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**“Society welcomes discussion on legal framework for mining”**

The Blue Mountains Conservation Society (BMCS) welcomes the Environmental Defender’s Office NSW’ discussion paper ‘Mining Law in New South Wales’. BMCS acknowledges the need for reform and the regulation of coal mining and coal seam gas extraction does not safeguard positive outcomes for community and the environment.

Representatives of BMCS and other organisations from around the state attended the launch of the Environmental Defenders Office NSW discussion paper on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2011. The paper recommends a series of changes that include empowering authorities and community under planning law.

“We agree whole-heartedly there is a sincere need for reform in our state. There should be more checks and balances for the mining industry, not less. Community concerns are often ignored, and industry and decision makers have not adopted Ecological Sustainable Development in the exploitation of mineral resources. We can do better,” says Lachlan Garland, President of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society.

“There are a number of coal mines and mining complexes in the Western Blue Mountains region, with many project applications on the table for new mines or expansions. The role of community and the uptake of their concerns could be significantly better prioritised in the decision making process.

“The ‘Coalpac Consolidation Project’ proposal, which seeks to rip up the publicly owned Ben Bullen State Forest and destabilise the pagodas of the Gardens of Stone, will also severely impact on the local community. Coalpac, under current planning legislation, can largely disregard community concerns about property damage, property value, loss of amenity, and health issues from dust and other pollutants.

“We thank the EDO for their leadership on this important discussion” says Lachlan Garland.

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**Link to discussion paper**

[http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/pdf/pubs/110628mining\\_law\\_discussion\\_paper.pdf](http://www.edo.org.au/edonsw/site/pdf/pubs/110628mining_law_discussion_paper.pdf)

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