

**INQUIRY INTO KOALA POPULATIONS AND HABITAT IN
NEW SOUTH WALES**

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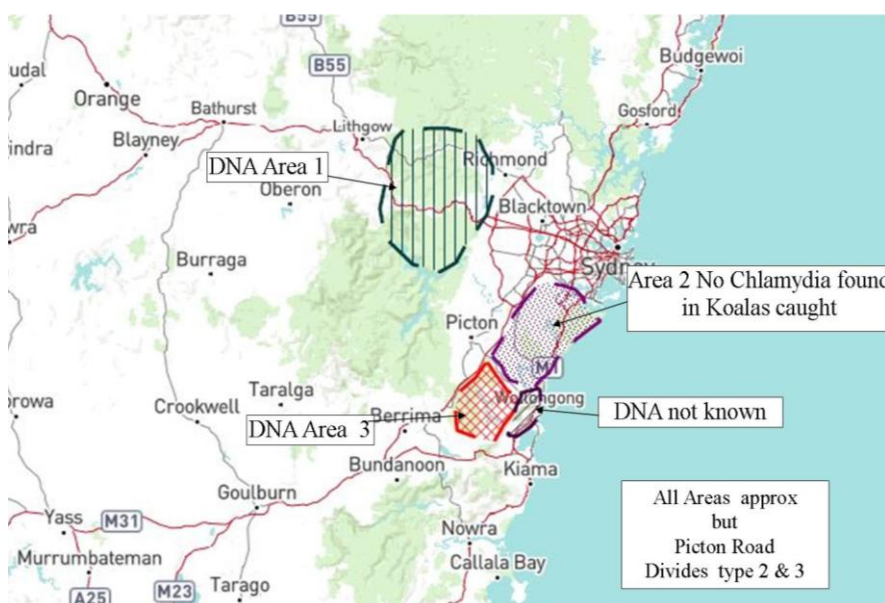
SUBMISSION INTO INQUIRY INTO KOALA POPULATIONS AND HABITAT IN NEW SOUTH WALES

I thank the committee for allowing us to send submissions to help with their inquiry.

Although this submission is a personal one, I have based it on the web site.

<https://campbelltownkoalaresearchanddatabase.com/> of which I am the webmaster. This panel will be hard pushed to read and digest all the material that will be available to them so I hope that this brief summary will help, more information can be found in the scientific documents and reports.

As I live in South West Sydney this submission is based on the koalas of this region, where there are three genetic types according to Dr. Tristen Lee whose thesis this is based on. It is now commonly known that the Campbelltown population was hunted for their pelts and came close to extinction with numbers down to less than 20. That being the case it has taken this population a long time to recover and to reach the numbers of today. It is called the Campbelltown population but it covers a

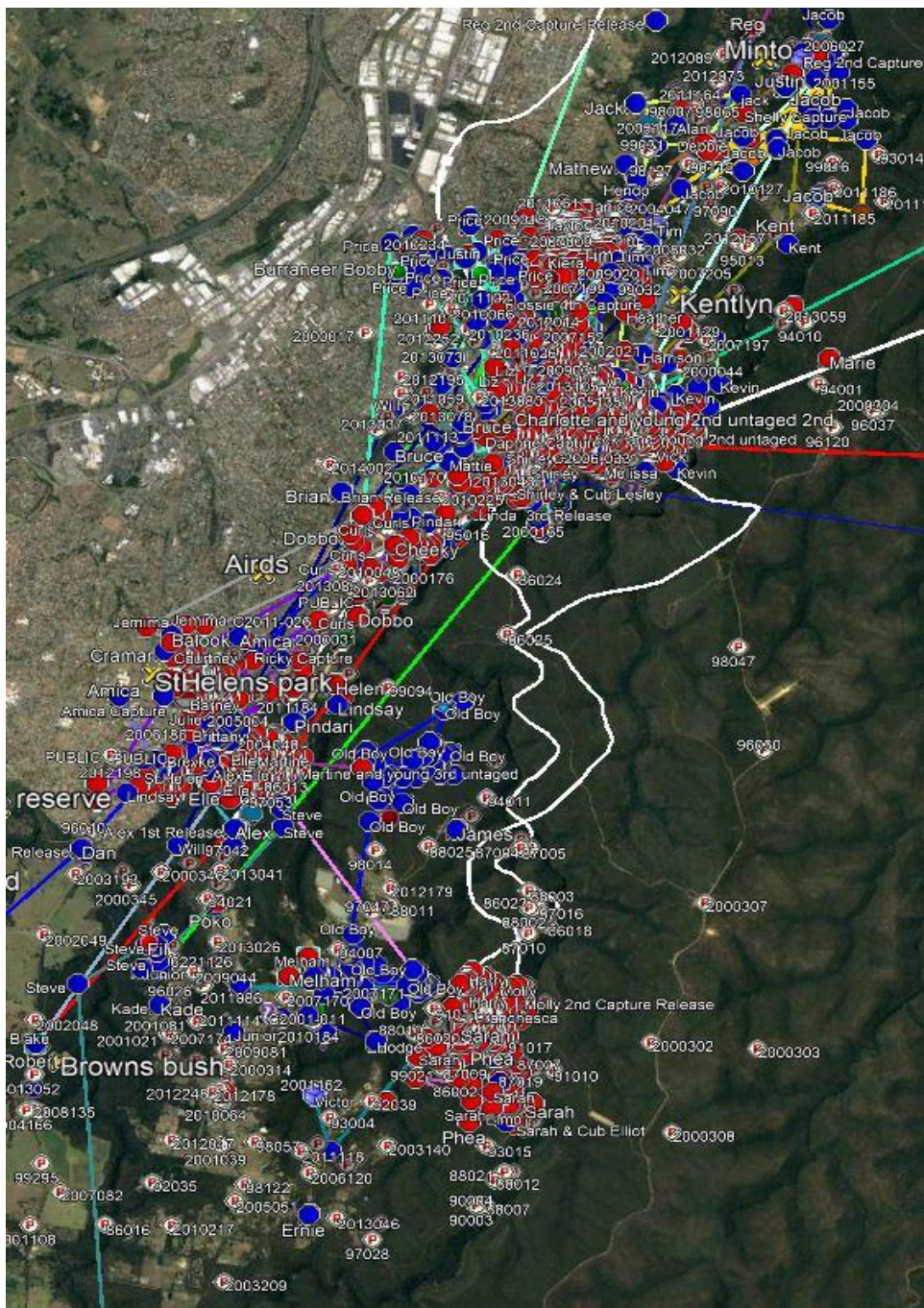


large area as you can see from this map the three areas of the DNA mapping and where the Chlamydia boundary is. This is very important to remember as unlike other populations this one is expanding and Chlamydia free.

Prof.R. Close has always said that numbers are not important but the ability to roam and expand is. It is taken for granted that we know

what is meant by this but what is being said is that their need to roam is vital so that the genetic distribution can be spread over a distance, just like in humans this helps to stop inbreeding. This ability to roam is I believe the reason that this population is so healthy.

Based on the recent report done by Dr. Edward Narayan **on stress and koalas** supports that claim, and also states that stress is a greater threat than dogs, which means that restricting their movements is worse than submitting them to suburbia. After the massacre of koalas in 1930, it wasn't until they were rediscovered in 1986 at Wedderburn that they were reported again. This is when Prof R. Close got involved in finding out the same answers that are required today, how many, home range, are they a viable community? (answers in his report). After 27 years of detailed scientific research and community input that we now know as Citizen science (he could have been the pioneer of this) that being said his study shows that not all koala like staying with mum and that quite often they move out some, a long way.



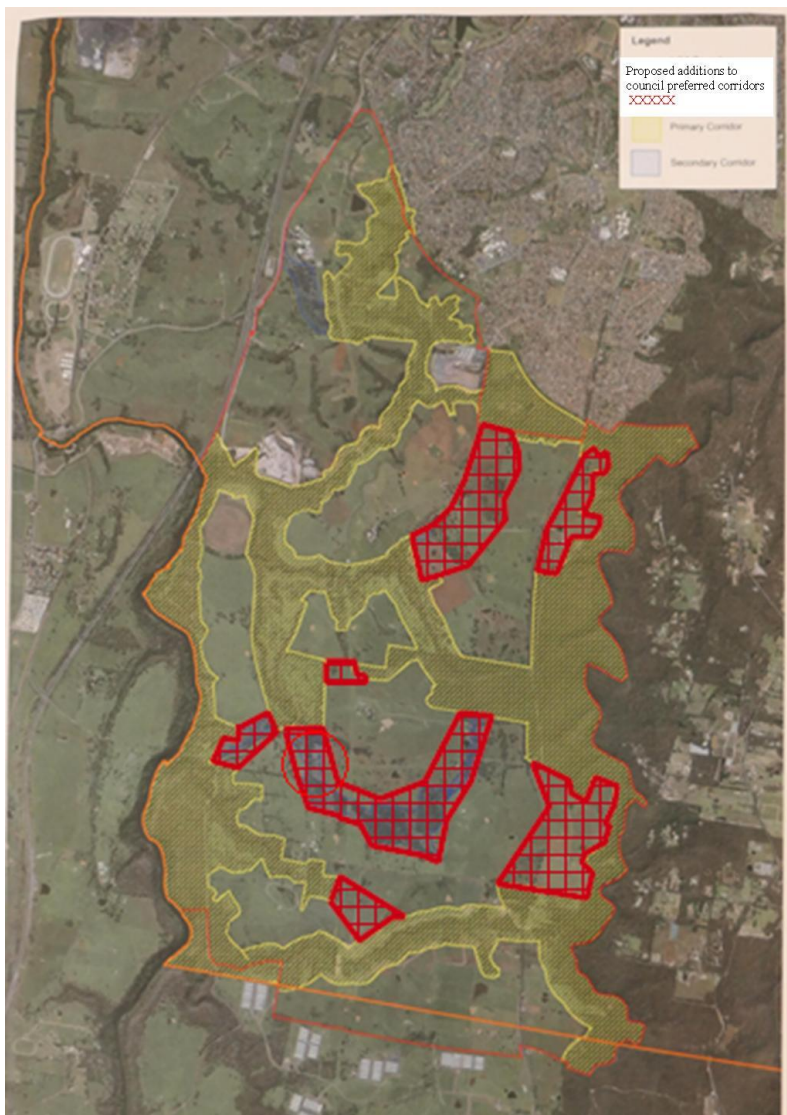
His findings are quite often quoted by others in that field, and therefore should not be buried in some dark corner. As you can see from this picture there are thousands of sightings. This map shows the tracked koalas only.

What is more remarkable is that there are plans to put a Major road corridor through this named "Georges River Parkway". There have been whispers that it may be a National Park but the threat that is imposing on this thriving population is very real and it is all for development and greed of developers and planning laws that let this happen. You can

also see from this map is the concentration of sightings along the edge of suburbia this is because of soil types ^{ward Ph.D. thesis koalas and the community} making this a hot spot for koalas. The land in the Military reserve is of low koala habitat on the plateau it is important as it allows koalas to move freely across the land, and now there are koala hot spots on the eastern side of the range.

This population is not only living near suburbia it is also expanding ^{see McAlpine,} which is unlike all the other populations of the koala.

The koala also has the status of an Australia ICON and is internationally recognized. As such brings



in 3.2 Billion and 30000 jobs from tourist dollars which is also sustainable.

When planning large subdivisions, before anything else, proper corridors must be put in place to protect wildlife?

This map was produced by Campbelltown City Council in regard to Mount Gilead, (only the yellow hatch). It was passed by the council but never implemented. What is wrong is that there are several dead ends that wildlife will come to grief the red hatch lines help to enhance the corridor. As you can see from the map there are plenty of paddock trees already there and these are so important as pointed out by Dr. M. Schulz.^{see Koala scat surveys.} It is will be no good after the bulldozers have been in, as all the established trees are going.

As pointed out that distribution to any population is vital otherwise

stress due to not being able to roam, or in fighting with other koalas which can bring on Chlamydia. Prof R.Close also recorded that koalas were more frightened of other koalas than that of humans or dogs, it was recorded that one female raised a joey in the suburbia. This expansion of this population is not typical ^{McAlpine} of all the other populations in Australia and should be high on the Government to keep safe and take extreme notice of what these experts are saying.

So far the government attempt to contain them and still get development through in the cheapest way. This may be the right answers for there shareholders but the cost is way too high for koalas. A

typical example of this is happening right now at Mount Gillard where it has been refused twice before by State Government, then brought to Council by the heavyweight Lendlease and passed then state Government passes it all against expert advice and no consideration of wildlife only saying that they will be protected, but that is always too little too late. We still have not got proper Corridors linking the Georges River to the Nepean River (this is the shortest path between the two rivers) and therefore **should and must** be properly done if we are to maintain this expanding population.

It is of the sad news that it is now too late the developers have won and the bulldozers will be moving in, once again wildlife takes a back steep.

Appin Road upgrades this will see the removal of thousands of trees and about 20 hectares of core koala habitat when it is finished and cut the corridors in two. Thousands of people signed a petition for over or underpasses, The answer we got back from the Government was that only one was being considered is at Ousedale Creek (Appin) where you have houses one side of the road the other a Greyhound track, paintball, and a motor cross track. This is not a solution to any wildlife crossing. OEH had a report done and that was only for temporary fencing see temporary fencing on Appin road. The fencing that will be used will be Permanent and will be in a different place than the report states. This is without any over or underpass and goes against all expert advice. This will be to the developer's advantage as if you stop koalas using their thoroughfare then the problem is gone and fancy words are thrown around to say how wonderful it all is that the koala is in less danger, wherein point of fact the koala natural corridor is broken and the process of stopping them roaming has begun.

Plan of Management of Koalas. Campbellton City Council has been working on one for 20 years and still has not got one, this shows the lack of support koalas get, there is plenty of talk on how they intend to protect them but it would seem that development wins ever time. The latest one sees Campbelltown City Council Koala Plan of Management has been awaiting approval since November 2018, but even if it is approved I doubt it will be properly policed.

It could be that if there was a proper plan it would upset too many developments and developers. Most of the woodland on the fringe of suburbia is core koala habitat, therefore if there was a plan of management development would not be able to go ahead.

There is a TV add running at the moment convincing viewers that trees are renewable which is correct. It shows vast amounts of small trees being grown and leave you with a warm fussy feeling that they are doing a wonderful job. If this was the case why are they still wanting and going into old-growth forests that were not planted by them? This may be a complex issue but the fact remains NO TREE NO ME and it is that simple. If the logging industry had planted enough trees early and harvesting planted trees then that is part of farming, but to go into the native forest to harvest timber that is bad management on their behalfs and that practice should cease.

Your TERMS OF REFERENCE

questions and answers for Campbelltown population only
answers in red

- A. The stress of koala populations and koala habitat in NSW, including trends the government along with council are determined to remove and build house lots on as much koala habitat as possible, Key threats, removal of bushland for housing, Continuity of corridors, underpasses or overpasses on new roads (Appin Road), these are more important than the threat of Dogs see Doc Edward Narayan. Resource availability, As Prof R. Close report covers over 27 years study and covers 4 generations the need for studies is well documented the need for action is well overdue. Adequacy of protection and areas for further research, At the moment there are only lip services, this is being done by the gradual disappearance of trees to say we have planted 2000 trees of which only 75% may live, then approve whole stands of mature trees to be removed is hypocritical. Research takes time and that is something that we are quickly running out of, it is another feel-good story WE NEED ACTION ON THE RESEARCH THAT HAS ALREADY BEEN UNDERTAKEN.
- B. Not applicable to Campbelltown.
- C. The effectiveness of State Environmental Planning Policy 44- Koala Habitat Protection, the NSW Koala Strategy and Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016, including the threatened species provision and associated regulations, in protecting koala habitat and responding to key threats. All these can be answered in a few words NO NO NO NO. That is it if these acts were working there would be no need for this INQUIRY. The problem is big developers have consultants first they find threatened species then they have to reduce the threat to zero so that the development will have no impact (and let's face it they get paid by the developers if they gave them the wrong answer they would not get another job). In fairness, these acts were designed to protect the koala but have failed the question to ask is why?.
- D. Identification of key areas of koala habitat on private and public land that should be protected, including areas currently at risk of logging or clearing, and the likely impacts of climate change on koala and koala distribution. The area has already been identified and been presented as UPPER GEORGES RIVER NATIONAL PARK this is in the hands of all parties and should be made. The other is the TWO RIVERS NATIONAL PARK which is getting harder to be accomplish by the week this maintains a corridor between the Georges River and the Nepean River. As the need for protection from climate change TWO RIVERS NATIONAL PARK would be essential as this would give access to both river system when they are on the Plateau as the dispersion of koalas can go in either

direction for instance in a bush fire, koala distribution can be seen in Campbelltown Koala research and database.

The environmental, social and economic impacts of establishing new protected areas to conserve koala habitat, including National Parks. In protecting one species you cover a whole range of others including plants and trees as referred to an ecosystem one depends on the other even us. We need open space for our well being. In the case of Mount Gilead, There have been several cases of this in Sydney where the Government of the day overturns a decision made on development for the good of the people. One is the now Dharawal National Park. Part of this was going to be a housing estate and was taken to the environment court and won for housing but none was built. The Government of the day stepped in and resumed the land and made it into a Conservation Area later to become a National Park.

This is what is now needed for Mount Gilead or now called "Figtree Hill" this could be done as a land swap. Now that the Dharawal NP is made, visitors are going there to see the beauty of the place and not just another housing estate. Mount Gilead is not just for koalas but for heritage as well, all the paddock trees will go even though they are an important and essential part for koalas see Koala scat surveys After this in a few years time people who have never been there will be astounded by the place as this should become a treasure for Campbellton and tourists to visit.

In Conclusion, this inquire has more than enough reports to make the two National Parks and bring certainty to this vital population whereas their survival is now in doubt, and I would suggest a tour of this area to see for yourself the need for this to happen.

Yours faithfully

Barry Durman