

Hello again koala carers

The granting of a licence for a men's shed at the isolated temporary Black Rocks site at Pottsville has been deferred so that State MP Geoff Provest and Council can fast-track a suitable, centrally-located permanent site. This is a win for koalas, men shedders and the community. There has been a lot of misinformation circulated in the public arena. However, our newly elected Councillors Milne (Mayor), Cherry (Deputy Mayor), Cooper and Byrnes have voted for a solution where there are no losers:

- A place where koalas are not impacted by men's shed activities 20m from primary koala habitat in the middle of the koala corridor
- A place where the community has easy access to men shedders' invaluable skills
- A stress-free place where men shedders will be safe, socially included and supported
- A permanent place where there is no waste of public grant money when they are required to dismantle their shed, relocate and rebuild.

The Tweed Valley Weekly has invited public comment about whether the community would like the men's shed to be built at the temporary Black Rocks site or whether they believe that the men's shed would be better served with a permanent site. Could you please take a few minutes to write to the Tweed Valley Weekly [editor@theweekly.net.au] with a copy to:

- State MP Geoff Provest [ElectorateOffice.Tweed@]
- General Manager, Tweed Shire Council [tsc@tweed.nsw.gov.au]
- Mayor Katie Milne [KMilne@tweed.nsw.gov.au]
- Deputy Mayor Chris Cherry [CCherry@tweed.nsw.gov.au]
- Councillor Reece Byrnes [RByrnes@tweed.nsw.gov.au]
- Councillor Ron Cooper [RCooper@tweed.nsw.gov.au]
- Councillor James Owen [JOwen@tweed.nsw.gov.au]
- Councillor Pryce Allsop [PAllsop@tweed.nsw.gov.au]
- Councillor Warren Polglase [wpolglase@tweed.nsw.gov.au]

The Threatened Species Conservation Society Inc believes that a permanent centrally-located site is the best option for the following reasons:-

- For almost 2 years the Pottsville and District Men's Shed have been operating at a temporary site at the Pottsville Primary School where they provide woodworking lessons to students. The school welcome's their presence and there is no indication that they will be required to leave.
- It is illogical for P&DMS to needlessly move to another temporary site at the Black Rocks sports field and waste taxpayers' money on dismantling, relocation and rebuild costs when a permanent site is secured.
- A permanent site will provide certainty to P&DMS and eliminate any stress

associated with having to relocate.

- A permanent centrally-located site will put an end to division in the community, so that the focus can be on the good things a men's shed has to offer rather than on a bad location.
- P&DMS do not have enough funds to complete their shed. Securing extra funds will be more difficult at Black Rocks because Community Building Partnerships will not be issuing grants to temporary sites in the future.
- The isolated Black Rocks site is inconsistent with the aims of the Men's Shed movement to facilitate socialisation and community integration, and provide a safe and inclusive facility. It is located in the middle of the bush with no other nearby houses or community facilities, where there has been a history of vandalism, break and enter, theft, fire-lighting and hooning.
- It is inappropriate for men shedders to perform an active management and reporting role at the Black Rocks sports field. This will not only increase stress levels to men shedders but also put them at risk of harm from aggressive offenders who often frequent the site.
- Lot 3 Centennial Drive, Pottsville will soon be available for consideration as an alternative, centrally-located, permanent site for the men's shed. This site was the P&DMS and Council's preferred option in 2014. Why not fast-track their preferred or another centrally-located permanent site?
- Considering that local koalas are listed as endangered with a high risk of extinction in the near future, it is more important than ever to adopt a precautionary approach. Why needlessly expose koalas to noise and disturbance from an industrial-like facility when there could soon be an alternative option which will have minimal impact on threatened species and maximum benefit for men shedders?

Your email to the Tweed Valley Weekly, with a copy to State MP Geoff Provest, Council's General Manager and Councillors, in support of the deferral of a licence at Black Rocks in order to secure a permanent centrally-located site for the men's shed will go a long way to providing the public feedback needed to get the best outcome for men shedders, koalas and the community.

Kind regards

Lyn Dickinson

On behalf of David Norris

President

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