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Don't shoot, I'm a bushwalker

by Sue Stock

Over 150 people from all walks of life joined in a colourful protest outside National Party MP Thomas George's office in Lismore, with some dressed as wounded bushwalkers, koalas and other creatures, in protest against the O'Farrell government's deal with the Shooters and Fishers Party to allow recreational hunting in National Parks. The deal was struck in exchange for the Shooters support for the privatisation of NSW's remaining electricity assets.

North East Forest Alliance spokesperson Dailan Pugh told the crowd that "The Act makes 107 of the 112 national parks, nature reserves and state conservation areas in the Northern Rivers area available for amateur hunting." He said that "These parks are used by over 4.1 million visitors a year and are important for local recreation and essential mainstays of the tourism industry."

Greens MP Cate Faehrmann said, "Communities close to the parks that will now be entertainment for recreational hunters are extremely concerned. What makes this deal even worse is that recreational ground shooting is recognised by feral species experts as completely ineffective at eradicating species. It's disgraceful that Barry O'Farrell has sold off public safety, the environment, animal welfare and native wildlife to the extreme demands of the Shooters Party."

There was acknowledgement that feral animals need to be controlled but that amateur



The Game and Feral Animal Control Amendment Bill 2012, has now passed through parliament.

Amongst other things, this Bill will:

- Allow the minister to make National Parks available "for the hunting of game animals by persons who hold a game hunting licence". The legislation allows recreational hunters access into 79 national Parks including Nightcap National Park.
- Expand the list of "game animals" that can be hunted on public land (like national parks) to include several non-native bird species.
- Prevent anti-hunting protesting by making it an offence "to interfere with a person who is lawfully hunting game animals on public hunting land" (including national parks).



recreational hunting is not an effective way to do it. It could scare feral animals into new areas, making them increasingly wary to the efforts of professional

shooters. Animal welfare will be put at risk. There can be no assurances that hunting will be humane.

Public safety will also be put at risk. Will the public be



excluded from National Parks when hunting takes place? Shooting would jeopardise the safety of rangers and apiarists as well as bushwalkers. Rangers and apiarists have a right to feel safe at work and the safety of wildlife needs to be guaranteed.

Protestors heard that in New Zealand since 1979, hunters injure and kill each other on average every nine months. In 2010, recreational hunters killed two innocent park visitors. One woman was getting milk from her Esky when a hunter mistook her for a deer, killing her instantly.



CSG – The Musical

by Bob Dooley

Full houses and standing ovations were the order of the day for the short run of CSG – The Musical at the Lismore Workers Club at the end of June.

The light-hearted satirical romp, with more than a tilt at Oklahoma, was developed over 10 weeks and directed by Ollie Heathwood, involving over 100 people on-stage, in the choir directed by Peter Lehner, and in the piano, tuba and ukulele ensemble, under the direction of Jude Magee.

Ollie Heathwood is a former NIDA student who battled to save Terania Creek in the 70's, and has created environmental and human-rights theatre since 1985. "I want to move people so they take action," Ollie said.

Part of the script was taken from actual statements from CSG mining companies, in what Ollie described as "reverse spin."

Using this process, the character Bruce Reynolds, a mining company CEO, was portrayed as a money-hungry, win-at-all-costs villain, and a local government politician named George Stewart delivered some of the most hilarious lines in the show.

In another scene, the NSW Environment Minister, Robyn Parker, brought the house down with her rendition of 'I'm Just a Gal Who Can't Say No',

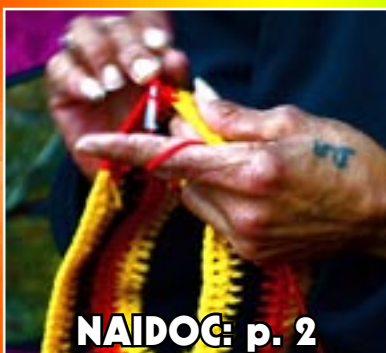
accompanied by the NSW Primary Industries Minister Katrina Hodgkinson and Prime Minister Gillard.

The musical drew on many performance styles, including ventriloquy, puppetry, acrobatics, dancing, singing, and occasional ham acting, to create a theatrical experience that was both entertaining and thought-provoking.

More than 1400 people saw the show over three nights, raising over \$23,000 for the CSG-Free Lismore organisation, which will be used for a legal fund, scientific testing and monitoring of CSG activities, and more community meetings.

Ollie said, "Thanks to everyone who came and supported us, and also to all the people who put it together in only 11 rehearsals."

The musical looks set to reach a wider audience, with a documentary by local filmmakers Brendan Shoebridge and Susie Forster, who followed the production since its first meeting in March, currently in post-production; a cast meeting later this month deciding on a touring production of the stage show, possibly playing Bangalow and Murwillumbah; and Ollie is undertaking a re-write with all original music to publish on-line for groups in other states to produce the play.



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