

OGILVIE MCKENNA

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DAVID BURTON, B.A., LL.B., J.P.

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YOUR REF:

28 February, 1996

FAXED

Mr Bob Burton
c/- Elect Bob to the Senate Campaign
43 Barrack Street
HOBART 7000

Dear Mr Burton

We act for Senator Robert Bell, the Australian Democrats Senator for Tasmania.

In a document entitled "Media Release - 27th February 1996" published yesterday by you, the following appeared.

- (i) "The Wilderness Society accounced today that it will place newspaper advertisements and is writing to all members indicating that Democrat Senator Robert Bell's recent antagonism to the protection of the unprotected south west wilderness forests and indifference to the fate of the Tarkine wilderness leaves wilderness supporters with a clear choice for supporting Bob Brown in the Senate" and
- ii) "Robert Bell, [voted] at a recent public meeting in favour of clear felling of unprotected wilderness forests of the Picton, Huon and Weld Valleys"

These allegations plainly refer to our Client. They are in our opinion most serious defamatory imputations. A further defamatory imputation also appears in that document. It is stated that "Senator Bell's support for clear felling of these forests is a extraordinary reversal of his policy position". Each of the allegations are untrue. They are utterly groundless on our instructions. They are not only injurious to the reputation of Senator Bell as Democrat Senator with a deep and recognised commitment to conservations issues, but also are deeply offensive to his own personal feelings.

We note that the Wilderness Society, according to the document, intend to place newspaper advertisements. If the defamatory imputations are repeated then we will have no option but to commence proceedings.

We are therefore instructed to require from you the publication of an apology in manner and terms to be agreed upon by us. This must occur within twenty four hours of receipt of this letter. The nature of the wrong done to Senator Bell is such that we doubt that the publication of an apology can effect adequate redress, and accordingly, all the rights of our Client are reserved.

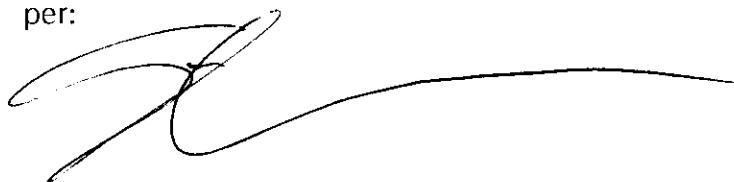
We also require your assurance that this untrue allegation will not be repeated in the future.

We would be obliged if you would give this matter your most earnest attention.

Yours faithfully

OGILVIE MCKENNA

per:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized initial 'S' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that tapers to the right.

SIMON COOPER

MEDIA RELEASE

27TH FEBRUARY 1996

WILDERNESS SOCIETY DISMAYED AT BELL'S OPPOSITION TO SOUTH WEST FORESTS PROTECTION AND INDIFFERENCE TO TARKINE

The Wilderness Society announced today that it will place newspaper advertisements and is writing to all members indicating that the Democrat Senator Robert Bell's recent antagonism to the protection of the unprotected South West wilderness forests and indifference to the fate of the Tarkine wilderness leaves wilderness supporters with the clear choice of supporting Bob Brown in the Senate.

Research Officer for The Wilderness Society, Mr Bob Burton, said that the action of Democrat Senator Robert Bell voting at a recent public meeting in favour of clearfelling of unprotected wilderness forests of the Picton, Huon and Weld valleys was a clear indication that he had abandoned the protection of wilderness as a part of his platform.

Mr Burton said that these forests have been recognised as being of World Heritage quality by the World Heritage Bureau, the Australian Heritage Commission and the Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage.

"Senator Bell's support for clearfelling these forests is an extra-ordinary reversal of his policy position that voters need to know about before the election" Mr Burton said.

Mr Burton said that Senator Bell's authorisation of a leaflet produced with Labor Senator Shayne Murphy in January this year, supporting the logging of areas that environmentalists have been campaigning for over the last twenty years, gave voters a clear choice¹.

Mr Burton said that Senator Bell's comments last year that the protection of the Tarkine wilderness was well down the list of priorities reflected his indifference to the protection to the area².

"Voters concerned about the protection of our forests and wilderness have a clear choice. Bob Brown has an exceptional track record for the protection of Tasmania's wilderness while in recent times the Democrat's Robert Bell has adopted policies more in line with the logging industry" Mr Burton said.

"The statement by the logging industry front group, the Forest Protection Society, that they would campaign for the election of Robert Bell over Bob Brown reflects the timber industry's comfort with the policies of Robert Bell," Mr Burton said³.

"We have enjoyed the support of the Democrats in jointly campaigning for the protection of wilderness forests for many years. We are dismayed by the recent turn of events with Robert Bell and feel that we have no choice other than to inform wilderness supporters that in the election for the Senate there is a clear choice in Tasmania" Mr Burton said.

For further information please contact Bob Burton on 002 34 9366 or leave message with Alec Marr on 015 805 850

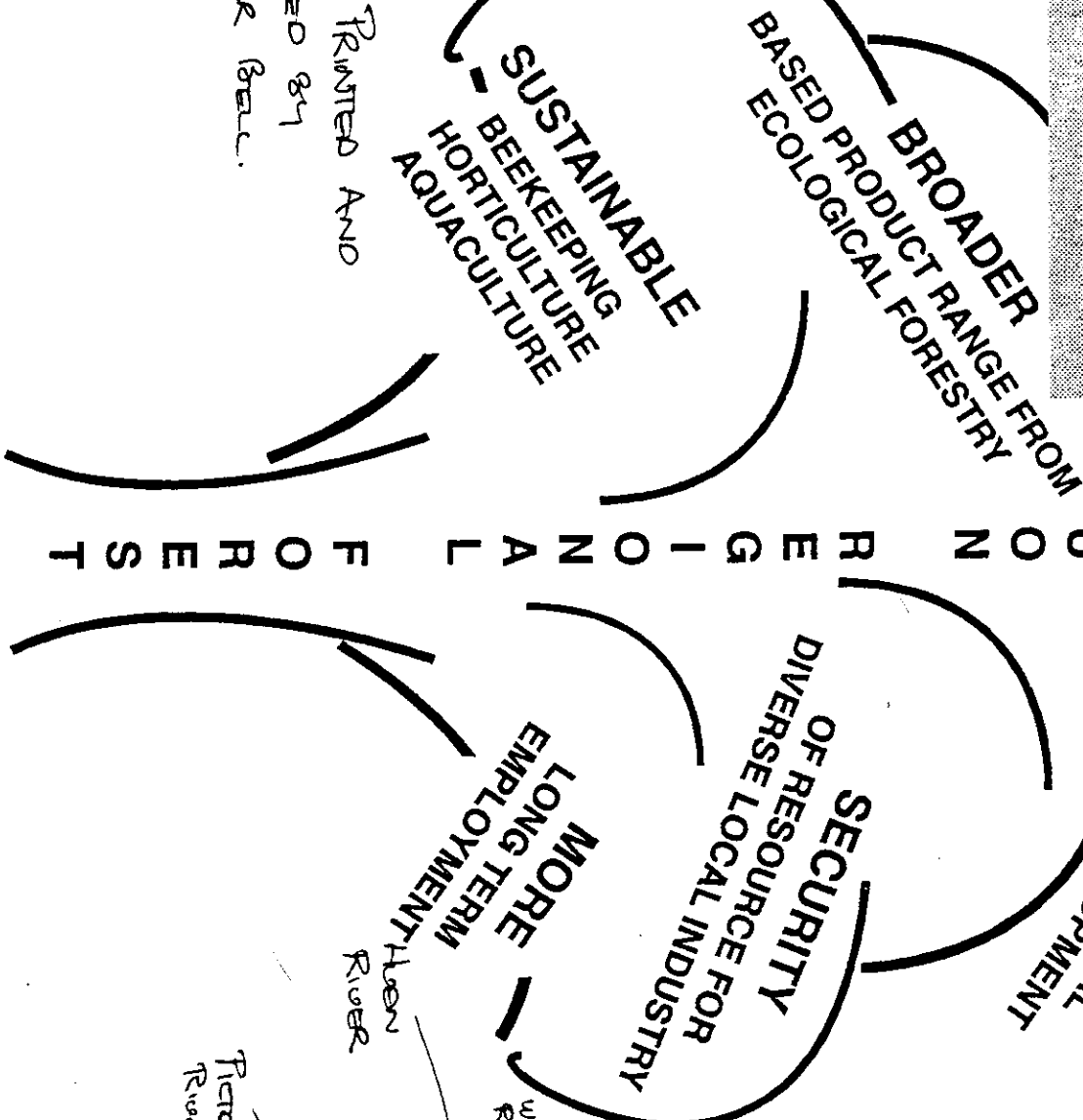
Attached copy of TWS letters to members and supporters, Bell brochure and FPS statement.

¹ Senator Shayne Murphy, Senator Robert Bell and Harry Quick, "To the householder - good news for forests", January 1996.

² Wayne Crawford, Politically this is a track to somewhere, The Mercury, 15th April 1995.

³ Mathew Denholm, Pro-logger campaign may boost democrats, The Mercury, 29th January 1996

DO YOU WANT THE HUON FORESTS TO PROVIDE:



BROADER RANGE FROM ECOLOGICAL FORESTRY
SUSTAINABLE BEEKEEPING HORTICULTURE AQUACULTURE

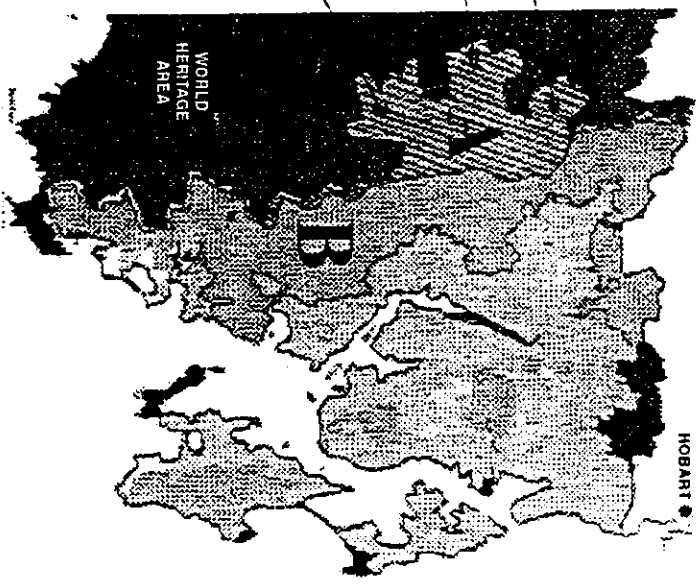
WILD RIVER
HOON RIVER
PICTON RIVER

THE SOUTHERN FOREST COMMUNITY GROUP INC.

The SFCG Inc is an education based association with no pecuniary interests in forestry. We are a non aligned research group dedicated to the continuation and enhancement of our diverse and vibrant community.

In the opinion of the SFCG Inc, the current forest management strategy will

- result in the replacement of a diverse forest by a eucalypt monoculture
- ensure economic benefits from the forest continue to bypass our region.



- A. Proposed Regional Forest
- B. Continuing under Current Management

THE PROPOSED HUON REGIONAL FOREST WILL

- ❖ ensure the ongoing supply of quality resource for local industry.
- ❖ increase leatherwood nectar supply necessary to sustain the increased pollination services vital to the Huon's expanding export horticultural industry.
- ❖ the establishment of a woodskills school.
- ❖ would NOT preclude the establishment of a fibre-board type of facility based on the resources of the Southern Forests.

PRINCIPLES FOR THE HUON REGIONAL FOREST

- ❖ Promote sustainable and diverse regional development.
- ❖ Local representation in the management of our local Crown Forests.
- ❖ Ecologically sustainable management of the National Estate Area and the remaining mature mixed forests of the region.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ?

ATTEND

the Public Meeting at the

HUONVILLE TOWN HALL 7.30PM

THURSDAY 8TH

FEBRUARY

CONTACT

People seeking election in the forthcoming State poll to ascertain their attitude to the establishment of a Huon Regional Forest

— and vote accordingly!

POSTAGE PAID

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact

Rex Dircen Phone (002) 951628
RSD 870 Nicholls Rivulet 7112
Ian Weist Phone (002) 950028
Jean Taylor Phone (002) 674870

Printed and Authorised by:

Senator Shayne Murphy,
59A Brisbane Street, Launceston.

Senator Robert Bell,
371 Elizabeth Street, North Hobart.

Harry Quick MHR,
Suite 1, Covehill Fair Shopping Centre, Bridgewater.

TO THE HOUSEHOLDER

Good News for Forests

PUBLIC MEETING

To Present the HUON VALLEY REGIONAL FOREST CONCEPT

8 FEBRUARY 1996

MOTION

This meeting calls upon the soon to be elected Parliament of Tasmania to establish a Huon Valley Regional Forest Board within Forestry Tasmania to achieve the following objectives:

- A) - to support and promote sustainable and diverse regional development;
- B) - to allow local participation in management decisions regarding the Huon Crown Forests;
- C) - ecologically sustainable management of the National Estate Area and the remaining mature mixed forests of the Huon.

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The proposed Huon Valley Regional Forest should be managed under the direction of a Board of Management appointed by the following organisations:

- Forestry Tasmania (3)
- Parks and Wildlife (2)
- Tourism Tasmania
- Huon Valley Council (2)
- Huon Valley Regional Development Board
- The Southern Forests Community Group Inc.

The Huon Valley Regional Forest Management Board would be constitutionally committed to ecologically sustainable management practises; full support for the national estate values of the Regional Forests; and the facilitation of sustainable and local economic development. Financial surplus would be used to provide local employment and training opportunity or invested in local economic development opportunities. The Board would actively support local landcare activities, particularly in co-operation with local schools, with the emphasis on reforestation and other tree planting activity. The Esperance Forest and Heritage Centre, currently the responsibility of the Huon Valley Council, would provide an ideal headquarters for the Association and could be a showcase for the new organisation.

ATTENTION JOURNALISTS AND CHIEFS OF STAFF
28 February 1996

RE: BELL'S BACKING FOR LOGGING IN SOUTH-WEST

Has Robert Bell supported logging in Tasmania's South-West wilderness? YES - see the attached leaflet.

Have all of the areas in which Robert Bell has supported logging already been logged? NO - most of the country is pristine

Is Robert Bell supporting woodchipping and clearfelling? YES - see the attached leaflet.

Senator Robert Bell has supported a written proposal by the Southern Forests Community Group Inc. The proposal is outlined on the attached leaflet. The leaflet was **printed and authorised by Senator Robert Bell** (jointly with pro-logging federal Labor MPs Shayne Murphy and Harry Quick).

The proposal has also been outlined in the "Sunday Tasmanian" (2 July 1995) which says it involves **"modified clearfelling"** of oldgrowth forests in an area termed "Regional Forest".

The leaflet has a map defining the Regional Forest. It includes the unprotected unlogged parts of the Weld, Huon and Picton valleys - including Deferred Areas. **These are oldgrowth forests immediately adjacent to the World Heritage Area.** They are listed on the Register of the National Estate.

The World Heritage Bureau, Australian Heritage Commission, IUCN and Department of Parks, Wildlife and Heritage have said that these forests should be added to the World Heritage Area. Their protection has been part of a **20-year campaign by the Wilderness Society and ACF.**

A public meeting about management of these areas was held in Huonville on 8 February 1996. At this meeting, Robert Bell voted against a proposed amendment to protect the Huon, Weld and Picton valleys in an expanded World Heritage Area.

Further info: Bob Burton (002) 23 4910, 015 805 850.



The Wilderness Society (Tasmania) Inc.

130 Davey Street, Hobart. Ph: (002) 34 9366. Fax: (002) 23 5112

**MEDIA RELEASE
29 February 1996**

BELL HAS ENDORSED LOGGING IN AREAS SET ASIDE BY LIBERAL AND LABOR FOR POSSIBLE RESERVATION

Pristine wilderness forests threatened by proposal endorsed by Democrat Senator

Senator Robert Bell has agreed to logging of areas that even Liberal and Labor have earmarked for potential reservation, according to the Wilderness Society.

The Society's Research Officer, Bob Burton, said that the leaflet endorsed by Robert Bell has targeted National Estate forests adjacent to the World Heritage Area for logging.

These National Estate Areas include "Deferred Forests" - areas set aside for further studies by both Liberal and Labor State Governments, and classified as "administrative reserves" by the Federal Government (see maps).

"Senator Bell has authorised a leaflet proposing logging in areas set aside by Liberal and Labor for possible future reservation," Mr Burton said.

He said these Deferred Forests are part of Tasmania's South-West wilderness and have never been roaded or logged.

"Claims that these proposals for logging apply only to disturbed areas are false," Mr Burton said.

"Senator Bell has endorsed a proposal that could see roads driven deeper into the Weld, Huon and Picton valleys of Tasmania's South-West."

**Further info: Bob Burton (002) 23 4910, 015 805 850.
Attached: map from Southern Forests Community Group
leaflet and map from Federal Government's forest
assessment.**

*The Hobart Wilderness Society Shop
Shop 33 Galleria,
Salamanca Place, Hobart 7000
Ph: (002) 349370*

*The Launceston Wilderness Society Shop
174 Charles Street, Launceston 7250
Ph: (003) 34 2499
Fax: (003) 34 1277*

*The Devonport Wilderness Society Shop
26 Stewart Street, Devonport 7310
Ph: (004) 24 7393*