

Association Denies Minister's Accusations

The Tasmanian National Parks Association Inc (TNPA) takes offence at the accusation made by Tourism, Parks and Heritage Minister Ken Bacon that our 'Protect our Protected Areas' Rally held on Friday 7th May was "another stunt organised by the Greens" as reported by 'The Mercury' Saturday 8th May.

The TNPA is not aligned or associated with any political party and the Rally we organised was no "stunt".

It was, Mr Bacon, a genuine, sincere protest by decent, honest people of Tasmania against your Government's policy of selling off Tasmania's 'Protected Areas' to 'developers' whose only interest in these areas is a return on their investment dollar.

The TNPA also takes offence at your accusation that the TNPA "has shown itself to be a 'Green' front group opposed to all development".

This, apart from being the 'catchcry' of those with nothing constructive to add to reasoned debate, is a further example of the empty rhetoric you and your Government use whenever your environmental record is challenged and an insult and slur against the membership of the TNPA and members of the wider community who support us, that I cannot let go unanswered.

The TNPA membership and, we believe, the vast majority of Tasmanians sincerely and genuinely believe that nature conservation, the reason they were set aside in the first place, must remain the priority in our 'Protected Areas'.

We must, indeed we have an obligation to, protect our native wildlife and its natural habitat in these areas, as there is nowhere else for them to go.

We sincerely and genuinely believe that 'developers' interested in exploiting these priceless areas for their own financial interests should not be given priority and as native wildlife has no voice of its own we will continue to stand up on its behalf.

You would also know, Mr Bacon, if you had agreed to meet with us as we have requested, that the TNPA has always promoted and encouraged development of commercial infrastructure outside of our 'Protected Areas' such as we see at Cradle Valley and Strahan and genuinely believe this is in the best interest of Tasmania's economic future and future Tasmanians, of all forms, we call it 'sustainable development'.

Surely if you think about it Mr Bacon you must be able to see that destroying what tourists come to Tasmania to see, to provide infrastructure for them, can only be described as craziness and unfortunately that is also the only way we can view your comment that building a massive 80 cabin, plus lodge etc commercial tourism

development in the South West National Park will enable more people to access our famous wilderness areas!

What exactly is your definition of a wilderness area Mr Bacon?

While your Government, and your 'big end of town' supporters who appear to have your ear, may be more interested in exploiting all that makes Tasmania unique for short-term returns, please Mr Bacon don't insult or deride those of us ordinary Tasmanians who are not.

Greg Wood
Tasmanian National Parks Association Inc.