

Calling all NR Guardians and earth protectors: get your blockade gear together and stand by.

If you have any angel wings, flouro vests, animal costumes or masks have them ready.

We need to mobilise and prepare for **an action at Black Rocks, south of Pottsville** where a sports field has been established 300 metres inside koala habitat at the junction of three koala corridors.

Will you help us to reverse the trend to coastal koala extinction?

We need people ready to get there on short notice.

Ecologist & koala expert Dr Steve Phillips says: *'Increasing development pressure ...The Men's Shed in particular was/is – in my view – little more than a Trojan Horse intended to establish a development footprint within the grounds....'*

The September 15th 2016 Tweed Shire Council meeting authorised the Pottsville & District Men's Shed (PADMS) to start building at Black Rocks sports field 20 metres from primary koala habitat. This could happen **any time** as the group has secured government funding for a "temporary" facility there.

Why is this important? Construction of even a temporary Men's Shed will allow the destruction of one of the few remaining habitats for this endangered koala population : noise causes stress which is often fatal to this keystone species. This would accelerate decline towards extinction. I think it's critical that we stand up for our bioregion...now!

Also, the PADMS plans to store and use flammable materials that could catch fire and spread to nearby bushland, wiping out the last viable colony of Tweed's coastal koalas. Dr. Steve Phillips says in his report to the EDO: *'I am of the opinion that there is strong likelihood of a significant impact on the Pottsville Wetlands - Black Rocks local koala population if the proposed action was to proceed.'*

A proposed activity of the Men's Shed will be making and testing model aeroplanes, which have already created dangerous disturbance for the nearby osprey nest, the only naturally-occurring osprey nest left on the Tweed Coast .

Historical summary : the sports field was set up as part of the Black Rocks housing development.(Given the importance of the location to Tweed Coast koala survival, Dr Phillips has recommended that the field be returned to koala habitat.) It may be that developers of nearby *Dunloe Park* housing estate could also use this field to avoid requirements to provide public open space.

A men's shed group was organised at Pottsville and told they could build on this reserve. Tweed Council approved this as a temporary site until a permanent site could be found. The Men's Shed originally preferred a site at Centennial Drive, Pottsville next to the school (where the P&DMS operate at present.) Lot 3 will soon be available for consideration but some Councillors who represent developers refuse to consider this win-win for the men's

shed and the wildlife.

This means the Men's Shed will be built (using public money) damaging or destroying the koala colony and then have to re-locate in a few years - a waste of public grant money that could be better used on a permanent site.

We need to **stop the concrete pour** and to draw more media attention to this issue ...and to put pressure on Tweed Council who probably will be replaced by a more progressive Council at next month's election (29th October 2016).

Councillors Polglase, Byrne and Longland need to be replaced. Cllr Youngblutt is retiring. These 4 have voted to send the Pottsville men, many of whom are elderly, to an isolated location,

4km from town, where thieves, hoons, vandals and arsonists already have done damage. Additionally, council is putting equipment at risk. Many PADMS members don't want to go to Black Rocks but their current President refuses to consider other options & has convinced the group that they have no alternative.

Many local residents ask for our support and the NSW state government is sensitive to the threat to wildlife in this situation. This is where we can help the community. Let **the spirit of Bentley** save this critical coastal wildlife refuge and give the Men's Shed a viable future.

If you want to go on the **action call-out list** contact Lyn: 02 6676 0615, 0413 752 450 or send email to diceileen@gmail.com

For a sustainable future,
Scott Sledge
President
Northern Rivers Guardians, Inc
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