



Comment on suggestion 26

Skenes Creek Advancement Association Inc.

2 pages



SKENES CREEK ADVANCEMENT ASSOCIATION INC.

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30th November 2017

Dear AEC,

I am writing on behalf of our community to express our strong view that Skenes Creek and Apollo Bay should remain within the Corangamite electorate rather than be transferred to Wannon.

Skenes Creek Advancement Association is a thriving community group which for over thirty years has represented residents of and visitors to Skenes Creek, one of the larger townships on the Great Ocean Road.

We are dismayed by the suggestions from the Labour and National Party that our township, along with Apollo Bay should transfer to Wannon an area with which we have no connection or community of interest. Those proposals seem self-serving rather than in the interests of effective representation.

As a community all our economic and social links and common interests are shared with the coast to the east along the Great Ocean Road.

- it's where the income comes from in the form of tourists,
- it's the route for the only public transport we have and where most of the social links are,
- it's the source of our healthcare and emergency services – we even share our hospital CEO with Lorne!
- it is the area with which we share the Great Ocean Road – the dominant unifying feature of coastal Corangamite.

- We struggle to think of any links to the West as all the decent roads go east or north and, apart from tourists, anyone heading west goes inland from Skenes Creek not along the coast.

Economically our links to Waurn Ponds for shopping, business services etc. are strong - maybe stronger than to Colac and certainly stronger than to Wannon. Warnambool, for example, is 170km away!

We are a coastal town - and our natural fit is with a coastal electorate in which the GOR issues will have primacy. Rather than being federally tied to the farming areas in the Western District.

If you absolutely feel you have to split Colac Otway Shire across electorates then so be it. Bear in mind that COS itself is only a very recent, artificial construct – formed in 1994 from the merger of Otway Shire, City of Colac City and Shire of Colac. Having been part of Otway Shire since 1919, that merger still causes very strong feeling due to the divide and different priorities of the progressive coastal eastern focused Otway region and the traditional, agricultural Colac area.

We would not want the desire to conform to current Victorian local government areas to determine how we should be represented at a federal level.

Kind regards,

Tim Cobb
Secretary
Skenes Creek Advancement Assoc.