

Jervis Bay Regional Alliance

PO BOX 21
VINCENTIA 2540

The Hon. Mark Speakman SC MP,
52 Martin Place,
Sydney,
NSW 2000,
6th July 2016.

Re: Additions of Tomerong, Currumbene and Nowra State Forests and part of Yerriyong State Forest to the Jervis Bay protected area network

Dear Minister Speakman,

The Jervis Bay Regional Alliance (JBRA) is an environmental advocacy group covering the coast from Culburra Beach to Sussex Inlet and the catchments and ecosystems of Lake Wollumboola, Jervis Bay and St Georges Basin. The JBRA's charter includes advocacy for environmental, social and cultural heritage, as well as visual quality of the coast. BirdLife Shoalhaven are a regional branch of the national BirdLife Australia group, which in turn is part of the global BirdLife International organisation. The Australian Conservation Foundation works across society to influence transformative action to deliver lasting change and the Australian Orchid Council, founded in 1960, actively pursues the conservation of Australia's orchids on a national level.

This correspondence is to request a meeting with you at your convenience to discuss a tenure change for Tomerong, Nowra and Currumbene State Forests and the northern section of Yerriyong State Forest to National Park to progress conservation efforts in a particularly diverse part of NSW.

All areas are small. Tomerong is approximately 200 hectares and the northern section of Yerriyong approximately 1000. The combined area of the contiguous Currumbene and Nowra State Forests is 2200ha. Yet all areas are strategically important additions to the state reserve network to consolidate the east—west link between the coast and the hinterland (see map below), as identified as a priority in the NSW National Parks Establishment Plan.

The additions of these areas would significantly enhance connectivity values. Tomerong is adjacent to Woolamia Nature Reserve, and the relevant section of Yerriyong is bordered to the north by Parma Creek Nature Reserve and to the south by Jerrawangala National Park. Nowra and Currumbene State Forests abut the western extent of the northern portion of Jervis Bay National Park and Saltwater Swamp Nature Reserve to the north. These additions are all included in the Illawarra to Shoalhaven Great Eastern Ranges corridor, specifically the Tomerong and Currumbene focal corridors.

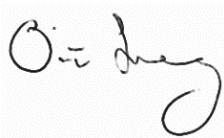
All areas contain multiple records of national and state-listed threatened species including yellow-bellied glider; greater glider (recently EPBC listed); masked owl; sooty owl; powerful owl; glossy-black cockatoo; spotted-tail quoll; green and gold bell-frog and biconvex paperbark. Although not on the BioNet, there are also multiple species of orchid occurring in Tomerong. It is our intention in the near future to further investigate the occurrence of gliders in Tomerong State Forest.

We note that Tomerong and Currumbene State Forests have current harvest plans and are therefore scheduled for logging at an unspecified date in future. **We ask for your urgent assistance to defer any planned logging in these areas until our proposal be considered.** Given the small size of these State Forests and their relative isolation from other State Forests the financial gain from logging

would be largely insignificant. There are no current harvest plans for the northern part of Yerriyong or Nowra.

You are no doubt aware that the Jervis Bay area is contained within the global biodiversity hotspot, Forests of East Australia and is home to highly localised species such as the eastern bristlebird and the Jervis Bay leek orchid. It is also one of the most visited areas in the state of NSW due to its natural beauty. It is our contention that the overwhelming importance of the flora and fauna of the area to the local economy justifies the attention and funds that the NPWS has devoted to the area. We are grateful for this attention and urge you to continue the consolidation of Jervis Bay national park. We hope that you agree that these additions are reasonably simple, yet logical and important additions to a key National Park and in keeping with the National Parks Establishment Plan.

Yours sincerely,

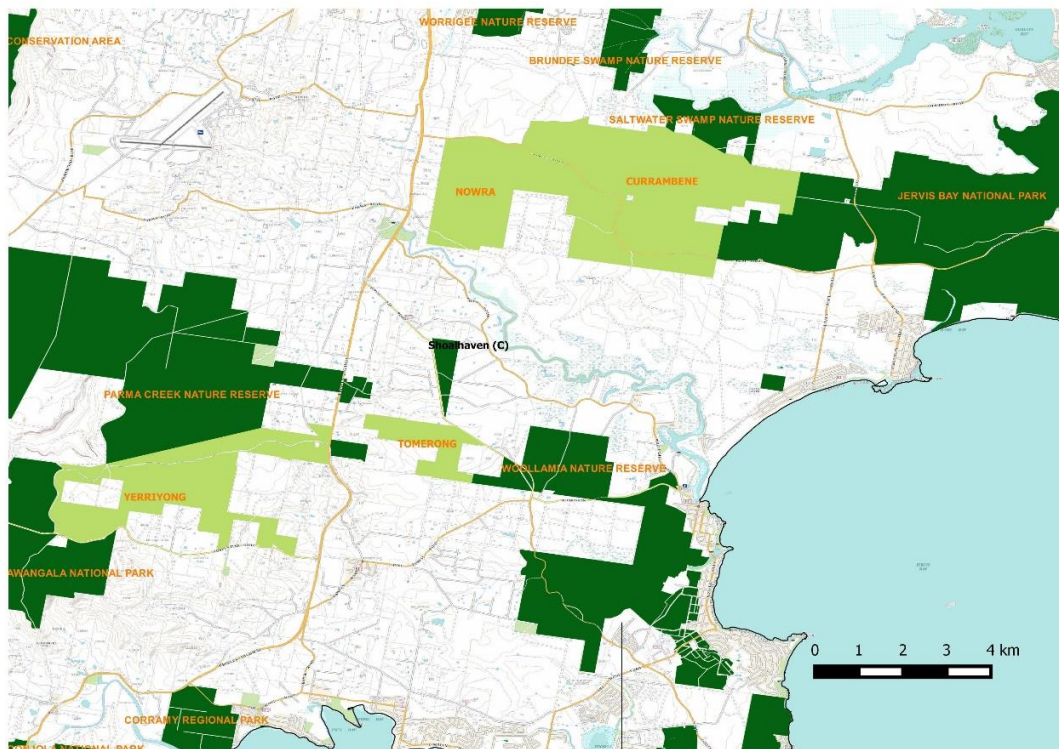


Dr Oisín Sweeney, Chair,
Jervis Bay Regional Alliance
T: 0431 251 194
E: oisinatjb@gmail.com

Mr Rob Dunn, President,
BirdLife Shoalhaven
T: 0438 250 600
E: robarb@bigpond.com

Mr Alan Stephenson, Conservation Director,
Australian Orchid Council
T: 0401 195 321
E: affine@tpg.com.au

Mr Terry Barratt, President,
ACF Shoalhaven Branch
T: 0439 494 402
E: terrybar@sctelco.net.au



The locations of Nowra, Currumbene, Tomerong and the northern section of Yerriyong State Forests (light green) relative to the protected area network (dark green) in the Jervis Bay area.