

## FROM THE COMMITTEE

2012 is well and truly on its way. The committee are concentrating on getting historic bridle trails identified and mapped. They are working in collaboration with the local NPWS officers. It is anticipated that this project could be finalised by the end of this financial year if the present level of cooperation of sharing information continues between members & the NPWS.

All members are encouraged to advise AFA committee of any historic tracks that require mapping and keeping open. If the old tracks are not identified they will be lost as the “green” political train progresses to close public access to public land.

The committee would like to also thank the volunteers and the NPWS staff who assisted with the recent cleaning of the Corn Trail.

Enclosed with this newsletter are our new revised AFA stickers. Thank you to those who provided professional advice (at no cost to AFA) regarding registration of our trademark. We will be sending this newsletter via e-mail as well, if you receive it by Australia Post also and would prefer it by e-mail only please advise, otherwise you will be receiving it both ways in the future.

The NPWS are reviewing the NPWS Horse Management Policy. ...find it on the NPWS website or at your closest NPWS office, spread it far & wide amongst horse user groups so comments can be considered. AFA are hoping to get the opportunity to review & make comment on the new draft document before it is finalised.



Members may have heard on the news of the Federal Government's intervention into the Victorian State Government's decision of allowing the trial of cattle back into the High Country in Victoria.



Browsing, to find information on the subject, proved that this ongoing battle must be so frustrating to those families fighting for their heritage to continue. Since 1982 The Mountain Cattlemen's Association of Victoria has been battling with governments to allow cattle back into the High Country. The subject has been a political football and the green vote has used it for photo opportunities, arrogantly dismissing the longstanding connection of generations of cattle families and the Alpine country. Some of these families can boast 150 years of continuous experience working with cattle and the high country environment. They stand for all of us in the battle to keep our access through our heritage to our National Parks.

Using the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act the legality of the present cattle trial has been questioned by the National Parks Association who accuses it as a “thinly veiled attempt to dress it up as science”. The World National Parks Congress will be held in Melbourne in 2014 and reading between the lines those in government, who are supposed to manage our National Parks, are going to use the recent cattle trial as a “bad example” and argue with the present federal government that cattle would prevent the NP “sea to snow concept” as a threat to their quest for world

heritage listing which Bob Hawke's had proposed as Prime Minister in 1989.

Mr. Burke your federal minister for the Environment spent one hour inspecting the “cattle damage” used it as a photo opportunity then his convoy successfully managed to rip up the access track making it impassable. Shame someone did not take a photo of that!

“A Report to Parks” (April 1998) highlighted that previous assessments of the effects cattle have on the High Country were inadequate. RH Groves, a Senior Principal Research Scientist CSIRO, stated “an assessment of the scientific adequacy of grazing studies in Victoria high Country 1945 to 1998 recommends further research” and went on to mention how this research could be completed to have credibility for future management decisions of cattle & the High Country. His recommendations have been followed through by this recent trial of cattle. The full report can be found at [www.cowpaddock.com/CSIROreport.doc](http://www.cowpaddock.com/CSIROreport.doc).

It is time Geoff Mosley (and others like him), who wrote an article in the National Times (April 2011) which gives a history lesson of the National Parks from 1943 to 2006, accepted that their 50 years of experience is not enough to argue with the experience of generations of cattlemen. Geoff Mosley has by the way been a member of the Australian Conservation Foundation for 50yrs and was their Chief Executive Officer from 1973 to 1986. He makes comments on the present Victorian Liberal government of being “highly secretive”...could be they are learning a few tricks from experiences the floundering Australian Conservation Foundation ex-CEO has given us e.g. “The Wilderness Act”!

By the way the cattle scientific trial consists of 400 head of cattle over 6 sites covering 25,600 hectares (3.5% of the Alpine National Park) and continues until the end of the gracing season on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Trial results so far have been sent to Mr. Burke's department and no reply has been forthcoming.

The High Country family's heritage & resilience during this long time is inspiring & commendable and we must all try to help them in whatever way we can. Watch this space, they are considering walking, driving & riding on into Canberra....that sounds like something we could participate in maybe?



**CORN TRAIL & SHOEBRIDGE TRACK PUBLICATION** – Not too much to report. The tedious process of research continues.

**2012 DATES FOR AFA MEETINGS TO PLACE ON YOUR CALENDAR!**

14<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2012 – Special Meeting to prepare mapping of tracks. Venue: Moruya Bowling Club 6pm

31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2012 – Braidwood Servicemen's Club 10am

30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2012 – AGM. Venue & time to be announced

29<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012 – Venue & time to be announced

All members are welcome to attend any meetings. If you would like to hold a meeting in your area please

discuss this with the Chairman or an AFA committee member.

**MEMBERSHIPS FOR 2011-2012 – A reminder these are due.** Memberships are due for renewal at the beginning of each financial year. A renewal form was sent with Winter/Spring Newsletter 2011, if you have misplaced it please contact a committee member or print one from our website. Thank you to those who have paid their 2011-2012 membership. Membership fees remain the same for 2011-2012: Family \$20.00 Single \$10.00 Pensioner \$5.00 Cooperate/Business \$100.00 including GST.

**AFA Website:** Peter Kneen diligently updates our website, have a look one day when it is too miserable to go outside.

**AFA 2011 – 2012 COMMITTEE**



Chairman: Brian Clarke

Secretary: Joan Webb 48428047

Treasurer: Terry Hart 48422710

Asst. Treas. & M/ship recorder: Jeanette Hindmarsh 4847115

Vice Chairmen: Peter Kneen, Anthony Atkinson and Reg Webb

Publicity & Website Officers: Peter Smith & Peter Kneen

# ***ACCESS FOR ALL NEWSLETTER***



## **SUMMER EDITION**

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