

NORTH WEST BRANCH

The Northwest Branch of the Tasmanian Conservation Trust Inc. was formed in 1969. The inaugural meeting was chaired by Mr. Malcolm Grant, a Burnie teacher. Another of the members present was Mr. Brendan Lyons (Dame Enid's son). Subsequent meetings were held at various venues in Burnie, Devonport and Ulverstone. Meetings are now held at Penguin Railway Station Meeting Room on the first Wednesday of each month.

In 1972, three sub-committees were formed. They were (a) Recycling, (b) Environmental improvements and (c) National Parks and reserves. The sub-committees called meetings in their own time and reported back to the NW Committee

During that time, the **Recycling Sub-Committee** prepared a major draft submission titled: "A Recycling Scheme Suitable for Municipal Councils in Tasmania". This recycling scheme was based on a New Zealand scheme. The Recycling Sub-Committee disbanded in 1976.

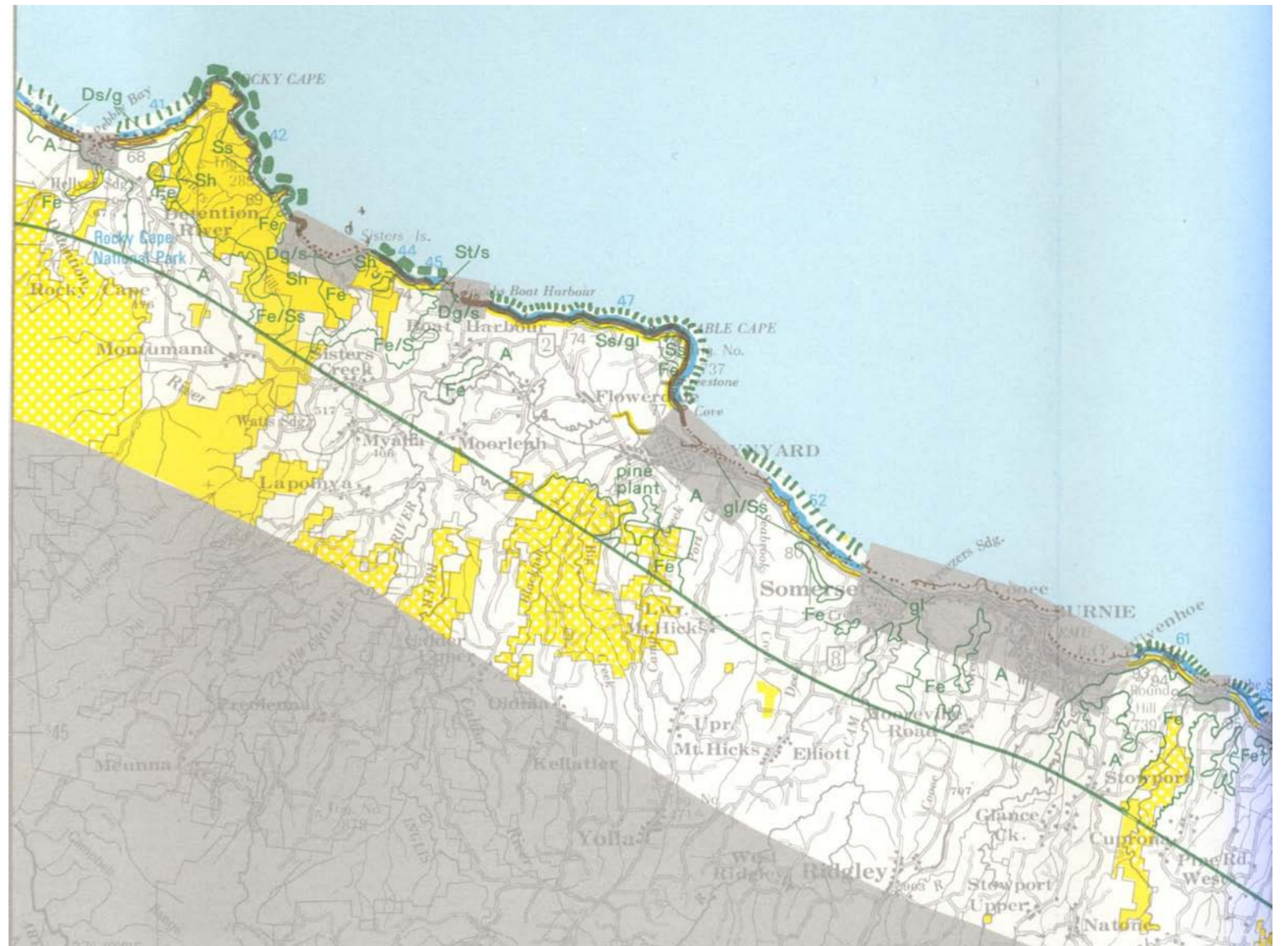
The **Environmental Improvements Sub-Committee** was involved in the quarrying at Round Hill in Burnie, the Tioxide pipeline extension and the Port Latta iron ore pelletising mill. This Sub-Committee disbanded in 1975.

The **National Parks and Reserves Sub-Committee** commenced in 1973 and disbanded in 1977. Involvements included alluvial tin mining on the Arthur River and the Norfolk Range National Park proposal.

Fossil Bluff:

Fossil Bluff is adjacent to Table Cape near Wynyard and overlooks the mouth of the Inglis River and Bass Strait. It features an array of fossils on its cliff face in layers dating back 50 million years. The oldest known marsupial fossil, the Wynyardia occurs in this cliff. In 1972 a developer wanted to sub-divide the land for close residential development on top of and around Fossil Bluff including the adjacent Freestone Cove, and extending to the western boundary of the Wynyard Golf Links.

The NW Branch was totally opposed to this proposed development and fought to stop it proceeding through the Wynyard Council. The Branch gained the support of the local population and circulated 2 petitions – one to the Wynyard Council and one to State Parliament. Both petitions collected 550 signatures.



The proposed development was finally stopped by the Minister for Lands and Works who refused permission for bulldozers and other development equipment to pass over a strip of Crown Land that crossed the access road to the site of the development. In 1979 another developer, estate agent John Guest wanted to sub-divide the same land for residential development. This time the residential development would be more open with less subdivision than the previous proposal. Once again the North West Branch opposed the development on the same grounds as the previous proposal, and with the support of local residents, the development was stopped.

Coastal Survey:

Between 1972-75 members of the NW Branch prepared maps and submissions for the Coastal Survey. Several groups in the Branch were allocated sections of the NW Coast to prepare maps showing features of the Coast and prepare brief submissions about each section for submission to the State Government for their consideration and records.

National Estate:

During 1974 –1975 the North West Branch along with five other NW conservation groups prepared a well documented submission for the Committee of Enquiry on the National Estate. The submission included the North West Region including off shore islands.

Other Submissions made by the Branch:

- 1972, South West Advisory Committee on preliminary recommendations for S.W. Tasmania.
- 1982, Forestry Commission against forestry operations in the Jackeys Marsh/Quamby Bluff area.
- 1988, Submission opposing the Wesley Vale Pulp Mill.
- 2000, Arthur-Pieman Conservation Area – Draft Management Plan.
- 1989, Murchison District Forest Management Plan.
- 2000, Amendment of the Forest Practices Code

Don Heads:

In 1989, three entrepreneurs secured land at Don Heads, with plans to sub-divide the farming land there for a housing sub-division. They extended this development to include shops, a café and a marina on the adjacent Coles Beach area. A roadway across the Don River to Devonport was also planned. The North West Branch fought to stop the proposal citing the loss of prime farming land should the development go ahead. Other local ratepayers opposed the development along with conservation organisations which argued that farming land was a valuable part of the N.W. Coast, which is essentially a food bowl for the nation. This development was supported by the Devonport Council, but was eventually stopped through the TCT campaigning.

Regional Forest Agreement:

In 1997 the North West Branch made a submission to the Regional Forest Agreement. The submission was against the export of native forest woodchips for the manufacture of pulpwood for making paper. The submission supported the export of plantation timber for this purpose. However, the export quotas on woodchips had been lifted during the previous Keating Government, allowing unlimited quantities of woodchips to be exported and also to be used for pulpwood within Tasmania. The result was that 5 million tonnes of native forest woodchips were exported each year and 2 million tonnes retained in the State for downstream processing. The N. W. Branch has been campaigning to change the situation ever since. The branch also made a submission in 2007 opposing the proposed Gunns Pulp Mill.

