover and *Fantastic Fungi*, Dr Ray & Elma Kearney. They'll be a guided *Fungi Walk* on **Saturday 8 June**. To register **E** info@wollicreek.org.au **T** 0431 914 553.



Facebook Feeds

Please help us spread our news on our Wolli facebook page by 'liking' or 'sharing' post that you read there. When you 'share' a post, all your Facebook-friends will see it in their news feed. It's easy to add your own post or photo as well. No need to search your personal news feed, here it is...

<https://www.facebook.com/protectwollicreekvalley>

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