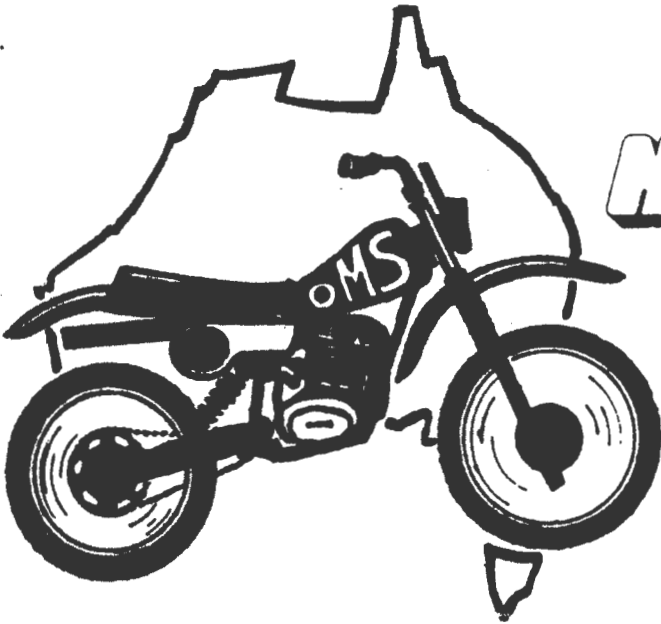


# OUTBACK MOTORBIKE SAFARIS



**1080 STUD ROAD,  
ROWVILLE, VICTORIA, 3178**

**Phone: (03) 763 7907**

Mr. Jim Cummins,  
President, Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria,  
Ensay, Vic.

Dear Sir,

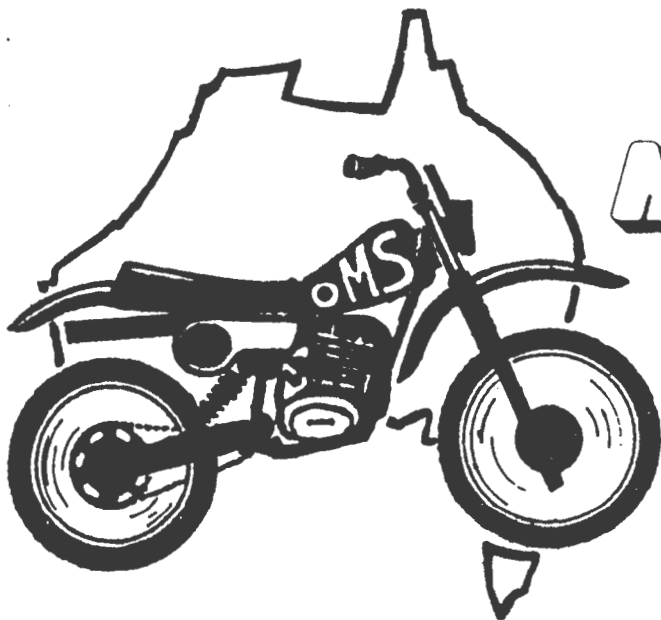
As requested I am enclosing a copy of the letter I have sent to the LCC, the  
Forests and Conservation Minister Mr. Rod Mackenzie and the Minister for Planning Mr.  
Evan Walker. I have also sent a copy to my local member Mr. Steve Crabb.

I sincerely hope we can win this one. Let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Yours in Adventure Riding,

*Murray Crawford.*

Murray Crawford.



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15th. July 1983.

The Secretary,  
Land Conservation Council,  
464 St.Kilda Road,  
Melbourne vic 3000,  
Dear Sir,

The purpose of this letter is to register my total disapproval to the proposed seizure of further lands for national parks in the Alpine area of Victoria. The implementation of the LCC's recommendations would mean the discrimination against the majority in favour of a very selfish few hard line radicals and would be nothing short of a national disaster. In my business I come in contact with many national parks through out Australia

as well as much of the unspoilt wilderness areas, and so have a pretty fair knowledge of the affects of national parks on both people and bushland. The National Parks have an appalling record of land abuse and should have to prove that they have the money, manpower and above all the ability to competently manage their present parks, before any thought is given to further seizure of lands which are under proven management in the cattlemen, the lands department, and the Forestry Commission at present.

At a recent meeting the Ministerial adviser Mr Michael Henry, when asked about enforcing existing legislation answered, "We can't; the state is broke!"

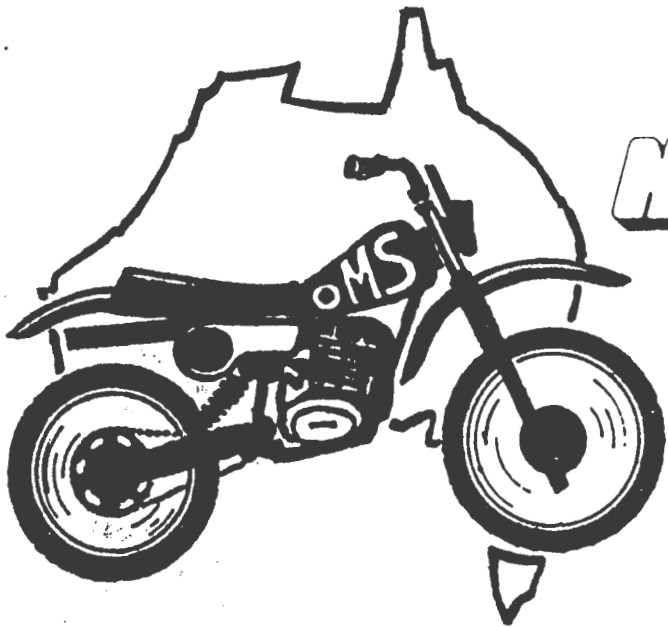
It is well known in business that you scale down when you are not financially stable, and when you're broke you go out of business, but under no circumstances do you expand. That would be the actions of incompetents.

The Parks can't even police the existing legislation, due they say, to lack of funds. If this was done properly, the menace of unlicenced riders and unregistered vehicles, which is just as big a concern to a trail rider like myself as it is to the Parks people would be irradiated. Unlicenced and unregistered bikes cause most of the damage and annoyance and generally give trail bike riders a bad name. These people are attracted by the facilities set up for them in the form of picnic sites. They are not interested in the bush, but instead find a hill and spend all day long riding up and down on it.

In stead of policing the existing parks, the LCC now wants to penalise all trail riders because of the Parks own inadequacy to do their job properly.

Many areas proposed by the LCC for these new Parks are highly unsuitable for the present Parks concept. Particularly areas such as King Billy, Howqua River which are high use areas and important access for the Wonnangatta Moroka Park. Extremely restrictive regulations that are applied to coastal Parks are in no way suitable for large areas of mountain country. People should and NEED to be free to enjoy this country with out servere regulations. It would be ridiculous to try and run an alpine area with the same restrictions as that at Wilson's Promontary.

As it is we have more than enough Parks and the small area left MUST continue to



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cont....2/

be managed under the present multi purpose concept as this is the only way a wide range of interests can gain benefits and be compatible. The huge concessions made by the general public in the form of increased land to the National Parks last time was on the understanding that no further lands would be sort. However it appears the LCC is like a parasite in plague proportions-it is not content until it devours everything.

To stop or even reduce cattle grazing in the alpine area is to place a death sentence on the whole alpine region. The Parks have more than enough good land which is fast becoming fire hassard country and it is only a matter of time before a fire causes servere devastation to these once clean and productive areas. Fires are inevitable. The cattlemen keep grazing areas clear of heavy undergrowth. Stop grazing and clearing and you get cold fires becoming wild fires and everything is destroyed taking many years to regrow. The recent Ash Wednesday horror fires are a typical example of conservationist, and I use the word very loosely, mis-management. There have been enough deaths of volunteer firemen caused directly by the parks and "greenies" allowing bush undergrowth to become to thick and to close to buildings. You have two choices-Leave the cattlemen to continue their excellent work or make the alpine area a Park which will also pass a death sentence on more firemen.

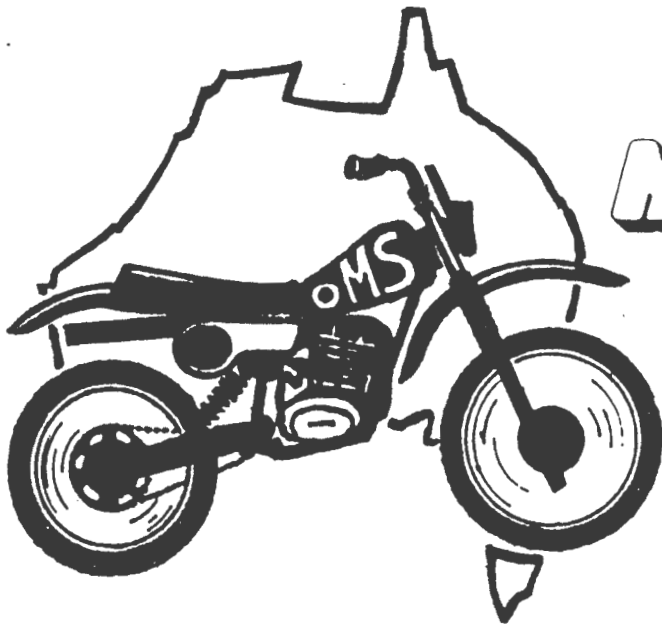
Apart from this, what a shamefull thing for a labour Government particularly as they are supposed to be for the working man or battler, to destroy one of the last living links with our pioneering past. Shame on you for even proposing such a thing. This Australian tradition is the heritage of all Australians and MUST not be allowed to fade into history.

My great grand father was a mountain cattleman on the Snowy River and I have spent a good deal of my life there and I have NEVER seen any damage that is serious or longterm which has been created by cattle grazing in the alps and there is NO genuine proof of any damage.

The same statement can be made about responsible trail bike riders. Where damage is done is when unlicenced and unregistered people from the "Commodore crowd come up to the bush for a mad, boozing thrash. Police these people and you remove all damage.

I run the above business which operates in the alpine area some five months over the summer part of the year. Apart from taking people to see places they would otherwise never see, we instruct them on riding techniques, navigation, survival and bushcraft.

We pride ourselves on being able to ride in rough areas without doing damage or leaving anything but a light tyre tread print on the ground. We also spend quite a bit of time and energy cleaning rubbish away from camping spots. As part of our own operating procedure, carry every thing out that we bring in.



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It would be impractical and detrimental to the scenery to put "Commodore" roads into many of the beautiful attractions in this area. So if the Parks take these places many attractions will be lost to all people in recreational vehicles.

Safari Tours such as ours and those run by the other cattlemen are of great benefit to the general public apart from the education and entertainment they give to the many participants for whom it is often there only opportunity to experience something of this nature.

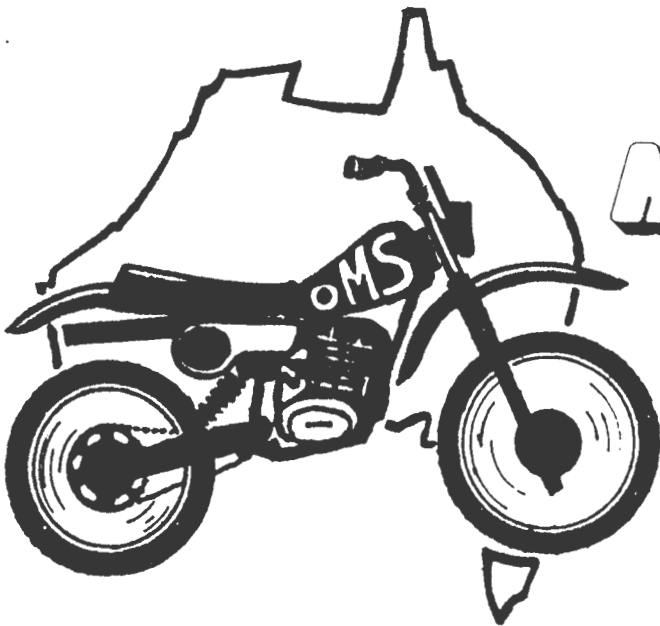
Because of the supervision of the riders you would think that this form of alpine area use would be the most acceptable by the Parks and LCC. The fact is they don't us period. I have experienced what many national parks do to commercial trail safaris. No matter what they say before the take over; once they have control they forbid us entry. From my considerable experience once the Parks get hold of land they will ban bikes permanently or allow use only on main roads. No one would stop walkers from their walking tracks or make walking tracks into main roads so the general public can drive their Commodores along there. Trail riders have the same interests and requirements as walkers. WHY should they be banished to uninteresting formed up roads.

The benefit we offer ie trail riders and cattlemen is help in an emergency, from search and rescue operations to just giving advise. I have hauled a number of people including walkers out of the bush when they were in trouble. This assistance, particularly from the cattlemen since they are there all year around costs the state NOTHING.

On top of that the many cattlemen's huts dotted throughout the mountains are used by thousands free of charge. They are built and maintained by the cattlemen and are indeed a welcome sight for vistors in an emergency. Neat tables and rubbish are fine for the day tripper but a person in trouble needs refuge. I know of one such case this year where a person badly in need of refuge in bitterly cold weather nearly died because a forestry hut had been replaced by a picnic site causing him to spend the night in the open. Cattlemens huts like the cattlemen are part of the alps and MUST stay.

We don't need main roads throughout the alps the tracks that are there are quite alright. As Mr. Henry said "We will close existing tracks so that rest will rejuvenate them and cut new ones to be used in the mean time." This needless destruction of the bush will only promote more erosion of the bush and is very costly.

Upgrading roads for the "Commodore crowd (and facilities) costs huge amounts of money and many of these people hardly leave the camping site anyway for any length of time or distance. These people often leave huge amounts of rubbish which is unsightly and unhealthy apart from further taxing the governments small resources in infrequent clean ups.



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cont....4/

There are ample facilities at present for such people with out stopping the many other users activities in order to increase them.

The majority of the general public for what ever reason are not aware of what the LCC is proposing. Many just dont believe it could happen. If it does the outcry from people whose free dom has been taken away will rock your Government.'

Sir, I implore you to leave the alpine area alone. Leave the cattlemen to continue the excellent job they having been doing for over 140 years. Let the trail riders and other users have continued access to all the areas currently available and use the money on improving and most of all policing existing parks instead of setting up further uncontroable lands, for to have the Parks take over these proposed areas would be a national disaster and an act bordering on criminal negligence.

I hope common sense will prevail,

Yours in Deep Concern,

Murray Crawford.

Murray Crawford.