

MEDIA RELEASE

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MRRA Asks Federal Candidates: What Will You Do To Protect Macedon Ranges?

Macedon Ranges Residents' Association Inc has contacted all Federal lower house candidates in the Bendigo and McEwen electorates, asking what they will do to protect Macedon Ranges from over-population and over-development if elected.

The Association is highly concerned that during its 11 year life, the Bracks/Brumby State government has failed to deliver its promise to provide protection to the Macedon Ranges as an area acknowledged as environmentally sensitive at a State level.

MRRA Secretary, Christine Pruneau, said, *"We also advised the candidates there have been recent attempts to overturn the Macedon Ranges and Surrounds policy (Statement of Planning Policy No. 8), and the Victorian government is now intent on pushing population and development growth into this sensitive area"*.

MRRA has asked candidates:

- **what their views are on protecting Macedon Ranges as an environmentally sensitive area from over-development and over-population, and**
- **what, if elected, they will do to provide long-term protection for Macedon Ranges at a Federal level, in the absence of protection from the current Victorian State government.**

The Association is alarmed that the Brumby government's new Regional Strategy Plan for the southern Loddon region pushes another 20,000 people into a "Calder Growth Corridor" in Macedon Ranges, particularly as the public has never been consulted on the Plan, and much of Macedon Ranges is recognized as amongst the highest fire risk areas in Victoria.

Ms. Pruneau said, *"Macedon Ranges desperately needs help. There isn't any coming from the Victorian government, so we've turned to the Federal sphere. The Macedon Ranges are irreplaceable, fragile, and can be dangerous. Surely it's just common sense that this is the last place population should be being pushed into, that it's a place that needs special protection. It's now or never for protection – and with what the Victorian government is doing, we say it must be now"*.

The Association has asked candidates for responses by Wednesday 18th August, and these will be posted to MRRA's website www.mrra.asn.au before the election on 21 August.

Christine Pruneau,
Secretary.