



Florentine Protection Society

Patron: Steve Biddulph

12 March 2010

Paul Harriss, MLC
Parliament House
Hobart, 7000

Dear Mr Harriss,

Thank you very much for recently making some time available to meet with us to discuss the protection of the Upper Florentine valley.

As we mentioned at that meeting, we are seeking your support as a Member of the Legislative Council, for policies and programs which would halt the logging of the old growth forest and provide permanent protection for the area. The Florentine Protection Society's policy is as follows:

"The Florentine Protection Society proposes that the Upper Florentine be added to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and to the Southwest National Park.

"The Florentine Protection Society adopts in principle the boundary of the Upper Florentine as shown in "Western Tasmania: A Place of Outstanding Universal Value" by Geoff Law (2009) page 4, which would combine the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area and Mt Field National Park as one protected entity.

"The Florentine Protection Society therefore calls on the State Government to extend the Southwest National Park to incorporate the Upper Florentine and to support World Heritage nomination of the Upper Florentine.

"The Florentine Protection Society also calls on the Federal Government to nominate the Upper Florentine as an extension to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area."

Further information is available from the Florentine Protection Society website:
<http://florentine.org.au/>

At the meeting, we mentioned that the IUCN had identified that the Upper Florentine has conservation values which are significant at the World Heritage level. You said that your information appeared to contradict this, as the 2008 IUCN mission had not recommended adding the Upper Florentine to the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area. We promised to get back to you on this point. Although apparently contradictory, both statements are true. The IUCN, in their 1989 evaluation and subsequently, has identified that the Upper Florentine has World Heritage values. The 2008 IUCN mission did not insist that the area be added to the TWWHA because their assessment was that omitting the Upper Florentine does not threaten the integrity of the TWWHA's World Heritage values and boundary. However the IUCN has since published a disclaimer, distancing itself from the IUCN mission's assessment as the individual opinions of its members, and the World Heritage Committee in July 2008 called for tall eucalyptus forests adjacent to the TWWHA to be added at the discretion of the

Australian Government. The Australian Government could choose to add the Upper Florentine to the TWWHA at any time.

It may be a moot point whether the TWWHA needs the Upper Florentine to be considered complete. We are advocating National Park and World Heritage status for the Upper Florentine for its own sake, in order to protect the recognised high conservation value old growth forest and other World Heritage values.

Thank you again for taking the trouble to meet with us. We appreciate your interest in the Upper Florentine.

Yours sincerely,

 

Gil Pixley and Angela McGowan
on behalf of The Florentine Protection Society Inc.