



Submission to the Draft Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan 2014 – Tasmanian Government

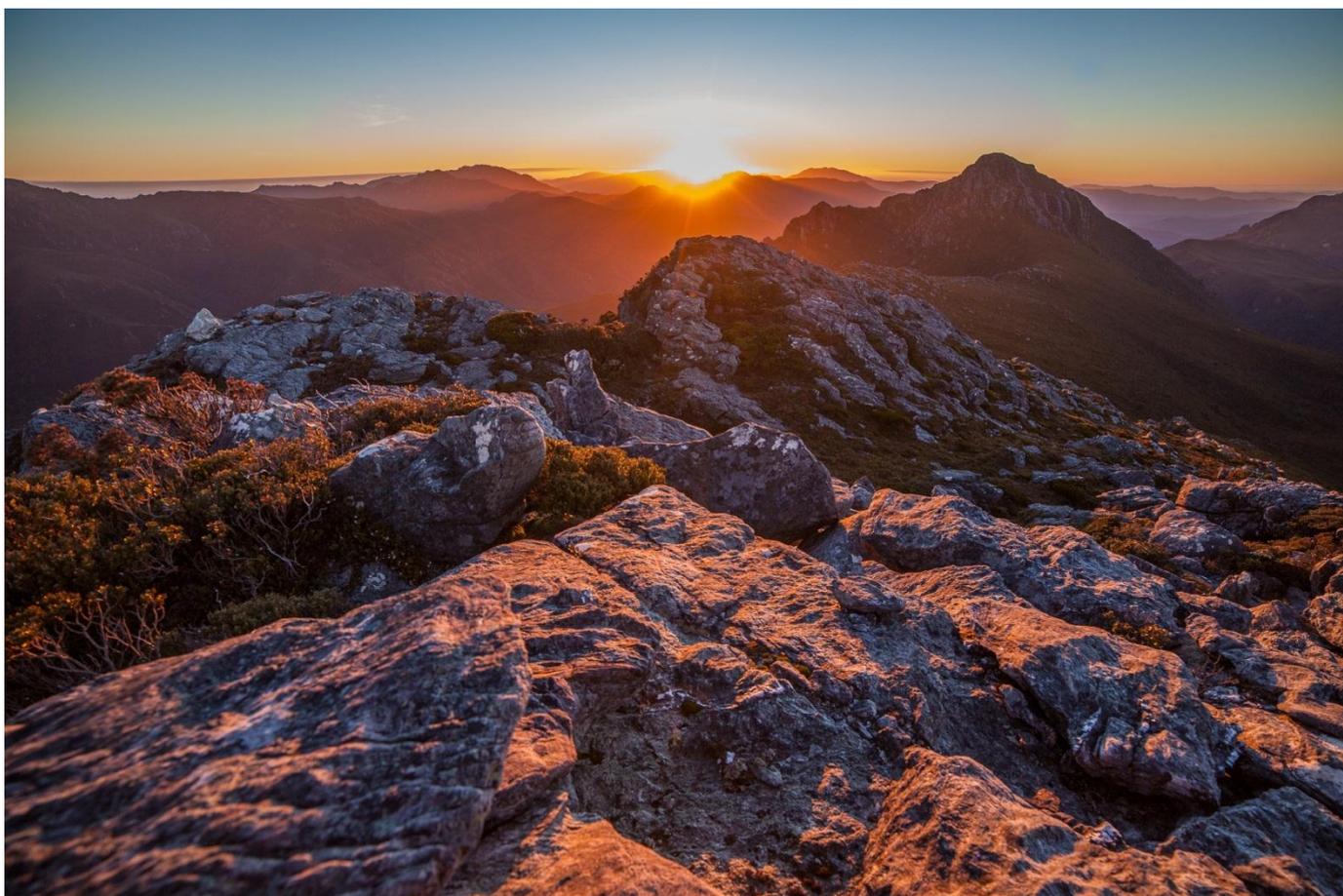


Photo: Frankland Range, Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, by Dan Brown.

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Draft TWWHA Management Plan

Representation

Director of National Parks and Wildlife

Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment

From

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Preamble

Wilderness is perhaps the world's fastest-disappearing natural resource. It is the single most potent attractant for potential visitors to Tasmania and is the major factor behind the current improvement in Tasmania's job rate compared to other states. The Hodgman government's draft management plan for the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area would inevitably erode wilderness and therefore jobs and economic wellbeing for Tasmanians. The plan is an economic, employment and ecological backward step. A more reliable and economically responsible option is to maintain the present Management Plan while providing guidance to the private sector wishing to develop on the back of Tasmania's wilderness bounty. This should involve private ecologically-advanced tourism and hospitality infrastructure being developed on the plentiful supply of spectacular back-country places, on private lands, such as Tasmania's non-National Park shorelines, the Liffey Valley, Central Plateau, Tarkine, Huon Valley and West Coast Range. This Foundation is very willing to discuss these options with the Minister for the Environment or other members of the government. BOB BROWN.

Recommendations

Bob Brown Foundation makes the following recommendations:

- The Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area Management Plan 2014 Draft be rejected in its current form;
- Reinstatement of the Wilderness Zone as in the current Management Plan, reinstatement of the protection of wilderness;
- Explicitly prohibit logging in all parts of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA);
- Explicitly prohibit mining in all parts of the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area;
- Consult Aboriginal and environmental expertise comprehensively;
- Tourist accommodation and aircraft landings should be prohibited in the same zones as it is in the current plan;
- Regional Reserves, Conservation Areas, Future Potential Production Forests and Permanent Timber Production Zones within the TWWHA be upgraded to National Park Status to guarantee their protection;
- Outstanding Universal Values of the TWWHA should be listed alongside prescriptions for how these values will be protected;
- No new permanent structures for commercial tourism should be erected outside of the Visitor Services Zones;
- It needs to be reinstated into the 2014 Draft Plan as it is stated in the current (1999) plan that: *"If facilities or services exist or can be developed outside the TWWHA that meet visitor needs, such facilities and services will not be provided as concessions within the World Heritage Area"*.
- Styx Valley of the Giants should have a visitor services zone, as a publicly funded amenity;
- Consider Aboriginal management/ownership for the most significant areas of the TWWHA;
- Government should consider this branding; "Tasmania: the World Heritage Wilderness Isle";
- The Tarkine, areas south of Macquarie Harbour, Southport Lagoon and the Wellington Range should be nominated for inclusion in the TWWHA;
- The State should establish a 'Eco-Resort & Facilities Commission' to aid the private sector to capitalise on Tasmania's natural and cultural attractions adjacent to and outside the TWWHA;
- National Parks & Wildlife Service should be re-established as a distinct department and adequately funded; beginning with the \$7 million per annum of Commonwealth funding that was originally allocated under the Tasmanian Forest Agreement.

Further Explanation

Founded in 2012, the Bob Brown Foundation is a non-profit, non-government organisation.

Bob Brown Foundation has major concerns with the Draft Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area (TWWHA) Management Plan 2014. It is fundamentally flawed, it dismantles previous protections that the World Heritage property and places the TWWHA at real risk. The 2014 Draft Management Plan form flouts the global responsibility and duty of the State and Federal government that is to pass on the property to future generations as a place that has been protected, maintained and preserved.

Tasmania's Wilderness World Heritage Area is one of the last truly wild places on Earth, habitat for some of the world's rarest plants and animals. Tasmania's Wilderness World Heritage Area is one of the largest temperate wilderness regions in the southern hemisphere. Of all the World Heritage areas on Earth, only Tasmania's includes wilderness in its title in unique recognition of the region's remote and pristine wildness. Wilderness is arguably the world's fastest disappearing natural resource.

Wilderness is internationally recognised as the most intact, undisturbed wild natural areas left on our planet – those last truly wild places that humans do not control and have not developed with roads, pipelines or other industrial infrastructure. The attack on Wilderness by the Tasmanian government, and the suggestion by government in the 2014 Draft Plan, that Wilderness is offensive to Tasmanian Aborigines, is an out-dated, ill-educated premise. Wilderness does include protection of Aboriginal conservation values and the maintenance of traditional lifestyles.

The definition of wilderness that is in the current plan for the TWWHA, that has been deleted from the 2014 Draft Plan, does not require an area to be free of cultural values and ongoing importance to Aboriginal people. It does recognise that the Aboriginal people who lived in the land for tens of thousands of years treated it in such a way that natural values and natural processes have survived.

Intention by the Tasmanian government to update the TWWHA Management Plan was to account for the additions in 2013 of a large tract of globally significant forests on the eastern boundary. In this boundary extension the Australian government listed one of the contributing Outstanding Universal Values for inclusion was Riveaux Cave, "with a high incidence of recorded cultural sites including Riveaux Cave with its Pleistocene art"ⁱ. A place of immense significance to the Tasmanian Aborigines and a site of outstanding universal value, this area is just one example of outstanding universal values that this new Management plan has ignored. When the government fails to prescribe management prescriptions for the preservation of places such as Riveaux cave, it is a fundamental flaw in acknowledging Outstanding Universal Values and contradicts the Government's alleged effort to work collaboratively with Tasmania's Aborigines.

The 2014 Draft Plan removes protection from logging of significant tracts of forest inside the World Heritage Area. Including 200 000 hectares of globally significant rainforests and tall eucalyptus forests, from the far south of Tasmania to the northern boundary of the TWWHA. These forests include the tallest hardwood trees in the world, in the Weld, Styx and Florentine Valleys. Logging threatens the tallest hardwood trees, the ancient rainforest species such as myrtle beech and leatherwood that are Gondwanic vegetation, long-lived species such as the Huon Pine, and endemic species such as King Billy Pine.

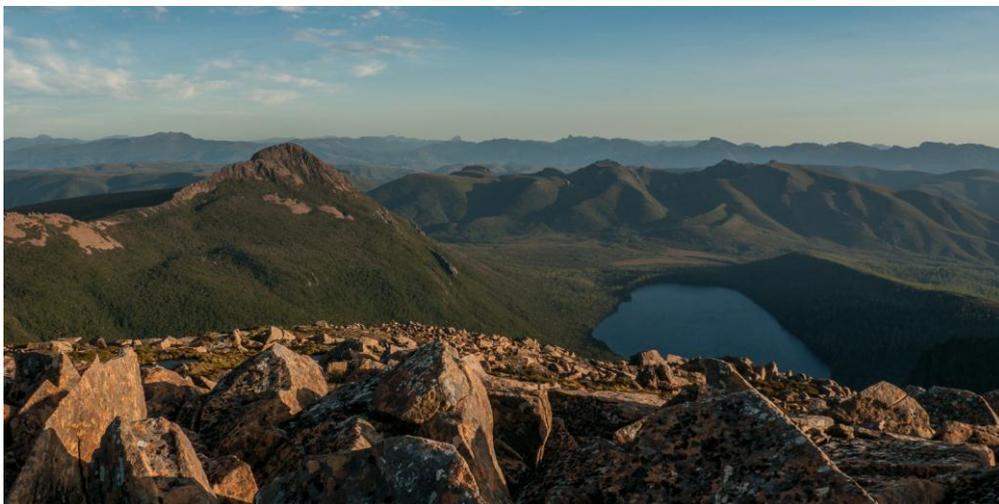
In what is a fundamental problem with the current tenure of the TWWHA and needs urgent upgrades to National Park, the 2014 Draft Plan removes previous prohibition to mining allowances in the property, as mineral exploration and potential mining will be permitted in approx. 172 000 hectares, inside the World Heritage property.



Panorama of the Western Arthur Range from Mt Pegasus. Lake Oberon with Mt Sirius and Mt Orion above, Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, Photo by Dan Broun



Tent pitched on the summit of Mt Counsel, Bathurst Range looking over the Southern Ocean and Maatsuyker Island. The green and purple in the night sky is known as 'airglow' a natural phenomenon of elements entering the earth's atmosphere, Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, a hub for tourism low-impact activities, Photo Dan Broun



Lake Judd, Mt Sarah Jane and Schnells Ridge from Eve Peak in the Anne Range, Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, Lake Judd is a proposed float plane site. Photo Dan Broun



Mt Geryon, the three headed beast of the southern reserve. Part of the DuCane Range, Cradle Mountain - Lake St Clair NP. Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, Photo by Dan Broun



Tall Eucalyptus Forest, Weld Valley, Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area, threatened by logging. Photo Bill Hatcher