It is necessary for Pedder 2000 to clearly define how it sees the Pedder area being managed post-draining. To that end, the Melbourne and Hobart branches have reviewed both the Future Management Study by Geoff Mosley and a paper by Martin Hawes which has been published in this issue of Reflections.

The Review by the Melbourne branch takes a wilderness first stance and a hard line regarding human visitation in an effort to avoid disruption of the healing process. Nicole Kaiyan summarised the branch position:

The important question as outlined by Hawes is "...whether you are campaigning for the restoration of a lake or for the restoration of the heart of the southwest wilderness". We are firmly committed to the idea that any restoration involves the whole of the impounded area and not just Lake Pedder.

As the heart of the southwest wilderness, the entire area must be managed with the objective of integration into the surrounding WHA as restoration proceeds.

We propose guided walks, by permit only, closure of the Scotts Peak Road, a viewing area from a lookout east of the lake, a world standard visitors centre at the present Wedge picnic site and plane landings on the beach under a permit system.

The issue of tourist dollars is not dependent on visitors actually being on the beach, rather it is the flow on effect of increased tourism to the whole region of Tasmania, that is the real dollar value of restoring Lake Pedder.

Public opinion in Tasmania is currently hostile, not only to the concept of draining the lake, but also to minor attempts at wilderness restoration (note the current debate over the closure of the Mt McCall Track). The Hobart branch are more keenly aware of the need to woo public support and endorse in principle the concept of the "premier walk" proposed by Martin Hawes, involving a network of hardened tracks in the area of the restored lake. Such a plan is, perhaps, our best hope of consolidating public opinion behind the draining project. As international attention is focused on the great restoration project, opportunity for non-bushwalkers to gain access is felt to be imperative. Readers are invited to send in their comment as we work towards the development of a Management Plan for the restored Lake Pedder.
Letters to the Editor

Dear Ms Gee
Thank you for your letter enclosing a copy of Reflections. I have read your newsletter with interest and note that your committee intends to continue its campaign.

I was a member of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment, Recreation and the Arts, which conducted the inquiry into the draining of Lake Pedder, though I have become chairman of the Committee only since the last election.

The Committee in its inquiry into Lake Pedder received 171 submissions and 25 exhibits. The Committee inspected the Lake Pedder area and held 4 sets of public hearings in Hobart and Canberra. Some of the comments on your Peddertorial (Reflections) are about the findings of the Committee would seem to draw a long bow.

I remind you of the final paragraph of the summary of the Report, The Committee concludes therefore that, although the proposal could be implemented, it does not have either the priority or the official support necessary to warrant the commitment of Commonwealth Government resources for further consideration.

Nonetheless, I note that your Committee’s new strategy is “to build national support and complete all necessary research before the next political initiative”. I certainly recognise your right in a democratic society to continue to pursue the case which I know is dear to your hearts.

Yours Sincerely,

Warren Truss MP
Federal Member for Wide Bay

Dear Helen,
I am writing in the hope that I might be able to purchase a postcard of Lake Pedder. We believe there is a connection with Lake Pedder and our family name.

I recently saw a lovely framed postcard in an office in Auckland and was interested to hear from the person who owned it that he had been to Lake Pedder and carried this postcard around with him for a couple of years before he returned to New Zealand.

Carolyn Pedder

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Carolyn Pedder

Environmental considerations for dambusters

ENVIRONMENTALISTS are adamant that engineers engaged in demolition work must consider the entire river system, not just the concrete structure itself. The American Society of Civil Engineers plans to publish technical guidelines for dam removals this month.

These will recommend that sediments are either removed or diverted away from rivers through alternative channels. Sediments, toxic or non-toxic, can wreak destruction, downstream and damage, though it may be temporary, can be minimised through careful planning.

Note and acknowledgement: For fuller detail refer to the article “Dambusting” published in the May edition of the New Scientist (pp. 34 – 37), upon which this article has been based.

Rob has given us a donation which made Reflections 5 possible. Thanks Rob.
Lake Pedder on ABC television

LAKE PEDDER, A Film Australia National Interest Program was first screened on the Timeframe series on ABC TV on Thursday 1 May 1997. It was produced and directed by Anna Grieve and Steve Best; this is historic documentation of the battle to save the lake and the events that led to its flooding. It concludes with the continued hopeful hope held for Pedder’s restoration. A number of Tasmanians were interviewed by Film Australia in December, for this production. The reaction to the film has been exciting. Many members have renewed their subscriptions. Thank you. This gives real heart to the small team working towards the day when it is politically possible to raise the profile of the campaign once more.

Young people say the film explains at last just how the lake came to be flooded, they couldn’t understand before how such a thing was possible. The film director Robert Sitch phoned in with support for Pedder 2000 for a chat about the extraordinary, evocative strength in the portrayal of those proud old men juxtaposed in the narrative. Co-director, Anna Grieve is planning to bring additional footage, not included in the film, to Melbourne’s forthcoming Above Pedder scheduled for October. Pedder 2000 extend hearty congratulations to both Anna Grieve and Steve Best for their thoroughly researched film which has encapsulated history and stimulated greater awareness of the issue around the nation.

Some of the quotes deserve being put on the record here in Reflections:

By Martin Hawes

“LAKE PEDDER, a film by Geoff Mosley of Film Australia, is a profile of the campaign once more. It is a strong, clear and worthwhile movie, which clearly identifies the lake as a significant tourist attraction. In my opinion, the first development is unlikely to occur in the next two decades. If we want to avoid a major political battle in Tasmania – a battle potentially as divisive as the Franklin campaign – we need to find a way of fulfilling the second condition. Suggested solution: Pedder as a premier walk.

The concept of premier walks has developed in recognition of the role played by well-publicised, high use trails such as the Overland Track and the Milford Sound Track, in contrast to less well-known tracks such as the Southerners Route traverse. The Tasmanian WHA has several tracks that can be classified as premier walks – the Overland Track, the South Coast Track and the Freeman’s Track. Many of these are among the most obvious candidates. However, one of these – the Overland Track – is classified as a T1 track in the Parks & Wildlife Service’s Walking Track Management Strategy. Asking walker numbers in the WHA are restricted to sustainable levels by means of a permit system, the WHA’s existing premier walks will account for roughly 60% of the visitor-nights spent by overnight walkers to the WHA.

In my view, there is both the potential and the need to develop additional premier walks in Tasmania, both inside and outside the WHA – particularly walks of T1 standard. The development of new premier walks will substantially increase overall visitor numbers to the WHA. For example, a second Overland Track could increase the number of visitor-nights spent by overnight walkers to the WHA by up to 50%. As far as overnight walks are concerned, the highest demand is for walks of 1-3 nights duration although proposals for developing longer walks are also worth investigating, such as the link track south of Mt Solitary.

The proposed track system would therefore involve the following:

Northern access via the Sentinels and Conventia.
Southern access via the western shore of the current impoundment. Eastern access from the Huon Crossing, and north of Mt Solitary, Map: Mount Peake South of the Huon Crossing as walking track only. This scenario does not exclude the possibility of closing the Scots Peak Road at Freshwater Pass and converting the entire road to a walking track.

The proposed premier walk would consist of a shorter loop and a long loop option as follows.

SHORT OPTION (2-4 DAYS)

Day 1: Gordon River Road to Lake Pedder
Day 2: Pedder to Huon crossing
Day 3: Scots Peak to Pedder
Day 4: Scots Peak to Condonman Creek
Day 5: Condonman Creek to Huon campsite

Optional sidelines: Mt Solitary, Lake Judd, Mt Anne, possibly also Lake Judd. Given the current trend of increasing demand for short walks, the short option is likely to attract more walkers although the use of two options may be similar in terms of total visitor-nights. It is reasonable to assume that many walkers will want to include at least one rest day to their itinerary especially at the lake itself. Some walkers would also opt to undertake longer walks the lake in the Arts Gurrent, Western Arthurs, Port Davey Track etc.

Usage levels

ASSUMING RECREATION is managed to minimise walker impacts, usage levels of up to 10,000 walkers a year can be considered. To put this figure in perspective, it is at least half of the current annual visitation to the Strathgordon-Scots Peak Region. One ten times the peak visitation that Pedder was getting in a weekend during the heyday of the Pedder campaign in 1970-71. Because the entire walk would be at low altitude and therefore only rarely subject to severe weather, it would be possible to encourage usage at least nine months of the year. 10,000 visitors could therefore be spread over 210 days, with a maximum of 80 people per day in the summer months. I believe Pedder could comfortably handle this level of usage.

Assuming 7500 walkers opt for the short circuit, spending an average of 1-2 nights in the bush, and assuming the remaining 2500 spend an average of 6 nights in the bush, the total visitation would be upwards of 25,000 visitor-nights, which is a 25% increase on the projected long term carrying capacity of the WHA track system.

These figures may be conservative. Indeed, I do not think would be entirely unreasonable to countenance double these levels of use in the future. This would involve a maximum of 100 people a day visiting the lake in the high season – roughly the same level that the
Economics of the proposed track development

AFTER REMOVED TRACKS of Tin standard, the minimum infrastructure required would be substantial (or at least stable) campsites and toilets. The option of extending walking-bus at Pedder and the other major campsites should also be considered. The track system I am proposing would involve roughly 50 km of new tracks at a cost of up to $2 million. This amount could be substantially less than this if it is possible to use cheap track construction techniques such as machine-dug turnpiking and greasing. I am assuming that there would be minimal cost in converting the Scotts Peak Road to a walking track.

Huts, toilets and additional infrastructure could cost around $400,000. Thus, a total annual visitation to the lake were around 10,000, a per-night fee of $10 would offset the costs of maintenance and huts. More over ten years. The fee required to finance ongoing track maintenance (including periodic replacement of treated pine infrastructure) would be substantially less than this – probably around $3 per night.

Other considerations relating to walking tracks

A POTENTIAL PROBLEM with the track system south and east of Pedder is that much of the country is marshy. One possible solution would be to route the tracks where possible along the edges of the existing impoundment. This could have the dual advantage that (a) the route would be less level (no need for surveying) and (b) the soil has already been removed by wave action, exposing relatively stable gravels. Thus substantial savings could be made in both initial construction costs and long term maintenance costs. Machinery could be used for benching and drainage over much of the proposed track system.

In addition to duckboarding and boardwalk, another track construction technique that may be appropriate in some areas is temporary to expose buried gravel, as has been done on the remnant section at the northern end of the Port Davey Track.

Effects of restoration on recreational areas

CLOSING ALL OR PART of the Scotts Peak Road would increase the remoteness and therefore reduce the demand for recreation in the Western Arthurs and to a lesser extent in the Anne Range. This would be a desirable trend, given the extreme fragility of these areas and the fact that usage will have to be restricted even if the tracks in these areas are fully established.

Conversely, restoring Pedder would dramatically increase the demand for recreation in the Franklin Range and to a lesser extent in other ranges such as theSENTINELS and Mt Solitary. While Geoff Mosley suggests that usage in the high hundreds would cause major track erosion problems in the Franklin, track conditions in the Western Arthurs suggest that the figure could be as low as 50 or even 100 visits a year. I am inclined to propose that visitation to the Franklin be kept at minimal levels to preserve the range in a trackless condition, although a track could be constructed to the summit of Terminal Peak. If walkers are encouraged to climb Mt Solitary it would also be necessary to construct a track to that peak.

A further proposal which may be worth considering is that of repairing and relocating the Port Davey Track as per the 1989 Parks & Wildlife Service Draft Plan, and promoting the Pedder to Port Davey walk as an extended premier walk in its own right.

Road lookouts

ONE PROBLEM with the premier walk proposal is that only 2% of visitors to the WHA would be able to visit the lake. For this reason, it may be preferable if visitors have the opportunity to view the lake from at least one lookout accessible by road, or only a short distance from the nearest road.

A look at the western end of the Sentinels, near where the old Pedder Track crosses the range, would involve about 2.5 km of new road and would shorten the northern access to Pedder. Another major advantage over Mosley’s Mandala Range proposal is that the latter requires the northern section of the Scotts Peak Road to remain open.

Flights as access for the handicapped

WE CAN COUNTER the argument that lack of road access would exclude the old and handicapped by pointing out that these people would have the option of flying in. Indeed, I suggest we promote flights as the preferred option for those who can’t walk, while at the same time promoting the idea that walking is the preferred option for those who are physically up to the trip.

Thus impact of overflights could be substantially reduced if aircraft noise were reduced. The use of tri-bladed props makes a noticeable difference, and I understand that noise-dampening materials and noise-cancellation technologies have been developed that could practically silence an aircraft. (These are not yet commercially available but probably will be by the time the lake is drained.)

In conclusion

WILDERNESS RESTORATION implies the restoration of nature. Rehabilitation of the impoundment and the Scotts Peak Road would substantially increase the remoteness, and in the long term dramatically increase the vaunted quality, of many major ranges including the Anne Range, Western Arthurs and Franklin.

Although there is little evidence of Aboriginal association with the lake, the lake is a powerful symbol of the spiritual power of the Tasmanians wilderness and is therefore directly relevant to the cause of promoting Aboriginal culture in Australia.

Overland Track is currently getting at times of peak usage, and enough to fill any two campsites and eight dispersed camping areas. However, the lake itself could be a bottleneck if large numbers of visitors opt to spend more than one night there.

The great environmental symbol

Greens election posters displayed at the 25th anniversary of the formation of the worlds first Green political party, the United Tasmania Group. This party was formed at a Town Hall meeting in Hobart on March 23 1972, directly to give political impetus to the campaign to save Lake Pedder on the eve of its flooding.

The Harold Ogilvie Poetry Competition

CONGRATULATIONS to Sydney poet Les Wicks, whose winning poem was read at the recent Sydney Poetry Festival and published in the NSW Poetry Journal. The Pedder 2000 Restoration Committee would like to thank our judge Les Murray, and congratulate him on his subsequent winning of the T.S. Eliot Prize. To Harold Queble, thank you for your great generosity and innovation in sponsoring this competition. Successive issues of Reflections will feature many of the excellent entries which Pedder 2000 wish to share with all readers.

Winning poem

Lost

Over the browns and ginger of that month
Rain on the day and ganges of silver mist
Littened.
First light ink-brush fingers combed the distance / soothing
The arch back of stone.

2.
They are waiting for the word
In weatherblown, torn khaki plastic.

Torrents
In angry fusillade dropping from the clouds
Against the obdurate calm of the waters,
As like opposing elements,
This downpour is no relation
To the lakes still
Or the earthbound beard of ice clinging
Bitter beneath overhangs.

Tears
& other human stuff
Bounce off the pink sand.

3.
Some have dived to find the hidden shore,
Pressed fingers on the old beach.
And sunsets still bring rose to the water
As the lake lies buried beneath itself.

Les Wicks
Prevent
Environmental
Degradation
Develop
Ecological
Restoration

This issue we are featuring
sand dune and foreshore restoration

READERS ARE URGED to send in news of their own restoration projects, wherever and whatever. The following accounts come to us from Ethel Tenby and Annabel Richards. Thank you! Keep up the inspiring work!

SEPTEMBER 1958. We got our land on the north shore of Phillip Island. It was ancient sand-dune country with an already rare mix of old vegetation, a wild tangle. When a storm took sand and trees, we pegged down brushy material to break the waves and trap sand. As other families removed scrub we used it to build our groynes. Each was about 6 – 8 feet long, perhaps 1 – 2 feet wide and up to 8” high, all at right angles to the shore-line.

Meanwhile I photographed “tree skeletons” on the beach, and shots of piles of sea-weed each with a small dune on the windward side. Mounted on card, with captions, these made a poster for the local shop window. Others caught on and started their own groynes.

In front of my bush block now there are 64 metres of new foreshore, densely vegetated with the same mix of scrub we have always cherished. And of course I haven’t stopped the process.

Ethel Tenby

ON THE MORNINGTON Peninsula, the Friends of the Promenade Reserve, Somers – affiliated with FOLKLaW INC., commissioned a report to enable a program of restoration of the degraded and weed infested foreshore.

Removal of exotic weed species and replanting of local indigenous trees, shrubs and grasses has attracted back native fauna including blue tongue lizards, frogs and echidnas. Koalas are resident in Somers and suffer from lack of food trees – mainly coastal manna gum (Eucalyptus prioriana). So this species along with Boobialla, Cassuarinas, Banksias, coastal heath and coastal tea trees are amongst the tree species grown.

Annabel Richards

John Hill, one of the band restoring the foreshore at Somers in Victoria

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JOURNAL EDITOR
Helen Gee

Meetings and social events are held in Melbourne and Hobart. Phone for details.

Contributions for Reflections #6 welcome: post/fax Hobart.

Forthcoming events
Monday July 28 7.30pm
Pedder 2000 AGM
Sip gluhwein while we view TV coverage of our campaign beside the open fire at Fern Tree after a short AGM. 835 Huon Road, Fern Tree
Ph: 62391120

Friday August 15
from 6.30 – 8.00pm
Politics in the Pub: LAKE PEDDER FOR SALE?
The Government wants to sell the Hydro and connect Tasmania to the National Grid. Privatisation and competition or people and the environment? What’s at stake?
Venue: Round Midnight, Hobart.

Pedder Pennies
To Hobart branch
Annual Membership $40
Three years $100
Concession $20
Friend Donation

To Annabel, Melbourne branch
Large Stickers $1
Pedder 2000 T Shirt $30 +$3 postage
Reports $10 +$3 postage