

Gardens of Stone gets support in Parliament ... but still no protection!

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The issue of protecting the Gardens of Stone has been highlighted in State Parliament recently. In late September the NSW Government introduced legislation to add 4,500 ha of “unproductive” state forests to the national parks estate mostly for koala protection.

During the debate in Parliament the Greens moved a series of amendments to increase the area added to the national park estate to 200,000 ha and to protect a number of other areas including Gardens of Stone. This bill sought to transfer Ben Bullen, Newnes and Wolgan State Forests, to national parks management as a state conservation area. These three state forests make up the bulk of the Gardens of Stone conservation proposal.

Despite a lot of debate about the values of Gardens of Stone area, these amendments did not succeed in gaining enough support to pass into law. You can read the Hansard record of this debate on 17 October at the NSW parliament’s website.

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/bills/Pages/bill-details.aspx?pk=3560>

For more on the Gardens of Stone Conservation proposal, see:

<https://www.bluemountains.org.au/gos2/proposal.shtml>

Meanwhile, the *Sydney Morning Herald* published a story on what has been going on behind the scenes in the NSW Government in relation to getting the Gardens of Stone area protected. In 2017 a government proposal to add some small but valuable parts of the Gardens of Stone proposal got close to being considered but was stymied by the Shooters’ Party surprise win in Orange by-election.

<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/conservation/plan-to-increase-nsw-national-parks-scuttled-by-berejiklian-government-20181015-p509qz.html>

It is frustrating but the campaign to protect this spectacular area continues.

<https://www.bluemountains.org.au/gos2/what.shtml>

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