



# *The Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria Inc.*

AFFILIATED WITH  
THE VICTORIAN FARMERS' FEDERATION

## ASSOCIATES OF THE MOUNTAIN CATTLEMEN

(Copies to all Mountain Cattlemen and Associate Members)

NEWSLETTER - NO. 11 - JULY, 1987

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the M.C.A.V. will be held on September 18th, 1987 (Friday) at 10.30 a.m. in the Boardroom, Victorian Farmers Federation, 6th Floor, Farrer House, 24 Collins Street, Melbourne. This is a preliminary notice, so please make a note of the date now.

### INCIDENT ON THE FILM SET "SNOWY II"

At the last Executive meeting, the Executive considered the Association's position relating to the recent incident at Merrijig. The following resolution was passed unanimously:

The Mountain Cattlemens Association of Victoria was not in any way involved in the incident at Mansfield however if any member of the Association becomes involved and is identified as a Mountain Cattlemen, that the Association gives full support.

The reasons behind the success of this motion at the Executive meeting included the dangerous precedent and implications for all country people that this particular case presents. It appears that an extension of the R.S.P.C.A. stand on this issue could make it extremely difficult for all people who handle animals and especially those who are faced with a problem of a sick or injured animal in the more remote areas of the State. As an example, horse parties travelling through National Parks, by law, are unable to carry a firearm.

Because of the general principles involved with this case the members of the M.C.A.V. intend to emphasise, if they have to comment, that the Association was not officially involved or implicated in the incident, but they support the general principle involved with putting down animals in pain - in difficult

circumstances - by whatever method is at hand, provided the method is efficient and humane, and is recognised as an historically accepted method of putting down an ill or injured animal.

"ALPINE AREA, PLANNING PROPOSALS - A BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT"

The following is a Summary Statement of Concerns of the M.C.A.V. to this document released recently by the Minister for Conservation Forests and Lands. This is the latest in the push by the Government to have most of the high country declared a national park, and apart from affecting the Mountain Cattlemen, it should also cause grave concern to anyone interested in forestry, horse riding, skiing, camping, and general recreation in the Alps. The "Alpine Area, Planning Proposals - A Basis for Management" document is open for public comment until August 31st, 1987. We URGE ALL Associate members to urgently obtain a copy of this document and to write a submission commenting on the areas which cause the most concern. Submissions should be posted to:

The Manager,  
Alpine Planning Project,  
4 Ireland Street,  
BRIGHT. 3741.

Copies of the Planning Proposals can be obtained from:  
Conservation, Forests & Lands Regional Offices at - Alexandra,  
Traralgon, Orbost, Bairnsdale and Wodonga or:

Information Centre,  
Department Conservation Forests & Lands,  
240 Victoria Parade,  
EAST MELBOURNE.

A large volume of submissions is expected from conservation interests, and it is VITAL that a balanced view is put by other sections of the community. The M.C.A.V. is relying heavily on its supporters to put in submissions and to support the Association in this exercise.

**MOUNTAIN CATTLEMENS ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA  
SUMMARY STATEMENT OF CONCERNS ABOUT THE  
ALPINE AREA, PLANNING PROPOSALS - A BASIS FOR MANAGEMENT**

**INTRODUCTION**

Given the importance of the proposals to the future of the Alpine Area and the limited time in which to prepare comments, the Mountain Cattlemens Association of Victoria would like to draw to your attention some matters which, it believes, need careful consideration.

**A DE-FACTO NATIONAL PARK BY REGULATION**

The main area of concern relates to the clear intention of the Government to ignore the Parliament of Victoria and to seek to establish a de-facto Alpine National Park, contiguous with the Parks in NSW, and with a National Parks style management regime.

Last year, all the Shires adjoining the Alpine Area voted strongly to oppose the proposed contiguous Alpine National Park, and a delegation from the Shires met with the Government on the issue.

It is clearly stated in the foreword of the document that it is Government policy to have the Alpine Area proclaimed as a National Park and that the funding for the preparation of the proposals came from the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. It is also stated that an 'agreement has been reached between the State and Federal authorities to develop a co-operative and co-ordinated approach to management of the Australian Alps National Parks.'

Clearly the Victorian Government is seeking to by-pass the decision of the Victorian Parliament not to establish a Victorian Alpine National Park and is attempting to create it by regulation.

A National Park style management regime imposes severely restrictive regulations which will have an impact on the recreational, social,

economic and resource usage of this area. The MCAV considers that while tight regulation may be suitable for small sections of the Alps, the use of the wider Alpine Area needs to be encouraged and developed and that it could become a major Australian tourist and diverse industry area. The MCAV considers that these matters need careful examination in order to ensure that the local and wider communities are not too seriously inhibited in their future use of this area.

Items of particular concern are;

**1 Winter Management - page 14**

An additional and restrictive winter management regime could have a serious impact on the future development of winter recreation activities. It appears that proposals from conservation interests have been included in the section on winter management without balancing this with an input from commercial and other interests.

**2 The Purchase of Additional Areas - page 21**

It is proposed that management would extend to private land adjacent to the alpine area and that consideration would be given to purchasing key areas. Restrictive land use controls could devalue property values to the point that their purchase would become a 'fait accompli'.

**3 Fire Protection - page 33**

Fire protection proposals need to be carefully examined together with issues such as access for firefighters and the positive effects of grazing on reducing fire hazards.

**4 The Effect of Grazing - page 37**

The stated effects of grazing are inaccurate and incorrect.

**5 Introduced Animals - page 39**

The control of wild dogs needs to be in line with the proven activities of the Department of Conservation, Forests and Lands and local experience.

#### **6 Brumbies - page 41**

There is a need to control numbers of brumbies and the proposed regulations on running brumbies are too restrictive - especially the proposal to limit the licences to groups and clubs.

#### **7 Pest Plants - page 45**

The control of pest plants and blackberry in particular does need to be stressed in any management plan.

#### **8 Wilderness - page 52**

The proposals include vague statements such as, 'Wilderness areas will be defined in the alpine area.' The extension of such areas would be inappropriate. This vagueness is characteristic throughout the document and may leave the way open to abuse by future bureaucrats.

#### **9 Tracks - page 53**

It is inappropriately proposed that use of some tracks, which were established as bridle tracks and continue to provide public access, should be restricted to walkers only.

#### **10 Cross Country Skiing - page 59**

Proposals in this area seem to seek to restrict the activity rather than to encourage its safe and appropriate development as an income earning tourist venture and a pleasurable experience for the public. It appears that the views of only one section of the cross country fraternity have been included in the proposal.

#### **11 Horse Riding - page 64**

Horse riding is also an income earning tourist activity and a pleasurable public recreational activity that needs to be encouraged within appropriate guidelines rather than restricted out of existence. The present proposals are far too restrictive for the wider Alpine Area, but may be suitable for smaller areas within present National Parks.

**12 Vehicle Use - page 75**

There will be an increase in recreational driving in the area and consideration should be given to the funding of road maintenance from sources such as the fuel taxes rather than seeking to limit the access of the public.

**13 Deer Hunting - page 80**

The hunting of deer is an important issue as it relates to the control of numbers and the control of diseases such as TB and Brucellosis. If hunting is too restricted the MCAV fear that the deer population will explode and that this will damage the environment and possibly become another problem for adjoining landowners.

**14 Firearms - page 82**

Recent experience has clearly indicated the need for cattlemen and horse parties to be permitted to carry a firearm. At present these groups are not permitted to carry firearms in National Parks.

**15 Camping - page 91**

Camping is another income earning tourist activity that must be facilitated and encouraged within appropriate guidelines rather than restricted to the extent that tourists will seek their recreation in other areas of the State.

**16 Huts - page 100**

The MCAV supports the proposition that a public land licensee will have a prior right to the use of a hut built or maintained for the purpose of their licence. The MCAV would, of course, not seek exclusive use of the huts. It needs to be recognised that the cattlemen do accept the task of cleaning and maintaining their huts which, have on occasions been left by others in a filthy condition.

**17 Search and Rescue - page 104**

The MCAV is concerned that the proposals do not acknowledge the assistance in search and rescue operations that has been provided by mountain cattlemen and other private individuals over many years.

**18 Information and Education - page 107**

The MCAV generally supports an educational approach to the management of the alpine area rather than an approach that relies on regulation and restriction.

**19 Commercial Tours - page 110**

Commercial tours in the Alps will become a major income earning activity in the area and the MCAV considers that action should be taken to form the operators into a group with a view to establishing operating guidelines and self-regulation. The franchising and licencing of reputable operators by the Government would assist the industry develop. Recommendations from Shire Councils along these lines could be of assistance to the fledgling alpine tour industry.

**20 Tourism - page 112**

The MCAV considers that tourism should be supported and encouraged but it should not be permitted to lessen the importance of existing resource uses such as grazing and logging.

**21 Grazing - page 117**

The MCAV is concerned that in this section there is no comment on the environmental or economic value of cattle grazing and that it is incorrectly presumed that in all cases the sight of cattle diminishes the visual amenity of the area. Mustering is not even mentioned but this does have a tourism aspect of some value to the area. Additionally some of the statistics on page 118 misrepresent the situation.

**22 Timber Harvesting page 120**

The use of renewable resources should be supported and areas should be considered for continual logging in the Alps. The Government has a policy to phase out all logging in the Alpine area.

**23 Mining - page 125**

The value to the area and to the nation needs to be considered in relation to mining. The refusal to grant a permit to mine high quality marble at Limestone Creek near Berriambra is an example of what can

happen in a 'proposed National Park'.

**24 Staff Resources - page 131**

The National Parks management structure being imposed on the area is of concern. Given the enormous size of the area and the inability of the Government to fund an adequate number of staff, people with local experience should be encourage to assist in management responsibilities.

**25 Management Units - page 134**

The management units should be examined to ensure that they do not conflict with existing boundaries of established authorities such as local government.

**CONCLUSION**

The alpine area is a national asset. It is not the exclusive preserve of conservationist bureaucrats. There needs to be a much greater input by other people with long experience with the sociology, economics and environment of the area including local government, the tourist industry and other industries which have worked in and around the area for many years.

The Alpine Area planning proposals are causing the MCAV concern because they are too vague and omit many important facts.

The MCAV urges local authorities, groups and individuals to accept the responsibility provided by local experience to be involved in planning proposals for the management of the area.

Finally, it is accepted that some updating of management is necessary but not to the extent of imposing rigid and restrictive regulations over the whole Alpine Area. Is a de-facto Alpine National Park to be created by default and deception?

**MOUNTAIN CATTLEMENS ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA**



THE MOUNTAIN CATTLEMENS SHOP - ROYAL MELBOURNE SHOW.

The Royal Show is on again - 17th to 27th September, and once again we will be taking our shop for the duration. Last year the shop was a dramatic success, both financially, and more importantly to provide a focal point at the Royal Show where the public could come to talk to Mountain Cattlemen and learn a little about what the Cattlemen are fighting for. This of course is all leading up to a CRY FOR HELP!!! The shop needs people to sell the goods and talk to the public. We will have to open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Please consider whether you could spend some time helping at the Show. Last year all the volunteers had a most enjoyable and rewarding time. This year we will need at least five people on duty each day of the Show - free passes are issued to volunteers.

PLEASE CONTACT SUE SILVERS - TELEPHONE (03) 857 5316 OR 13 TUXEN STREET, NORTH BALWYN 3104 AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IF YOU CAN SPARE A COUPLE OF HOURS DURING ANY OF THE DAYS.

It really is a lot of fun, and once again there will be Cattlemen in attendance to talk to the public. Branch Secretaries will shortly be advised of the days each Branch is rostered to provide one of their members.

THE BUSH DINNER DANCE - 11th JULY.

WOW!! After a rather shaky start with very slow ticket sales which caused a fair amount of nervous tension around Forest Hill way, the Dance finally took off with over 650 tickets being sold before the night, and a further 20 at the door. IT WAS A GREAT SUCCESS. Congratulations and thanks to Annie Whittam who loves organizing these monster fund-raisers for the M.C.A.V.!! She can certainly take a well earned rest after this successful night. The Cobbers played great music, and got everybody dancing. The spit roast dinner provided by The Spit Roast Catering Company was absolutely delicious and most beautifully presented. A giant raffle went on, and on, and on... and we would like to thank the following for their most generous donations as prizes:

Thomas Cook Clothing Co. for an oilskin coat;  
Stampede Ranch, Boronia for a Swandri over-shirt;  
John Cook and family for a stockwhip;

Leo Myers, Bairnsdale Horse Centre for a knife,  
 Saddle Up, Ringwood for a \$50 gift voucher;  
 Peter Kennedy & Son for 6 halters;  
 Morrissions, South Yarra for a hat;  
 High Country Clothing Store, Lilydale for 2 hats.

Other prizes were donated by the Whittam family, Ross Brown,  
 and the M.C.A.V.

Rusty Connley was presented with a surprise 50th birthday cake  
 so we all know how old he is, and when his birthday is, but we are  
 sorry to have to tell Rusty that he must not expect such a birthday  
 party each year!

Highlights of the night will form part of a documentary being  
 made about the Mountain Cattlemen, some of you may have been  
 wondering what the lights, camera and sound equipment was all  
 about.

Thanks to everybody who helped, especially the usual generous  
 gang who were present to help setting up the hall, and cleaning  
 up afterwards, the famous Whittam Gang, the Cooks and Joe Jury,  
 what would we ever do without them.

FOUND at the Dance a little girl's blue and brown western shirt.  
 Contact Annie Whittam - 878 7536.

INTRODUCTION OF STANDARD RENEWAL DATE FOR SUBSCRIPTIONS TO  
 JULY 31ST EACH YEAR.

Now that the Associate member numbers has become so large, and  
 in fact grows every week, administration and book-keeping has  
 become an onerous task. We are very fortunate to now have the  
 use of a computer and Associate membership details are being  
 put into it as we write. The use of the computer will make  
 everything so much easier. We are now standardising the renewal  
 date for subscriptions to the 31st July in each year. Subscriptions  
 will be worked out on a pro rata basis for this year, and members  
 will shortly be advised of their fee for the period 31st July  
 1987 to 31st July 1988 with the appropriate adjustment.

PLEASE REMEMBER:

Annual General Meeting	18th September, 1987
Help for the Royal Show	Phone Sue Silvers, 857 5316

MOST IMPORTANT:

OBTAIN A COPY OF ALPINE AREA, PLANNING PROPOSALS - A BASIS FOR  
 MANAGEMENT AND WRITE YOUR SUBMISSION BEFORE 31ST AUGUST 1987.