

INQUIRY INTO REVIEW OF THE HERITAGE ACT 1977

Name: Mrs Barbara Brady

Date Received: 28 June 2021

Submission

I have been a member of the National Trust (New South Wales) for some 50 years, and wish to support the Trust's measures to protect the environment, in particular through maintaining the strength of the Heritage Act.

Of special interest to me is the protection of the environment, the areas of land and water that the Trust is concerned with. Three issues I could name are:

- i) Koala habitat
- ii) under-water mining, and
- iii) coal mining.

The National Trust has issued policy documents on each of these issues.

My submission is that the Review of the Heritage Act should support and strengthen the protection measures carried out by the Trust, (particularly in the above areas of concern to me) and that these are adhered to by the NSW Government and not permitted to be weakened by forthcoming state government legislation. For example there is legislation in progress which ceases to protect some koala habitat; I would like the Trust's policy on issues such as this to be maintained and strengthened in the Review of the Heritage Act.

Regards,

Barbara Brady
National Trust Member
Gold Member

Impact of Coal Mining

[Initiative \(/explore/?content=initiatives\)](#) [NSW \(/explore/?content=initiatives&state=nsw\)](#)

The coal industry has been long recognised by the National Trust as forming part of the heritage landscape of New South Wales. Many historic coal mines and their associated structures and machinery have been listed on the National Trust Register for their historic and scientific values.

Eighty-two coal mining sites in New South Wales are listed on the National Trust's Industrial Sites List and seventeen sites are listed on the National Trust Register. Coal mining has played a key role in the history of European settlement in Australia and these listings reflect this historical and technological significance.

The National Trust recognises the role that coal mining has played in the history of Australia and its economic significance at the present time. Nonetheless, this industry is well-recognised as having significant and often detrimental side effects.

In the Hunter Valley, seventeen Landscape Conservation Areas were listed on the National Trust Register for their scenic, agricultural, historic and nature conservation significance. Coal mining has threatened the heritage values of a number of these areas. The Trust's Exeter/Sutton Forest Landscape Conservation Area also contains 43 properties individually listed on the National Trust Register and is also currently under threat.



NATIONAL TRUST

THE NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (NSW)

Policy on Koala Conservation

Preamble

Current trends suggest koalas could be extinct in New South Wales within 30 years unless urgent effective action is taken. It is estimated that at the time of British colonisation of Australia there were about 10 million koalas. By the early 1900s millions of koala pelts (8 million by estimate) had been exported from eastern Australia to Europe and North America. Before native vegetation clearing codes were introduced in March, 2018 the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEHL) warned the NSW Government that less than 1 per cent of identified koala habitat in New South Wales was protected from clearing under the proposed codes. Since the introduction of the codes, landholders have given notice of 51,000 hectares of clearing and Local Land Services have approved a further 288,000 hectares of clearing for agriculture. This includes thousands of hectares of koala habitat. The Office of Environment and Heritage has identified more than 100,000 hectares of core koala habitat (koala hubs) across New South Wales, however at the present time only 16 percent of this land is protected as part of the National Parks estate.¹

In a document provided under the Government Information (Public Access) Act [GIPAA] request, the Office of Environment and Heritage responding to the draft Integrated Forestry Operations Approvals [IFOA] stated "The scientific basis for proposed tree retention rates in the coastal IFOA is not clear and rates are less than half of those originally proposed by the expert formal panel. While koalas will use small trees, research has shown that they selectively prefer larger trees. In our experience the proposed minimum tree retention size of 20 centimetres (diameter) will be inadequate to support koala populations."

The koala (*Phascolarctos cinereus*) has become extinct in 21 of the 47 Federal electorates in the State of New South Wales and, due to vegetation clearance, its remaining suitable habitat is less than 50% in another 13 electorates with the total koala population in the State now estimated to be in the range from 11,555 to 16,130 individuals (including the Australian Capital Territory).²

Policy

1. The National Trust urges that urgent action be taken to prevent koala habitat loss and fragmentation from agriculture, forestry, industry and urban development through
 - i. immediate prohibition of the clearing of koala habitat, including legislative prohibitions on the destruction and degradation of mature forest and woodlands, and regrowth vegetation, known to be highly likely to be needed or used by koalas;
 - ii. completion of Koala Plans of Management and comprehensive and precise koala habitat modelling state-wide;

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