



Australians for Animals

PROTECT • NURTURE • RESTORE

Reg. Charity No. CFN12644

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AUGUST 2019 NEWSLETTER



SAVE SOUTHWEST SYDNEY'S KOALAS!

The Berejiklian government's policy of koala extinction has now focussed on eradicating the most important healthy koala colony remaining in the entire state.

Around 1,000 koalas will be sacrificed on the altar of development as the peaceful surrounds of Campbelltown, Camden and Wollondilly are transformed into a massive metropolis planned by the NSW government and the Greater Sydney Commission (headed by Lucy Turnbull, Malcolm Turnbull's wife.)

Known as the Greater Macarthur Growth Area, some 50,000 houses are planned for the precinct.

In the government's own words "the Growth Area includes Cumberland Plain vegetation and is home to threatened species including the largest, disease free koala population in Sydney."

Given the catastrophic decline of koalas throughout the state, this slaughter will ensure not only localized extinction but the death knell for koalas in NSW.

The first stage of this massive project is the Mt Gilead development of 1,700 houses by Lendlease slap bang in the middle of primary koala habitat. The development relies on access via Appin Road, already deluged with heavy traffic and ongoing koala death from vehicle strike.

The Minister for Roads suggested that "road improvements to Appin Road and the development of the Spring Farm Parkway will ensure the safety of road users and koalas".

In fact, the Roads & Maritime Services (RMS) have refused to construct any overpasses or underpasses along these roads, instead building exclusion fences which will prevent koalas from using their corridors to access their home ranges.

Koalas will be unable to disperse. They will be vulnerable to bushfires, floods, drought and climate change.

Lendlease's 'exclusion fencing' will run the length of Appin Road from Rosemeadow to Appin, and will remove Koalas from Lendlease's Gilead site west of Appin Road. It is literally enabling a 'localized Koala extinction plan'. The cost will likely be the long term survival of the Campbelltown Chlamydia free Koala colony, as:

1. It will accelerate contact with the Chlamydia infected Koalas further south in the Southern Highlands.
2. There will be no east-west escapes/exits for Koalas in case of a large fire or other Koala threats emanating from the Holsworthy Army Base.
3. It dramatically reduces the connectivity options for Koala movements and funnels them into one super Koala highway that could face any number of unforeseen blockages, obstacles, complications and certain to increase Koala stressors, a cause of Chlamydia.
4. Loss of genetic diversity

It's not only koalas, but gliders, possums, echidnas, wallabies, birds who are all left to die. There's a family of lyre birds in the path of the bulldozers which have now been given consent to clear critical koala habitat for the Mt Gilead development.

Consent was given by the Campbelltown City Council Local Planning Panel, yet another government set up to ensure no problems for developers. This Panel gave approval for clearing and dewatering dams on which



wildlife depend in less than 48 hours ignoring the evidence given by the community. Members of the Panel had clear conflicts of interest as members were either ex Councillors from other areas or had relationships with Lendlease.

Those of you who followed the disastrous Ballina Pacific Highway Upgrade campaign will remember that the RMS refused to construct the 26 connectivity structures in spite of major legal efforts. So far, only ONE connectivity structure has been built and the impacts on this critically important colony (designated as a nationally significant colony) are unknown.

Why? Because RMS won't commission any independent monitoring, we have no information. What we do know is that primary koala habitat was destroyed, koalas were unable to access food and shelter trees, they

couldn't disperse and their lives were made impossible by dust and vibration. No one cared. We do know many koalas died.

AFA identified a number of significant breaches of conditions of approval, but the government refused to hold the RMS to account.

The RMS runs like a dictatorship in NSW. Their response to no connectivity structures? "It will be a year without access".

AFA is aware that at the 2018 Australasian Network for Ecology and Transportation conference, a senior RMS bureaucrat gave a presentation on the Ballina Highway Upgrade which was totally misleading and incorrect. He asserted that the required underpasses and overpasses had been constructed at the Ballina Highway Upgrade when in reality, there were none.

Continued...

WHAT HAS AFA DONE ABOUT THIS NIGHTMARE

We've asked our brilliant graphic artist, Carl Paola to design an advertisement for the North Shore Times, the newspaper which circulates in the electorate of the Premier, Gladys Berejiklian.

Through our Koala Crisis Facebook page, we've asked for help in funding the full page advertisement as its going to cost \$4850.00.

This is the ONLY way we can get any protest before the Premier. Mainstream media continues to ignore the wipe out of koalas in NSW, Queensland and Victoria. In spite of our Co ordinator spending most of her life as a

mainstream journalist, ex Fairfax, the journalists in major newspapers continue to resist writing anything that brings attention to the shocking wipe out of koalas by governments.

What's happening at Campbelltown is being repeated in koala habitats in Southeast Queensland and NSW. In Victoria, AFA has had to apply under the Freedom of Information Act to get any records of koalas. The situation in Victoria is shocking, there are no population estimates, no government department has any idea how many koalas are surviving in that state.



NSW KOALA STRATEGY

In a great show of bluster, the NSW government announced several years ago that it had allocated \$44 million of taxpayer funds to a NSW Koala Strategy. The primary recommendation of this Strategy is to protect habitat.

Yet the government is doing the complete opposite. There is NO habitat conservation, no conservation through community action, no safety and health of koala populations and absolutely zero "building our knowledge and education".

Instead, the government is pursuing obscene policies of extinction. It's really important to know that one of Australia's leading scientists told our Co-ordinator at a Sustainable

Australia workshop at Griffith University where *they were both speakers that: "the koala is an umbrella species for coastal native forests which contain a host of biodiversity"*.

In wiping out koala habitat, the loss is much greater. Gliders, grey headed flying foxes, possums, birds, insects, entire ecosystems are being eradicated.

Last month the government announced the funding of \$1.93 million taxpayer dollars to 10 "

research projects" under its useless Koala research plan.

Three of the grants went to Queensland, one went to the NSW Department of Primary Industries, and the rest was split up between never ending research on chlamydia and useless genetic research.

ALL grants having a medical focus instead of conservation. Not one cent spent on protecting habitat. Chlamydia is a result of significant stress caused by loss of habitat resulting in a diminished immune system.

Since 2009 more than \$5 million has been granted to one particular researcher for a chlamydia vaccine, and the governments keep funding this useless project. There's no trial of the vaccine that's worked and the cause of chlamydia is ignored.

Imagine how much habitat could be bought for \$5 million .. or for the \$1.92 million in useless grants.

Translocation is now firmly on the agenda as well in spite of overwhelming evidence that it doesn't work. Look no further than Coomera in Southeast Queensland. Gold Coast City Council translocated around 180 koalas to facilitate developments.



As a result of Freedom of Information requests by AFA, we got hold of the wildlife returns to find that 2 only koalas survived. Translocation has one purpose for these appalling governments – to facilitate growth and more growth.

Australia is rapidly becoming a land of concrete, with an alarming loss of rivers, forests and agricultural land caused by massive environmental devastation.



**PLEASE
HELP SAVE THE
KOALAS**

NSW UPPER HOUSE INQUIRY INTO KOALAS

AFA has many years of expertise in koalas and as a result, we have made five submissions to the Inquiry and at the same time, requested that our Co-ordinator give evidence at a public hearing.

The Senate Inquiry into Faunal Extinction continues in the Federal Parliament and although AFA has provided extensive submissions to the Inquiry and appeared as a witness, we will be making further submissions.

But.. the big issue is we have governments who continue to ignore is that no matter how wonderful the recommendations from these inquiries, the government decides whether to implement.

Given the disastrous anti environmental governments in NSW, Victoria, Queensland, Canberra and South Australia, the uptake of recommendations is very unlikely.



QUEENSLAND THE DISASTER CONTINUES



In spite of many promises and a meeting at the 'Tower of Power' as it's known in Brisbane (the Premier and government's building) to address the koala threats, nothing has transpired.

The Queensland government announced a further delay in the recommendations of the Koala Advisory Council... another talk fest with no mandate to pass laws or change anything. Now there's to be no "strategy" until the fourth quarter of 2019.

AFA has lost count of how many talk fests the Queensland government has set up.

Every recommendation has been ignored, the primary one being protection of habitat.

The Koala Advisory Council is headed by Mark Townend, former CEO of RSPCA Queensland and he's busy promoting translocation.

Queensland government under Palaszczuk is making the Joh Bjelke Petersen government look like amateurs. The ongoing loss of koala habitat and environmental catastrophes in Queensland should be cause for crimes against Nature.



PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY

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AUSTRALIANS FOR ANIMALS
PO BOX 414 BRUNSWICK HEADS 2483



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AFA NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

The charity is on the front line. Almost daily we're receiving calls from local communities desperate for help, guidance and advice on how to deal with the looming destruction of koala habitat as developers are given the green light by councils, state and federal governments.

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As a result of the mainstream media shutdown of any major articles on the terrible plight the koalas are enduring, our Koala Crisis Facebook page has become one of the best read social media.

Every month our readers number around 50,000-60,000. This is an incredible effort and it takes an enormous amount of time to keep as many people up to date on what's happening, steps that can be taken.

AFA has also published an on line help booklet which is available

freely to communities who need advice and information on the complex legal system which allows developers to get away with murder.

We have set up a Facebook page to create a National Koala Network with some great stickers which simply say 'We proudly support saving koala habitat', which have been distributed far and wide. If you would like to spread some in your community, please contact AFA.

BUT THE BOTTOM LINE IS HEARTBREAKING.

We're losing not only the koala but a huge swathe of biodiversity, our wildlife is being trashed by these dreadful governments.

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT WITH A FREE STICKER



nationalkoalanetwork.org

Massive immigration and growth are all these political sell out merchants care for.

AFA is doing everything in its power to try and save koalas and our wildlife. It's deeply troubling that the major conservation organisations have done nothing to help protect the southwest Sydney koalas. There is very little unity and this is a major cause of the governments' free for all on

the environment.

We urge our supporters to donate to AFA. We are and always will be a grass roots organisation, dedicated to helping communities. Our focus is not to keep big offices with large salaries but to spend the dollars on where they count.

Australia's wildlife is at the cross roads of survival and extinction. That's the grim reality.

SUPPORT AFA BY BUYING KOALA MERCHANDISE



A3 POSTERS, KOALA KEYRING
KOALA TOTE BAG:
\$10.00

EACH INCLUDING POSTAGE

TO GET YOURS GO TO:

www.givenow.com.au/koalacrisis

donate your total and check "Leave a message..." with the items you'd like us to send.

SAVE THE KOALA CAMPAIGN GUIDELINES



AFA has put together a booklet for communities fighting to save koala habitat which is free on line.

The booklet is full of useful information including rescue guidelines, hospital contacts, media and political guidelines. The booklet is free of charge.

GET YOURS HERE:
<http://bit.ly/koalarescue>



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