



President's Report 2020-21

Meetings

The AGM was held on April 7th in Bathurst. Ordinary meetings were held by Zoom for the rest of the year due to Covid 19 restrictions on 5th July, 6th September and 6th December. Thanks to Mel Gray for the use of her ACF Zoom account.

Apart from a few technical hiccups, the Zoom meetings went well and saved on travelling costs. It was decided at the meeting of 5th July to continue with this medium, apart from one face to face meeting a year, this usually to be the AGM.

Regional Conference

CWEC hosted the NCC Regional Conference, also held by Zoom, on 13th June. It was well attended. The conference theme was 'Water in Western NSW' with some excellent speakers and useful workshops, such as one on media skills, one on water management, featuring member Mel Gray and another on the Gardens of Stone, run by a member group, Lithgow Environment Group. The western region hosts the regional conference every three years.

Submissions and letters

CWEC has made several submissions and objections to inappropriate developments such as mines and new dams and has made comments on various inquiries, plans and legislation as shown below.

14/4/2020	Macquarie Pipeline trigger
14/4/2020	NSW Independent Bushfire Inquiry
16/4/2020	EPBC Act Review CWEC
5/6/2020	Wyangala Dam CWEC comments on referral 2020 - 8653
15/6/2020	Comment on Referral 2020 8652 Macquarie Re-regulator
22/7/2020	Objection to Bowden Silver Mine, Lue
3/8/2020	Support for PC7 Inquiry into new dams in NSW
18/8/2020	Submission Crown Lands Strategic Plan Final
12/11/2020	Submission to draft Lachlan & Macquarie RWS

Submission guides on various issues were provided to member groups.

NCC motions

CWEC submitted two motions to the NCC Annual Conference, one for the NCC to lobby the minister regarding unsustainable land-clearing and a second asking NCC to help beef up the legislation on the Areas of Outstanding Biodiversity Value. The latter is of relevance to Mount Canobolas and the proposed bike competition area because the State Conservation Area has been nominated and meets all the criteria. It is hoped that a declaration of AOBV status would give the SCA additional protection from development.

Constitution

A copy of the constitution was obtained from the NSW Government. It is dated from the inauguration of the group ie 1992. It is still valid, but where it conflicts with the new model rules that came out a few years ago, the new rules would apply. It is recommended, therefore that the constitution be rewritten to conform with the new rules. A scanned copy has been circulated. Note that next year the group will be celebrating 30 years since inauguration!

Links to the other groups

CWEC joined with other groups to form the Canobolas Conservation Alliance, whose main objective is to oppose inappropriate developments in the State Conservation Area.

I also represented CWEC on various campaigns, including the one opposing the Macquarie Re-regulator and a separate one opposing the raising of the dam wall at Wyangala.



Wyangala Dam group of stakeholders meeting at Cowra, 6/9/20 Photo: C Kinross

Due to the Covid 19 pandemic, most forums were cancelled, although some were moved to be held remotely. I represented CWEC at the NCC Annual Conference (via Zoom).

I performed the role of NCC representative of the 'Western Region' until the October AGM when I stood down after five years. Mel Gray was appointed to this position.

The position of the CLWG (Crown Lands Working Group, part of NCC) hasn't changed since last year ie it is still extant, but in abeyance. The new CEO of NCC, Chris Gambian has expressed his belief that this working group is important, but nothing is likely to change unless a new convenor is found.

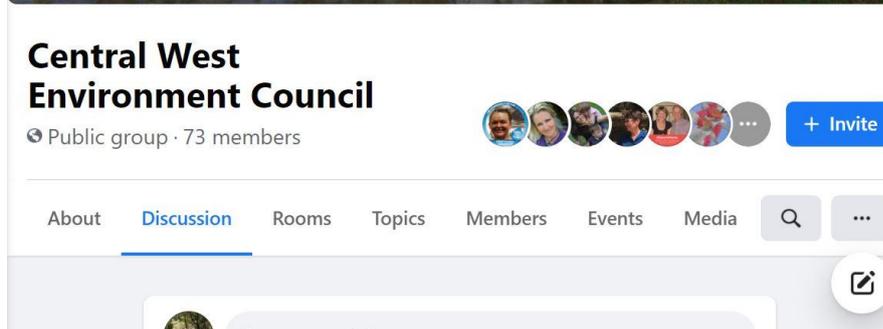
I also represent the NCC on the Canobolas Zone Bushfire Management Committee.

Social media

The website has been kept up to date and we have another year before we need to pay again and we could consider reverting to the free edition. The Facebook page has been a bit more engaging this year. We now have 73 members.



CWEC Facebook page



I also operate a Twitter account and use this mainly to send out messages regarding regional environmental issues, somewhat sporadically.

Other related responsibilities

This will be last breeding season of collecting data on peregrine falcons and I will commence the huge job of collating and analysing the data. For this reason I would prefer to stand down this year as chair of CWEC.

I am still the president of Summer Hill Creekcare and the Project Manager of a restoration grant, due to be wound up mid-year, but maintenance will continue for three years.

This year was a very trying year for many environment groups as they tried to get their heads around the idea of remote meetings, whilst the government tried to sneak through many changes with adverse consequences for the environment, but there were opportunities too (for example: availability of online international conferences) and less time and money spent in travel.

Many thanks to the 2020-21 committee for all their hard work this year under difficult circumstances.

Cilla Kinross, President, CWEC, 2/2/21

