



Protect the Gardens of Stone

“Say NO to open cut mining!”



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“O’Farrell government leaves Gardens of Stone vulnerable”

The O’Farrell government has released its strategic regional land use plans, which make a mockery of its promise to permanently protect sensitive natural areas and prime agricultural land from mining and coal seam gas exploration and extraction. Conservation groups are up in arms that internationally significant areas like the Gardens of Stone will be left vulnerable to threats from mining and other high impact activities.

“We see from the release of plans there is no clear or certain protection for natural areas, agricultural lands, public lands or water supply catchments. The promise in the lead up to the election by the O’Farrell government has been broken; it’s Strategic Regional Land Use Policy isn’t worth the paper it’s written on,” says Justin McKee, Blue Mountains Conservation Society.

“We were expecting to hear some great news for our environment, instead we are appalled. Safeguarding the benefits of nature is pivotal to the future prosperity of NSW. Healthy ecosystems provide billions of dollars of goods and services essential for the wellbeing of local communities and businesses. The impacts of coal and coal seam gas on our natural areas and local communities are increasing rapidly.

“Not one square inch of NSW has been placed off limits to mining or coal seam gas activity. Iconic and internationally significant areas like the Gardens of Stone, western Blue Mountains NSW are left vulnerable under the O’Farrell government.

“Keeping the natural values of the Gardens of Stone in tact, would bring economic benefits to our State’s economy for hundreds years, far outstripping the short 21year burst of income a mining lease would bring. It’s time the O’Farrell government showed us ‘real change’ for NSW by honouring its pre-election promise.

“We call on the Premier to deliver legislative change which place sensitive natural areas and strategic agricultural land off limits to mining and gas activities.” concludes Mr McKee.

Media Contact: Justin McKee: 0404 824 020

Further information: NSW government ‘Strategic Regional Land Use’ information page
<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/StrategicPlanning/StrategicRegionalLandUse/tabid/495/language/en-AU/Default.aspx>