



Robyn Parker MP

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 19 March 2013

TOP AWARDS FOR WILDERQUEST APP

The NSW Government's WilderQuest iPad app is proving a hit with children and the digital industry in its first 12 months, winning six gongs at the prestigious AIMIA Awards, including the coveted "Best of the Best" trophy.

Environment Minister Robyn Parker said the free iPad app is a key feature of the WilderQuest initiative, an innovative program aimed at inspiring a love of nature in young children and motivating families to get outside and enjoy the great outdoors.

The iPad app was produced by digital agency Nomad in collaboration with the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and Couch Creative.

"The Annual AIMIA Awards are the longest running and most prestigious awards in Australia's digital industry," Ms Parker said.

"Entries are judged by a panel of more than 160 Australian and international industry experts who assess design, content, usability, technical expertise and overall fitness for purpose.

At the AIMIA awards on Friday, 15 March, the WilderQuest app won in the categories:

- Best Children's;
- Best Learning and Education;
- Best Non-Profit;
- Best Application for a Tablet;
- Best Tourism and Travel; and the
- Best of the Best Award.

"The WilderQuest iPad App was launched last Easter and upgraded in December to simplify its gameplay and add registration, as well as a new Coastal environment," Ms Parker said.

"In its first week of release the iPad app was awarded iTunes iPad App of the Week and ranked Number 1 in the education category in Australia. It continues to have a customer rating of 4.5+ out of 5 and has been downloaded over 22,750 times.

"The industry awards, including the top award, are the icing on the cake for the app, showing it is loved by children and endorsed by peers in the industry.

"The highly creative team at Nomad who developed this iPad application and the team at Couch Creative are to be congratulated for their outstanding work on this collaboration with the NPWS."

Ms Parker said the WilderQuest program includes an online games-based website starring Ranger Sam and his sidekick Pug, a calendar of school holiday activities in NSW national parks, the roving WilderQuest stand and the iPad app.

“WilderQuest was inspired by Richard Louv’s best-selling book, *Last Child in the Woods*, which highlights Nature Deficit Disorder in children,” Ms Parker said.

“By creating an experiential app, as well as an interactive website, the NPWS is building on what many believe is a significant symptom of NDD - too much screen time - to urge children and their families to explore national parks and increase time spent outdoors.

“Children love it because it’s fun and parents love it because it is safe, free and educational.”

- The **WilderQuest** app (for iPad 2 or above) is available for free from the iTunes App Store or at www.wilderquest.nsw.gov.au/app/
- The **WilderQuest** website is at: www.wilderquest.nsw.gov.au
- WilderQuest Discovery activities will be running during the April school holidays throughout the state. For full details of these activities visit www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/Whats-On/wilderquest

Media: Steve Warnock (0428 968 499)