

The NSW and Cwth Environment Ministers recently appointed the 'new' Advisory Committee for the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (GBMWA). The inaugural meeting was held at the NPWS Heritage Centre, Blackheath on Thursday 5 May and enjoyed dinner and accommodation at the Jemby Rinjah Eco Lodge on Friday 6 May 2011.

Six 'original' members:

Doug Benson (Botanical/ecological)
Lincoln Hall (Outdoor self reliant recreation)
Julia James (Water quality/aquatic environment)
Richard Mackay (Chair)
Judy Smith (Zoological/ecological)
Haydn Washington (Conservation organisation)

Are joined by six new members:

Glenda Chalker (Indigenous/traditional owner)
Kevin Cramer (Local Government)
Kevin Duncan (Indigenous/traditional owner)
Martin Fallding (Tourism)
Ann McGrath (Archaeological/cultural heritage)
Brad Staggs (Local Government)



The AC and guests enjoyed a walk through the recently upgraded Grand Canyon Walking Track, led by NPWS Project Manager Tim Lanyon

See the short video on Youtube that features the heritage of the Grand Canyon Walking Track at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJydblaotck>

The Committee thanked Keith Muir, Executive Director Colong Foundation for his informative presentation on the impacts of long wall coal mining and resolved to write to the NSW and Commonwealth Environment Ministers and the Department of Industry and Investment recommending:

- the reservation of the Gardens of Stone Stage 2 proposal;
- subsidence Protection Zones for swamps, streams, Aboriginal heritage, cliffs and pagodas;
- no discharges to pristine streams, including the Wolgan and Wollangambe Rivers, and all discharges treated to drinking water standards;
- reject open-cut coal mining in the public forests of the scenic and diverse Gardens of Stone region.

The Committee thanked Joan Domicelj for the enormous effort and time that she was able to contribute in her role as former Chair and presented her with a specially commissioned artwork from local Aboriginal artist, Mr Chris Tobin, who said "It is a gift to thank and acknowledge Joan's passion and commitment in her role, helping to protect our Country and our people."



The next meeting will be held at Broke on Thursday 11 and Friday 12 August.

The GBMWA Advisory Committee is made up of scientific, technical, Aboriginal and community members appointed by the State and Commonwealth Environment Ministers. The Strategic Plan for the Area is used by the Committee to guide its operations and in providing advice to those Ministers regarding issues relevant to the Area.

The Advisory Committee meets quarterly in different locations around the million hectares of spectacular national parks and reserves that comprise the GBMWA, recognised and protected for its outstanding universal values.

For more information contact the World Heritage Executive Officer
by telephone on (02) 4784 7326 or via email to gmb.worldheritage@environment.nsw.gov.au