

THE NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (NEW SOUTH WALES) POLICY ON WETLANDS

PREAMBLE

The National Trust has a long history of advocating for the protection of Wetlands in New South Wales. In 1976, following lobbying by the National Trust, three bays on the Georges River, Oatley were protected from proposed “reclamation”.

In 1979 the Trust joined with the Australian Littoral Society (NSW) to lobby for the inclusion of saltmarsh and freshwater wetlands in the Towra Point Nature Reserve and opposing sandmining proposals. In 1980 the Trust successfully argued against tax deductibility for the draining of wetlands. A 1982 Trust Study of the MacDonal Valleyⁱ mapped and proposed protective zonings for the Valley’s wetlands. With the Coast and Wetlands Society the Trust published in 1983 an Information Paper – “*The Choice is Yours – Wetlands or Wastelands*”ⁱⁱ. The Trust argued in 1983 for allocation of surplus water for the Macquarie Marshes to protect wildlife habitat. Proposals for dedication of wetlands as Nature Reserves, including Lake Wollumboola, Pipeclay Creek, Hexham Swamp, Wentworth Swamp, Comenderry Swamp and Comerong Island have been put forward by the Trust. The Trust lobbied the Federal Government to protect Migratory Wading Bird and Waterfowl habitat under International Treaties and in 1985 produced a Wetlands Policy which this document updates and affirms.

POLICY

Recognising the importance of wetlands; the loss of wetland over the past two centuries; the need for water to be allocated to wetlands for conservation purposes; the poor representation of wetlands in conservation reserves and international treaty responsibilities, the National Trust will:

1. Urge the NSW Government to establish a Wetlands NSW Planning Policy applying to all NSW wetlands.ⁱⁱⁱ
2. Advocate for the dedication of representative examples of all wetland types as Nature Reserves or as parts of larger National Parks, and their appropriate management to preserve and enhance their wildlife values.
3. Call upon both the NSW and Australian Governments to co-ordinate the activities of various authorities and to plan for the management of water on a catchment basis and to give high priority to the provision of water for nature conservation purposes.
4. List important wetlands on the National Trust Register in recognition of their heritage values, to encourage their statutory listing, reservation and appropriate management and to promote their values and protection to the community.
5. Oppose recreational shooting of Australian and migratory waterfowl and wading birds and any other native fauna utilising wetland habitat.
6. Lobby for inclusion of provisions in a new Wetlands NSW Planning Policy that:
 - Estuaries and their associated wetlands should be considered valuable public amenities which should be retained in public ownership and under public control.
 - Should explicitly prohibit development within or directly adjoining wetlands unless solely intended for conservation or educational purposes.
 - Future flood mitigation practices should not isolate wetlands from their estuaries and dredging in estuaries will be closely controlled.
 - The creation of residential canal estates will not be allowed.
 - Measures will be taken to eliminate pollutants entering estuarine systems.
 - Development in flood prone lands will be restricted.
7. Lobby governments at all levels to provide encouragement and incentives to landholders to

conserve privately owned wetlands and to develop the wetland values on farm dams and along watercourses.

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ⁱ *Planning for the Protection of Scenic Landscapes – The Macdonald Valley – A Case Study*, Nic Deane, 1982

ⁱⁱ *The Choice is Yours – Wetlands or Wastelands*, The National Trust of Australia (NSW), 1983

ⁱⁱⁱ *State Environmental Planning Policy No 14 – Coastal Wetlands*