

# HOLISTIC APPROACH NEEDED TO SAVE WILDLIFE HABITAT OR OUR WILDLIFE FACES ANNIHILATION

October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2006 Animals Australia AGM Trinity College, Melbourne University  
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As part of Melbourne 2030, there has been unprecedented, spiralling out of control, industrial and residential development, most of which has not subject to an environmental impact assessment for impact on native animals' habitat loss or their welfare. Consequently there has been an accompanying spate of wildlife disasters, in this frenzied push for population and economic growth. Injured, frightened, maimed, terrified kangaroos and joeys, displaced native animals trapped, disorientated and distressed are the result. Development is cutting a swathe through habitat leaving kangaroos and joeys stranded. No one is accepting responsibility for this unfolding tragedy and wildlife is paying the price.

**To demonstrate how perilous the situation is for wildlife throughout Australia, proposed laws to reduce red tape and give developers more certainty in environmentally sensitive areas were introduced in Federal Parliament October 12, 2006.**

In Melbourne, a protest action was held outside Opposition Leader Ted Baillieu's Electorate: The Liberals contribution to protecting Victoria's wildlife is to create a kangaroo killing industry, introduce a 'multi-kill' hunting license, encourage 4WD access to forests, and put cattle back into the high country.

## **Between May 2002 and November 2003, a Sustained Massacre of eastern grey kangaroos took place at Puckapunyal Military Area (PMA) in Central Victoria**

Pam Ahern asked Seymour MP Ben Hardman for help- He wrote July 2, 2003 to the Hon John Thwaites : "Would you please investigate the possibility of the establishment of wildlife corridors as an additional tool for the management of the kangaroo population around the Military Area?"

### **The reply signed by The Hon John Thwaites came a month later 5 August 2003:**

"Vegetation condition assessment research indicates that continued kangaroo grazing pressure is placing important plant species at risk of localised extinction."

'Development of wildlife corridors in the Puckapunyal area would not ameliorate the *problem* due to the existing high population of Eastern Grey Kangaroos in the adjoining areas. As you may be aware my Department issues Authorities to Control Wildlife, under the Wildlife Act 1975, to a number of landowners in the area to reduce the impact on pastures, fences and crops. Creation of wildlife corridors is likely to increase the area of refuge for local kangaroos which will feed on the adjoining farm land.'

We replied to Minister Thwaites June 8<sup>th</sup> 2004: as follows:

***"We are amazed you have been advised that kangaroo's activity is creating this damage, when it is cattle that caused so much damage to the Greytown property, that they had to be moved to Puckapunyal. Trees were ring-barked, vegetation trampled and destroyed water areas decimated and fouled the result of over grazing by hard-hooved cattle!"***

***Kangaroos don't cause this damage to the ecosystem. Cattle do, particularly to marginal farming land such as the fragile eco-system at Puckapunyal. Of even more concern is that DSE allowed this to happen during one of the worst droughts on record and then blamed the damage on kangaroos, a native species struggling to survive in a hostile environment of phalaris grass, army activities and a campaign to discredit them.***

***A full assessment and independent audit re: Puckapunyal is essential if we are to establish the truth and ensure there has not been a cover-up. Phalaris grass is toxic to kangaroos as well as posing a serious fire risk; yet it is widely planted to feed cattle and prevent soil erosion.***

DSE is obligated to protect kangaroos by the original intent of the Wildlife Act 1975 under Victorian Law: *but political expediency, manipulation, regulations, changes and an Authority to Control Wildlife make a mockery of the process.*

At present wildlife *may* be considered under three separate Government Bodies: all of which fail to take into consideration the behavioural needs of wildlife, especially kangaroos.

- Planning
- Native Vegetation
- Reserve Systems

Agriculture and catering to farmers, no matter how marginal and unproductive they are, is number one priority. Sadly, wildlife doesn't even get a mention. A holistic solution is essential if we are to save our Wildlife Heritage, with the immediate establishment of Wildlife Corridors all linked, connected and continuous.

### **'Skippy Now In the Fast Lane' by Kelly Ryan reported in Herald Sun July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

"The story about how urban sprawl has overtaken a mob of kangaroos, marooning them between a rapidly growing industrial estate and Hume Highway bustle, captured the hearts and minds of Melbourne. Once free to bound in a grassy area far from suburbia. the eastern greys have been boxed into an almost waterless, grassless wasteland about 400m x 200m). Somerton factory workers alarmed by the animals' plight are angry their calls have so far gone unheeded". Page 5 full page story, colour photo of Rod Stoner & kangaroo joey in full flight

**"The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) asked if we wanted a permit to cull them. RSPCA, DSE and Hume Council said there was nothing they could do. I tried RACV hoping they'd treat the roos as a road issue and therefore deserving of immediate attention."** Construction of Roxburgh Park and rapid business development in the vicinity threaten the roos' existence. "We aren't willing to sit down and watch as these refugee roos are taken out cruelly, one by one, by trucks speeding in and out." Rod Stoner accused various governments of 'handballing Somerton's roos more than happened in the 1970 Grand Final. The problem's not going to go away and it is cruel and inhumane to stand back and let them become road kill." the safety officer said. **"There are joeys, and mums with joeys in their pouches, and to just sit back and turn a blind eye isn't environmentally responsible."**

"A spokesperson for Environment Minister John Thwaites said the question of relocation would be decided this week. **Thinning out part of the population might also be given consideration**".

I got a quick letter to the Herald Sun- which featured the following Monday July 17<sup>th</sup>

***"Show Empathy, roos were here first"***

***'Stranded- kangaroos roam around Somerton industrial site'***

**'Kelly Ryan's account of the tragic reality of kangaroos trapped in Somerton's suburban sprawl reveals the lack of empathy by politicians and bureaucrats ("Skippy Now in the Fast Lane," July 14<sup>th</sup> 2006). An urgent solution to a problem that gets worse as each day passes is needed. The Department of Sustainability and Environment's state-wide solution to "kill the bastards" is unacceptable.'**

**"We seek...no we demand...the urgent establishment of continuous, connecting wildlife corridors throughout Victoria so kangaroos can travel and live unharried and safe in their natural habitat. Start from national parks, linked to reserves, linked to sanctuaries, linked to the many private landholders and farmers who share their land with kangaroos, linked to other safety zones all linked and continuous."**

**When Victoria gets it right, we can tell the rest of Australia how it should be done."**

August 7<sup>th</sup>, I met with zoologist Dr Graeme Coulson at Melbourne University seeking his help for the Somerton kangaroos and wildlife corridors. Aware of the situation, his Post Graduate student Sumi Vasudevan was already working on it. Translocation, as suggested by Minister Thwaites'

spokesperson is a last resort. 'It takes time and planning and is not without risk, Graeme said. He went on "... **there once was a corridor for the kangaroos**' '**we should have seen this coming**' '**how has it come to this**'? '**It shouldn't have gotten to this point!**'

The current situation is untenable for the mob of 24 kangaroos, living on the edge, boxed in by road traffic with no signage to say slow down, harassment by dogs and people – Over the past 8 years, development has resulted in **only 16% of original kangaroo habitat remaining**. Hume Council Infrastructure Director Wal Lawson said "...**council was not responsible for the kangaroos' welfare.**"

At the Australian Wildlife Protection Council AGM August 27<sup>th</sup>, a Coalition for Wildlife Corridors, (CWC) was formed and is actively working with the Property Manager of a large corporation to obtain safe haven for the kangaroos in the Somerton area, short term.

Other danger hot spots emerged. Head Ranger George Paras La Trobe Reserve said kangaroos **need more signage as it has been proven that where there are signs with a speed limit of 40-50 km there are no fatalities or incidents.** A Strategic View of How Open Spaces Link Up As Perceived by the Kangaroos" is needed to pin point precisely where the corridors are, how they must be continuous, connecting and linked as one big major corridor to protect kangaroo mobs and provide safe passage. La Trobe has one large connected population that travels long distances – they are Wards of the State in Law- belong to the Crown owned by Victoria.

Pat Vaughan Environment Officer Banyule- has tried unsuccessfully for two years to have signage installed in a new housing estate to protect a resident population of kangaroos at frequent crossings. Then October 6<sup>th</sup> ~a kangaroo was killed in Kingsbury Drive (and sent to the lab to be dissected! "No regrets for the poor kangaroo." Vivienne Ortego wrote)

We met September 22, 2006 with the Manager Environmental Services Vic Roads, Sharon MacDonnell seeking help and the need to have signage at Kingsbury Drive, citing my conversation with George Paras. Do we blame Vic Roads? They knew Kingsbury Drive was a hot spot and did nothing. They do not care enough about kangaroos. That is the problem; no one in government seems to care. Where is the political will when there are no obvious votes or something in it for the political parties, except to do the right thing? We see glossy booklets telling us what they propose yet little or nothing is done short term to help kangaroo mobs. We need signage/ speed limits at hot spots like those at schools 40 km We need slogans on Bumper Stickers to educate children and drivers. Kangaroos belong here too and deserve respect. **SLOW DOWN - ROO TOWN or SLOW THE PACE - ROOS' PLACE** - campaign by DSE Officer Tracy Pennington based in Anglesea DSE - great girl who loves wildlife.

Six Resolutions passed unanimously at the Australian Wildlife Protection AGM 27.9.06 that

1. *Victoria should lead the way for wildlife protection*
2. *we form a coalition concerned to advance the retention and creation of wildlife corridors in urban areas, particularly in those outer suburban areas now subject to industrial/commercial and/or residential development threatening native fauna and flora*
3. *we seek immediate help from the Minister for Planning /Attorney General Rob Hulls and Environment Minister John Thwaites to establish interconnecting and continuous wildlife corridors linking National Parks, reserves, sanctuaries, private land*
4. *DSE allocate adequate resources to provide for the health and welfare of native animals, including kangaroos, who are an essential part of biodiversity*
5. *in the light of rapid development and habitat loss, we insist on the dissemination of information to all Victorians to make sure they are aware of the threats to kangaroos and other wildlife species so that wildlife corridors are established as a matter of urgency*
6. *we seek a Special Projects GRANT for a Wildlife Corridor Coordinator to identify logistics and strategies for creation of a blue print and its implementation.*

\*\*\* Animals Australia 2006 AGM passed unanimously ~ *all future Australian planning projects must include an environmental impact assessment to protect wildlife habitat and the welfare of native animals, before any planning approval is given.* \*\*\*

**Hot Spots - Whittlesea, Mill Park, Bundoora, Darebin, Banyule, Devil Bend, Greens Bush – Whittlesea** Kangaroo mobs near Mc Donald and Plenty Rd in South Morang are being spooked by development due to expansion of Plenty Valley shopping centre, now Bunnings and Westfield Shopping complex will be built. Mill Park has emerged as a hot spot for displaced, disorientated, traumatised kangaroos **Some land is supposed to be left for the kangaroos.** Whittlesea Council told Debbi Lee they instructed developers to provide for the kangaroos but there is no wildlife corridor to which the kangaroos can safely escape and development has closed in.

**Bundoora** - there are at least 500 kangaroos in and around Bundoora freeway area, in Plenty road opposite RMIT at the old Janefield complex. Animal Rescue Service Operator. Nigel Williamson said: I have attended on 3 occasions over the past 3 weeks to 3 kangaroos hit by cars, one with a broken hip. He had to wait over 3 hours for Police to destroy it. **Kangaroo mobs** are under threat at MAB University Hill development off Plenty Road, Bundoora

### **Animal Movement and habitat connectivity: can we design permeable roads?**

Ecologist Dr Dan Ramp UNSW says “Roads prevent animals from moving freely through the landscape, affecting normal behaviour and preventing access to feeding and breeding areas. For Australia’s large mammals, such as kangaroos, wallabies, wombats and emus, roads present an extensive problem. Our current level of understanding of how these species are impacted by roads, as barriers and as causes of mortality is extremely poor. Researchers in Europe and the USA have been pioneering the development of knowledge bases and mitigation technologies. They set a fine example of how Australia should be approaching this issue, integrating road managers, wildlife managers, local land-holders and academic researchers to properly address concerns.

**And it isn’t just roads; the threats to wildlife are many and varied.**

### **Global Warming threatens Big Red.**

In his book 'Country', Dr Tim Flannery provides an urgent warning about the negative impact of global warming on red kangaroo fertility. A 1980 study by Alan Newsome, shows that low male fertility results from heat stress on the testicles of Reds which have moved to treeless and shadeless plains. A CSIRO Report warned of a *6 degree* increase in warming in Australia and the dire implications of that for the Red Kangaroo.

" Newsome's study provided a valuable insight on how delicately **balanced** life is on this continent, and how easy it is to damage its creatures. It also filled me with fear for the future of the large kangaroos in the face of global warming,"

### **Climate Change warnings were there 20 years ago but few listened~ wildlife pays**

The authors of the **1988** CSIRO book, “Greenhouse: Planning For Climate Change” make it clear that the threats extend to the Red, Eastern and Western Grey Kangaroos. As kangaroo populations gradually shift in response to climate change, Professor A. R. Main sees them being subject to increased demands for control (killing). For example, kangaroos respond to normal dry conditions by congregating along roads where moisture and run off supports the last ‘green pick’. This makes kangaroos more obvious, often leading to the perception that their numbers have increased. Calls for increased killing frequently follow.

In the Chapter, ‘The Consequences of Climatic Change for Seventy Percent of Australia,’ Drs RD Graetz, BH Walker, and PA Walker are more specific. The Authors predict a reduction in tree cover in the rangelands from between 30-70% to less than 10%. **This will make large areas of the present stronghold of kangaroos unsuitable to the Eastern Grey**

## Drought

For the first time since after Federation in 1902, the whole nation has...been hit by drought, from WA to SA, through the eastern states and to Queensland. Victoria has been in drought for 10 years. The 1992 AWPC publication '**Kangaroos our Wildlife Heritage ~ Not an Exploitable Resource**' says on page 50 'During such droughts the process of natural selection is most important as the animals surviving these conditions are the most suited to Australia's harsh environment.' But the kangaroo industry rolls on and farmers seek cull permits which DSE and wildlife authorities who should be protecting the kangaroos, oblige.

Newsome wrote in 1965 "Kangaroo populations suffer dramatically during drought. Australians have been convinced (since childhood) that the species is indestructible and in fact, continues to reproduce, even during drought. This is a fallacy." Contrary to media reports, kangaroos do not keep reproducing and suffer greatly due to poor body condition and associated stresses."

Richard Jones former MLC NSW wrote: Recurring droughts have continued to decimate kangaroo populations in NSW and professional shooters throughout Australia are leaving the business because they can't find enough animals to shoot. A brief visit out west would tell you the real story. The kangaroo industry is in crisis. Large numbers of females are being shot now. Back in the 60 and 70s most of those shot were large males. One estimate is that up to 80% of kangaroos shot in Queensland are now females. The ratio in NSW is much higher now. Huge numbers of the next generation are being killed along with their mothers.

## Persistent shooting for export skins/ meat insidious threat to kangaroo populations

Pat O'Brien writes "In NSW, SA, WA, and Qld, dozens of chiller boxes have closed as kangaroo populations shrink. **Every State has large areas of quasi-extinction (regional extinction). Many shooters have left the Industry altogether.** In NSW there was once over 3000 licensed full time shooters. Now only a half a dozen are full time, 2000 odd shooters remain part time, the rest of them have given the game away, and the part timers now only shoot occasionally at the weekend. Although the Government still insists there are 25 million kangaroos in Australia, even the kangaroo shooters can't find them!"

## Kangaroos killed as a resource

- The Federal Government subsidises a brutally cruel and unsustainable kangaroo killing industry. Over 30,000,000 million kangaroos have been killed as a resource in the past decade. The tragic little by-products, are the 3,000,000 abandoned joeys that die of panic, fear, starvation or predation (300,000 each year). To their shame, Australians must accept that they are responsible for the largest wildlife slaughter on earth.
- The Federal Government's recently issued RIRDC operational plans for 2006-7 list more than 40 new animal-based industries, including native turtles and exports of kangaroo meat to China.

## In 2001 Animals Australia Executive Director Glenys Oogjes wrote

**"FOI Reveals Roo Rort"** When you hear the kangaroo industry defending their slaughter of kangaroos for profit, be angry that taxpayer funds are being used. Much of the project is focussed on 'generating positive mainstream media coverage' and Mr John Kelly will be available to 'counter any anti-industry campaigns as they occur.'

In an overview of the Lenah Consultancy project, Mr Kelly advises that 'Ongoing public 'up imaging' of the kangaroo industry is necessary to counter the continued efforts to denigrate it by radical animal liberationists.' Volume 9 Number 1 2001 Animals Today page 9

### **Kangaroos are Fugitives in Their Own Land**

The phrase was coined in **1969** by founder of the Australian Wildlife Protection Council, Arthur Queripel. Kangaroos were widespread and abundant at the time of early settlement. Today they are relentlessly pursued for short term gain.

### **Australian Conservation Foundation Draft Policy Supports Utilisation of Terrestrial Native Fauna ~ No Vote for 2006 Victorian Council for First time in ACF History**

A magnificent Red kangaroo graced the 1983 cover of the ACF 'Habitat' & editorialised: "**Killing a Kangaroo Every Ten Seconds - Is our National Conscience Extinct?**"

The highly regarded Dr Geoff Mosley was then Director and remains an ACF Councillor.

Rosslyn Beeby wrote in 'The Canberra Times' August 16<sup>th</sup> ***Roo Harvest Plan Splits Environment Group***. A Draft Policy to support the commercial harvesting of native wildlife has opened a bitter split with Dr Mosely angrily describing the organisations' new draft policy ***Utilisation of Terrestrial Native Fauna*** as "absolutely appalling, totally unnecessary and a betrayal of the ACF's origins." Formed in **1966** by CSIRO ecologist Francis Radcliffe and Chief Justice of the High Court, Sir Garfield Barwick as its first President, the ACF strongly opposed commercial harvesting of kangaroos and other native species.

The former Vice President, the late Dr Peter Rawlinson, was a high profile national spokesman, declaring there was '**no legal or democratic mandate for a kangaroo industry' and commercial exploitation of wildlife 'should never be contemplated.'**

University of NSW ecologist Dr Dan Ramp said "The argument that harvesting is a kinder way to control populations during drought is utter rubbish. These animals have evolved with a landscape that adjusts to their grazing pressures. They go through boom and bust cycles. That's part of what they do to survive,' he said.

### **Kangaroos are integral to the ecological health of Australia**

The soft padded feet and long tail of the kangaroo are integral to the ecological health of the land as regenerators of native grasses. Kangaroos have been living harmoniously and in balance with their environment for millions of years. They are perfectly adapted for their natural habitat. Any seedling that falls into the long-tapering footprint of the kangaroo is buried into the hole left by the toenail. Covered and with moisture concentrated at one point, the germinated seedling has a chance of survival. Their tail drags along behind them while they are grazing, pressing the ground, rolling seeds into the earth. Kangaroos play an undeniable part in biological diversity and ecological integrity. "**Where is the research to show their true value? Why don't people care?**" asks Susie Rowe, Narrandera NSW farmer.

Unsustainable, destructive agricultural practices on marginal, uneconomic land, native vegetation/tree clearing have degraded Australia, which is divided into kangaroo killing zones. Wherever kangaroos go they are killed as pests. Commercial zones in NSW cover the entire state west of Dubbo, and in December 2003, the NPWS opened up 5 new commercial zones around Canberra to commercial killing for the first time despite kangaroo numbers across the state plummeting to their lowest in more than 20 years. NSW NPWS admitted in its report that it relied on anecdotal evidence in some cases to estimate how big populations were in the new zones. The Barrier Daily Truth reported January 12, 2004 that kangaroo populations had crashed by 50-75% due to drought and other factors "**Too Few Roos To Go Around.**"

Kangaroos are the soul and spirit of Australia, this ancient continent, the driest most fragile on earth; they are undeniably the most recognised tourist symbol in the world, second only to the Statue of Liberty. They are loved by tourists around the world, but maligned, blamed misunderstood, betrayed, and demonised in Australia, due to our past colonial mentality, based on myths 'If it moves, shoot it, if it doesn't chop it down'.

**The official policy of the Commonwealth Government is** “Australian native wildlife is a renewable resource. If managed in an ecologically sustainable manner, wildlife can provide a perpetual source of economic benefits for all Australians.” **Cruelty is rife. Many suspect corruption and collusion; the kangaroo industry is not monitored or policed at the point of slaughter where cruelty breaches occur. No one takes responsibility for these ‘oversights’, and profit is the operative word.**

### **Australia’s leaders and the Media play a part**

Australia’s leaders hide behind a protective wall of propaganda and irresponsible legislation, so that a few may gain from the death of a species. Australia has the world’s highest rate of extinctions but there is no shame, only apathy about this appalling record.

To counteract the lies, and propaganda, in 2005 the Australian Wildlife Protection Council published *Kangaroos Myths and Realities* which was launched in the NSW Parliament Theatre in Sydney and at Melbourne University by Patron Peter Singer in March 2006.

### **‘DSE entrenched colonial culture prevails’ - Kanga Cull Shot Down in Protest**

Short staffed, permits issued by DSE have soared and are issued on an ad hoc basis as the calls to kill (cull) flood in. ***Throughout Victoria kangaroo mobs are in crisis.*** The deeply entrenched colonial mentality ‘culture’ within DSE, of unabashedly appeasing the farmers and landholders, still prevails. Only recently a permit was issued to Andrew Pelgrim, marketing manager of Caulfield Grammar at Yarra Junction who claimed the kangaroos were grazing in the school grounds, eating pasture required for its livestock, and further he said that the numbers of kangaroos had increased dramatically over the past six years. This was all the evidence that DSE Officer Tom Thuys needed and he gave the go ahead to kill the kangaroos. When it was revealed by Peter Preuss, and other locals that kangaroo numbers remained the same and drought made them more obvious, the permit was withdrawn. But without the community outcry, the kangaroos would be dead.

Do we have mappings of kangaroo populations in geographic locations in Victoria? What do we know about kangaroo populations? The importance of seeing an aerial photo cannot be overestimated. It means we can see where the corridors are best linked, continuous and connecting to existing national parks, reserves etc. Our work in this area has only begun. Zoologist Malcolm Legg has surveyed 100 sites on the Mornington Peninsula and only 20 of these have resident kangaroo populations. This is a shocking state of affairs as calls to kill more kangaroos in Greens Bush, Cape Shank and other areas are heard loud and clear. **They are trapped by rapid development; predictably, calls to kill them for profit, ring out!**

### **Macropod expert Doug Reilly in ‘From Conservation to Exploitation in South Australia’**

“In any wild animal if you disrupt in a short period of time the normal reproductive processes that have evolved over tens of thousands of years you are in danger of putting the species at risk. Precedents have been set in other parts of the world where large populations of a species have faced extinctions after widespread and destructive ‘culling’ programs. Many of these species suffer incursions of exotic bacterias and viruses when their populations contained a critical and unsustainable gene pool.”

***“Where pastoralists (with sheep, cattle and crops) are in competition with any native animal, the government administrators always favour the land owner. Whatever native animal is involved, that animal is marked for destruction.”*** ‘The Kangaroo Betrayed’ 1999 page 37

### **Nowhere to release joeys**

One of the issues causing massive problems for wildlife carers is they have no where to release their hand raised joeys. It's a very severe problem on the Western side of the State around the Bendigo area. Most of the problems seem to be with shooting. Nothing is safe anymore unless they have access to some Park, but they cull on a regular basis, so what do the carers do? They say there is no room for the roo. Wildlife Corridors are a must!

### **Establishment of Wildlife Corridors are Essential to Save our Wildlife Heritage**

Until we accept the necessity of wildlife corridors linked, continuous and connected to existing national parks, reserves, sanctuaries, and private/public land, we will continue to put out fires. DSE will be criticised for issuing permits to kill kangaroos, when there are non-lethal, alternate solutions. We need to put our energies and expertise into establishing wildlife corridors as quickly as possible. There are sites all over Victoria that require linking and this is where all of us must direct our energies.

I attended the Opening of Warringine Reserve in Hastings October 10<sup>th</sup> by invitation of my MP for Hastings, Rosy Buchanan. Just that morning a kangaroo was killed in Bittern, a small township in the vicinity. The very busy Frankston Flinders Road provides a significant barrier to wildlife crossing in front of the Reserve, splitting it in two. There are only three kangaroos in the 60 acre Reserve and it urgently needs to link to **Devil Bend**. Kangaroos have no where to flee. Everywhere they go, they are trapped in fragmented areas of suburban hell at the mercy of dogs, humans, and roads.

I understand there are conflicting human views about the use of **Devil Bend**, on the Mornington Peninsula, now run by Parks Victoria ~ but the needs and requirements of wildlife should be top priority. Human uses should not even be in the mix if they conflict with the needs of wildlife. They have been traumatised and suffered long enough.

150 years ago our uniquely beautiful wildlife flourished on the Mornington Peninsula. Today, out of 100 sites surveyed, eastern grey kangaroos inhabit only 20. There are only 12 species which appear safe or fairly for the next few years but Eastern Grey Kangaroos and wombats are endangered, white-footed dunnart, long nosed bandicoots are extremely rare. This is an indictment on all those who contributed to this unfolding wildlife tragedy.

We would like to see a time when instead of continually putting out fires and reacting to the most appalling injustices inflicted on our native animals, that all our energies be directed towards providing wildlife corridors to ensure safe habitat. With such a united community purpose, DSE would no longer have to deal with disgruntled land holders and outraged, unforgiving wildlife protectionists.

We would like to see Victoria be the best in Australia, even the world. We read and hear about how much Europe, the USA and Canada are doing to save and protect their wildlife, but we can do just as well here, making our State of Victoria a Role Model for wildlife protection. Then we can show the rest of Australia how it should be done. It is an achievable goal.

### **FOR AND ON BEHALF OF THE COALITION FOR WILDLIFE CORRIDORS**

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