

Save Our Bush Alliance

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SAVE OUR BUSH RALLY PARLIAMENT HOUSE STEPS FEB 24 12PM

STOP THE DESTRUCTION OF NATURE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF FREEWAYS
THROUGH OUR BUSHLAND AND SET THE GOVERNMENT ON THE PATH TO ALTERNATIVE
TRANSPORT.

SUPPORT 2010 YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY

M.C. - ROD QUANTOCK
ADAM McGUINNESS - BUNERONG CLAN OF THE KULIN NATION
SUE PENINCUIK - GREENS MLC
ROSEMARY WEST - GREEN WEDGES
COLIN LONG - GREENS UPPER HOUSE CANDIDATE
DAMON ANDERSON - COOMOORA RESERVE
MARION WARE - FRIENDS OF BANYULE
BRIAN WALTERS SC - PROTECTORS OF PUBLIC LANDS
GILLIAN COLLINS - PINES FLORA & FAUNA RESERVE

MEDIA RELEASE ~ SAVE OUR BUSH ALLIANCE
17 February 2010

ONE MORE NAIL IN THE COFFIN, OUR BUSHLAND IS BURIED

Melbourne's bushland reserves are under attack like never before, by a Brumby state government obsessed with freeway construction. 2010 might be the Year of Biodiversity everywhere else, but in Melbourne – unless Brumby can be stopped – it will be the year of bio-destruction.

On February 24, members of the Legislative Council will debate and vote on a Greens motion to stop the building of the Peninsula Link, a freeway that will slash through some of the city's most valuable and cherished bushland reserves. On that day Rod Quantock, Vice President of Protectors of Public Lands and comedian, will preside over a Bushland Burial on the steps of Parliament House. "The burial signifies the impact of the Government's plan to build Freeways and Bypasses through the State's rare and endangered bushlands, grasslands, wetlands and other threatened flora and fauna", Mr Quantock said. "If the motion is defeated it will represent a nail in the coffin for the Pines Flora and Fauna Reserve and other wonderful ecological treasures in the Southeast, and represent a green light for the destruction of our city's bushland reserves generally".

Under threat from Peninsula Link are the Pines Flora and Fauna Reserve; a rare patch of herb-rich grassy wetland that the Department of Sustainability and Environment says can't be replaced; the Belvedere Reserve in Seaford; the Pobblebonk/Willow Reserve and the Wittenberg Reserves in Langwarrin; and the pristine Heritage Victoria-listed remnant bushland at Westerfield in Frankston.

Other valuable reserves and ecosystems under threat from Brumby's road mania include Keysborough's Coomoora Woodland Flora and Fauna Reserve, a native landscape and indigenous ecosystem inhabited by increasingly rare and endangered flora and fauna species, which is classified by the National Trust for its environmental and heritage values. "The government didn't even bother with an Environmental Effects Statement before deciding to plough through Coomoora with the Dingley Bypass", Save Coomoora's Damon Anderson says.

The North East Link – often referred to as the 'missing link' in Melbourne's orbital road network – is about to create a 'missing link' of ecosystems in the Banyule Flats and Warringal Swamplands. These lowland riverine flood plains are among the most threatened landscapes in Victoria. Banyule Swamp is the most intact and biologically significant shallow freshwater marsh in the Lower Yarra. Both are key wetland areas in maintaining the viability of populations of waterbirds and wetland ecosystems in the Lower Yarra. They contain a number of rare, vulnerable and threatened fauna, 23 species of waterbirds, 125 species of native birds, 11 species of native mammals and four bat species.

Where we see wonderful trees that have existed since before Melbourne was founded, rare and endangered species, vital eco-systems, Premier Brumby sees free land for more roads. The State Government's Transport Plan leaves communities chronically under-served by public transport, with freeways that will not ease congestion, but which physically divide communities, and destroy bush land, wetlands, native grasslands, farmland and recreational facilities. What is needed instead is an integrated transport plan for the city, one that takes seriously VicRoads' recent admission that Melbourne has reached the limit for new road construction, one that takes Melbourne into the 21st century, not the 1960s.

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