DOOR OPENS FOR HERITAGE LISTING OF ALPINE NATIONAL PARK

The Carruthers Group – a group of eminent alpine ecologists and scientists – has applauded the decision not to renew grazing leases in the Victorian Alpine National Park.

The practice of Alpine grazing has been subject to criticism from the scientific community since the late 1950s. The Carruthers Group has been in existence for several decades, and was previously known as the “Kosciuszko Committee of Interested Scientists.”

“Due to environmental concerns – backed by the weight of scientific evidence - grazing was halted many years ago in Kosciuszko National Park in NSW and Namadgi National Park in the ACT.” Roger Good, spokesperson for the group stated.

“This decision is long overdue, and we applaud the Victorian Government for making the right decision based on science, environmental impacts and the importance of our heritage.”

Mr Good pointed out that the decision opens the door to pursuing appropriate national and international natural heritage recognition and listing for the Australian Alps Parks, which to date has not been possible while grazing continued.

The Alps are now also able to be managed as one unit; an objective of the interstate co-operative management program, as detailed in the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperative Management of the Alps Parks, signed by State and Commonwealth Ministers for the Environment in 1986.

“It’s a victory for all Australians, and it means generations to come will be able to enjoy the Alpine National Park.

“Importantly, from a cultural heritage point of view, the man from Snowy River survives: in State Forests, and away from such areas of acute environmental importance. And the heritage remains in the huts and remembrances of alpine grazing which exist in the park.”

“The end of grazing is a significant step for the environment – the high mountain ecosystem and especially for catchment management, as the Alps are the headwaters of several major rivers of the Murray-Darling system – the most important river system in southeastern Australia.” Mr Good said.

MEDIA COMMENT:
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Background on the Carruthers Group:

This iconic name for the group was chosen because Mt Carruthers in Kosciuszko National Park was the most severely eroded site as a result of domestic stock grazing in the Snowy Mountains.

Members of the Carruthers Group:

Dr Alec Costin  
Senior Principal Research Scientist, CSIRO (retired)

Prof. Frank Fenner  
Past Director, John Curtin School of Medical Research, Australian National University. (retired)

Dane Wimbush  
Senior Research Officer, (Alpine Ecology) CSIRO –(retired)

Roger Good  
Senior Project Manager, Mountain Catchments and Alpine Ecologist (NSW NPWS) – (retired). Ecological rehabilitation specialist

Prof. Ralph Slatyer  
Former Director Research School of Biological Sciences, Australian National University

Prof. Jamie Kirkpatrick  
Environmental Sciences (Alpine Ecologist), University of Tasmania

Prof. Geoff Hope  
Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University

Dr Geoff Mosley  
Environmental Consultant, . Past Director of Australian Conservation Foundation.

Graeme Worboys  
Vice Chair (Mountains Biome Theme) International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Commission on Protected Areas.

Dr Jennie Whinam  
Botanist, World Heritage Area, Tasmania and President International Mire Society

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