



NSW MINERALS COUNCIL
PO Box H367
Australia Square, NSW 1215

T 02 9274 1400
nswmining.com.au
ABN: 42 002 500 316

**AGENDA
NSW Minerals Council**

UHMD Joint Working Group Land Management

Singleton Information Centre, Townhead Road, Singleton NSW

Friday 8 May 2015: 9:00am - 12:30pm

1. Welcome and apologies
2. Minutes of the meeting dated 5 November 2014
3. Update on current projects
4. Grazing study update
5. Beneficial reuse of voids project
6. 2014 Rehabilitation reporting results
7. Rehabilitation mapping and signage in the Hunter
8. 2014 UHMD workshop - ideas and issues - land management
9. Liddell Grazing Study outcomes (tentative)
10. Other business

DRAFT Minutes

**UHMD Joint Working Group Land Management
Singleton Visitor Information Centre
New England Highway, Singleton**

30 July 2014: 1.30pm to 4.30pm

Present

Nigel Charnock	Glencore
Jason Desmond	The Bloomfield Group
Rebekah Gomez-Fort	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Monique Meyer	NSW Department of Trade and Investment
Tony Cox	NSW Department of Trade and Investment
Julie Thomas	Muswellbrook Coal Company
Craig Flemming	Muswellbrook Shire Council
Bill Baxter	Coal & Allied
John Drinan	Singleton Shire Healthy Environment Group
Jim Morgan	Wybong Action Group
Wendy Bowman	NSW Mine Watch
Sean Constable	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Ron Fenwick	UHMD - Individual Contact
Neil Griffiths	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Claire Doherty	NSW Minerals Council

Apology

Matt Parkinson	Bayswater Power Station
Laurie Perry	Wonnarua Nation Aboriginal Corp
Neil Nelson	Singleton Beef and Land Management Association
Troy Favell	Peabody Energy
Greg Sullivan	NSW Minerals Council
Lester McCormick	Department of Primary Industries
David Frith	NSW Minerals Council
Jo Powells	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Xanthe Willis	Anglo American
Angela Hawdon	Fauna & Flora
Luke Stevens	BHP Billiton
Kirstin Blaikie	Anglo American

1. Welcome and Apologies

Claire Doherty welcomed the members, and noted the apologies, including Troy Favell (Chair), and advised that she would chair the meeting.

2. Confirmation of the minutes from the 30 July 2014

The minutes of the meeting on 9 May 2014 were confirmed.

3. Update on projects

Grazing Study

Bill Baxter advised on the progress of Coal & Allied:

- Cattle have been blood tested.
- The analogue site water is not in place yet.
- Since testing the cattle have been divided into the rehabilitation herd (which are on rehabilitation near the study site) and analogue herd (in a paddock near the Wandewoi analogue site).

Neil Griffiths advised:

- The contract with ACARP has been finalised - ie funding is now all secured.
- There may be a formal launch with the Minister's office
- Cattle have done really well to date
- Delays in getting cattle on the Coal & Allied sites may mean that they are only on there for six months (dependent on the decision to sell that the lessees make). This decision will be informed by the Grazing Study Advisory Panel.

Tony Cox noted that at the NSW Minerals Council Environment and Community Conference a consulting firm that has been undertaking a trial at Oakey Creek in Queensland had a trade stall and that Department of Primary Industries should contact the consultants about that trial. Ms Doherty advised that she has already sent those details to Lester McCormick earlier this year and will pass onto Mr Griffiths to follow up.

Nigel Charnock asked about early results. Mr Griffiths advised that the cattle at Mt Arthur will be tested when the cattle go on at Coal & Allied and these will be the first results. Mr Charnock noted that their study at Liddell has shown some copper deficiencies, but not at concerning levels for the type of operation that they are representing (steer trading). The Joint Working Group invited Mr Charnock to present on the Liddell project at the next meeting (or an early meeting next year - Mr Charnock is waiting on a report from his consultant).

ACTIONS:

- NSWMC to provide Neil Griffiths with contact details for the consultants undertaking the trial at Oakey Creek in Queensland.
- NSWMC to invite Nigel Charnock to present the results of the Liddell grazing study to the Joint Working Group - Land Management in early 2015.

4. Rehabilitation Principles and Commitments - First annual reporting

Paper noted.

5. Beneficial use of voids project - next steps

The following issues were discussed:

- Craig Flemming noted that the regional context is important. Ms Doherty noted that this is part of the input through the workshop, which is the next stage of the project.
- Digby Short, spoke about his experiences in Western Australia where he worked from Premier Coal on their pit lakes including Lake Kepwari. He noted that the biggest issue is usually trying to keep the community away from mine lakes, that there is great call for recreational lakes.
- The Working Group noted that they continued to be concerned about where voids and other rehabilitation sat in the long term land use of the Upper Hunter. Miss Doherty noted that this work should be undertaken by the Synoptic Plan for the Upper Hunter. The Government are committed to delivering this plan, however it is currently stuck between Department of Planning and Environment and Division of Resources and Energy. NSWMC have advocated for wide stakeholder engagement in this process. Importantly this is not a land use plan, but a plan about how to take advantage of the opportunities presented by rehabilitation and how to integrate rehabilitation with neighbouring mines and other land uses such as conservation corridors. The plan should give the overview of what rehabilitation is currently approved, including where the voids will be situated.

The additional work to assess void water quality was supported by the Joint Working Group. It was noted that there are few final shaped voids. Mr Baxter noted that current voids are only going to provide limited information and that modeling will be necessary. The Vickery Void and Westside void, although not in the Upper Hunter, could provide information for the project. Wendy Bowman noted that the high salinity nature of the Upper Hunter generally needed to be considered in the water analysis.

ACTIONS:

- Provide the consultants with the following information with regard to Muswellbrook Coal Company's commitment to create a waste dump from the void:
 - Muswellbrook's policy on rehabilitation
 - Contact details for Craig Flemming, Muswellbrook Council.
- Include Vickery Void and Westside void in the literature review for the project and possibly in the assessment of void quality.
- NSWMC to follow up the progress of the Synoptic Plan for the Upper Hunter and advise the Government of the Joint Working Group's desire to see this project being developed.

6. Annual Workshop

This paper was noted. Ms Doherty noted that the Annual Workshop is being planned with a group of stakeholders. It is planned to have a gallery with stands for all the working groups as was done last year.

ACTIONS:

- NSWMC will circulate the paper.
- NSWMC will send an email out of session seeking ideas for collateral for the stand and volunteers.

7. Other Business

There was no other business.

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Agenda Item 3

UPDATE ON CURRENT PROJECTS

Grazing Study

An update is provided in Item 4.

Beneficial reuse of voids

An update is provided in Item 5.

Rehabilitation Principles and Commitments

An update is provided in Item 6.

Biodiversity Reference Sites

Coal & Allied and Glencore regard this project to be important, but consider it inequitable to be funded solely by them. NSWMC has been canvassing members to ascertain the level of interest in involvement in the project.

NSWMC has been liaising with the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) to determine whether the project could be partially funded from other sources.

FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION

**NSW Minerals Council
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Agenda Item 4

GRAZING STUDY UPDATE

Issue

The Grazing Study officially launched on 4 February 2015. The Grazing Study Advisory Panel met on 25 March 2015 to discuss the progress of the study.

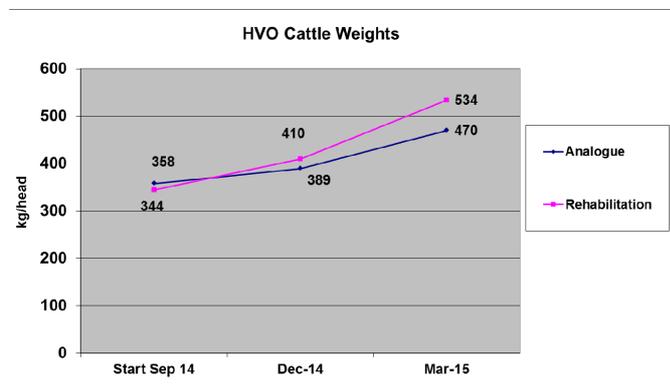
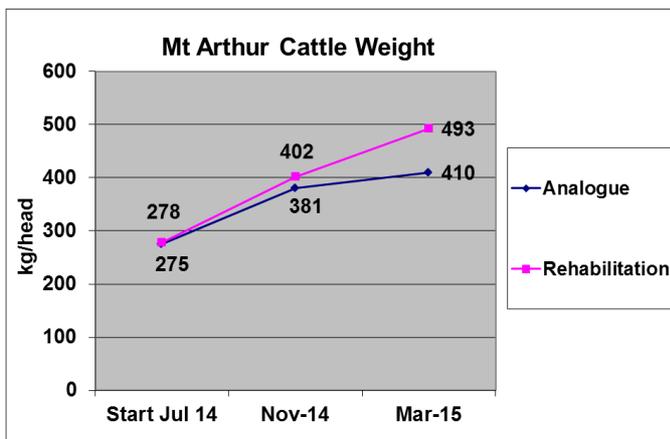
Background

The former Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson visited RTCA's HVO site on 4 February 2015 to launch the grazing study. The Minister had a good understanding of the project and expressed support for the initiative. The visit generated extensive media coverage with local television, radio and print media all covering the event.

ACARP funding for the project has also been secured for the Department of Primary Industries.

The Grazing Study Advisory Panel met on Wednesday 25 March to discuss the cattle's progress. The minutes of the meeting are attached. Key points include:

- Cattle at rehabilitation sites have gained more weight than the analogue sites (see graphs below).
- Soil at all sites is deficient of sulphur and phosphorus. A decision was made not to add Superphosphate to the rehabilitation site.



FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION

Grazing Study Advisory Panel Meeting
 Hosted by Mt Arthur Coal at Edderton Homestead
 Wednesday 25 March 2015

Minutes (summary) of meeting

Present: Neil Griffiths, Luke Stevens, Trevor and Nerelle Petith, Bill Baxter, Peter Nichols, Phil Baker, Wendy Bowman, Andrew Rode.

Apologies: Lester McCormick, Matthew Newton, Leonie Ball, Neil Nelson

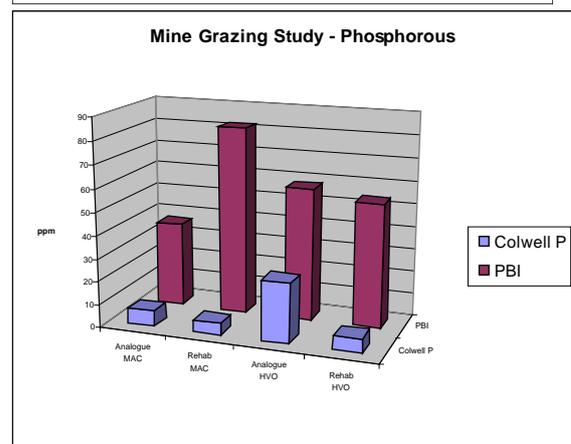
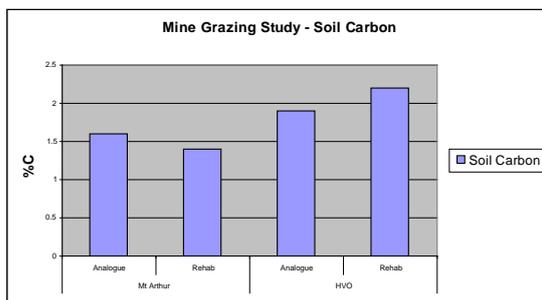
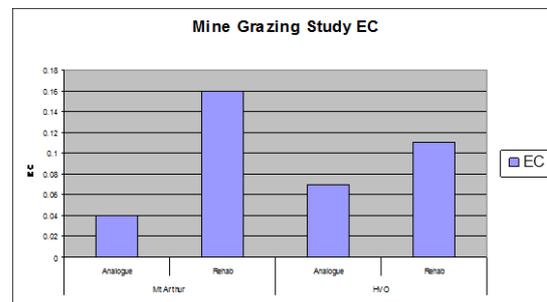
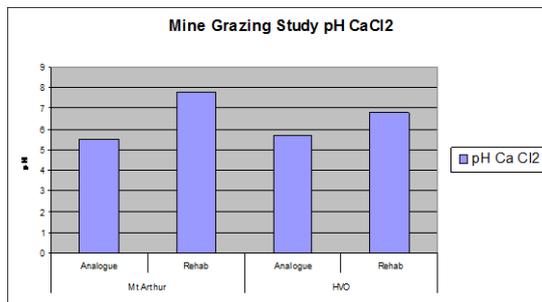
Summary of Activities

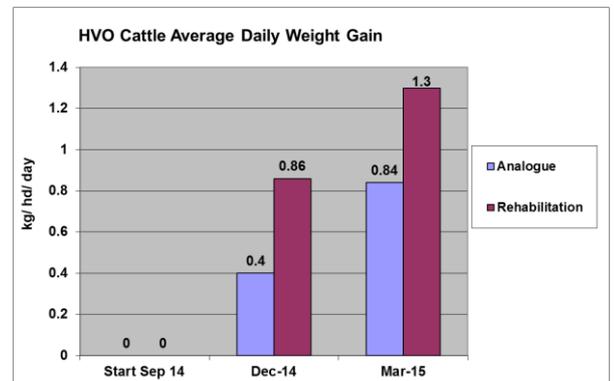
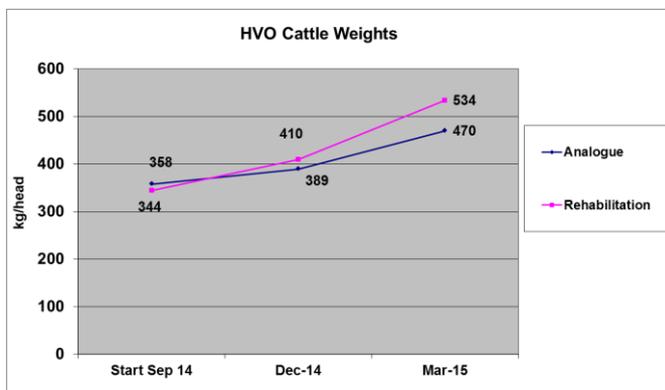
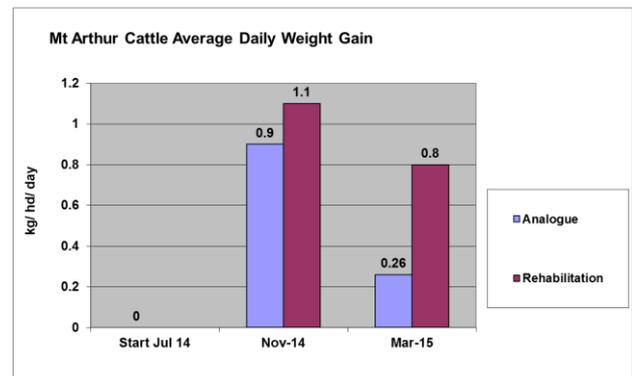
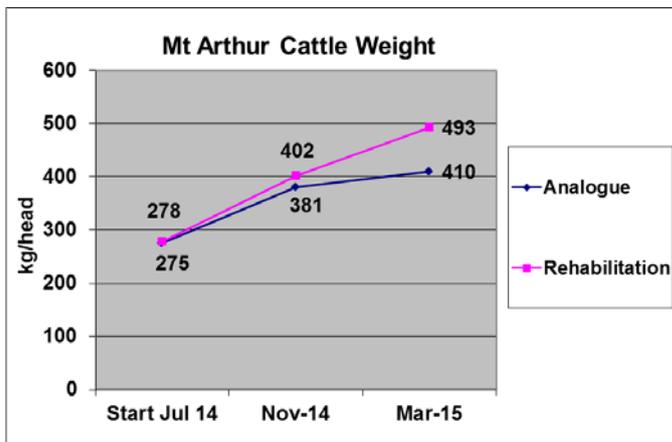
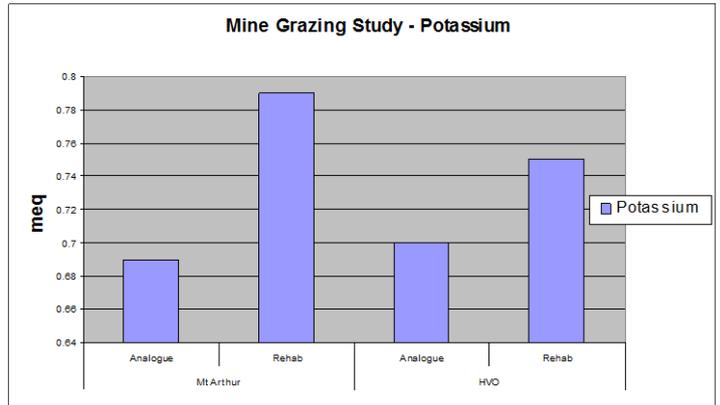
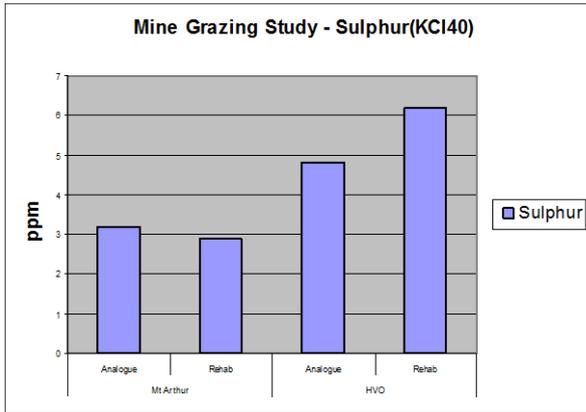
Pasture monitoring (botanal) is occurring every six weeks giving an assessment of pasture species present and herbage mass on offer (green and dead).
 Exclusion cages have been installed (two in each paddock) which will allow measurement of pasture growth.
 Samples have been taken for Feed Quality Analysis.
 Cattle have been weighed at both sites in March (see later).

The NSW Minister for Primary Industries and entourage visited the HVO site in February. The minister expressed good understanding and support for the project. The visit generated extensive media coverage with local TV, radio and press all covering the event. Thanks to Bill and C&A for help with this event.

Presentations giving over view of the project were made to a NSW govt. regional managers meeting in Feb. and at the 5th Hunter Mine Rehab Conference held at Singleton on 26 March.

Summary of results: we discussed soil test results and cattle weights (information presented at mine rehab conf., see graphs)





Pasture and Cattle Management :

Previously we had discussed a range of options for pasture and cattle monitoring and management.

At this meeting we decided to firm up our monitoring program, and to keep current cattle for another year.

The choice was to sell present steers and replace or grow out what we have. Decision to grow out was influenced by desire to keep as long as practical to increase likelihood of finding trace element or heavy metal issues with final blood testing.

Also noted that current animals had settled into the study areas and were easy to handle. Unless conditions change significantly we will aim to keep these animals until this time next year (when we should discuss replacement stock numbers)

Also agreed that we will maintain the current program of monitoring pastures every 6 weeks and weighing cattle every 12 weeks and then move cattle to new paddock after weighing (as occurring this time with March weighing).

Site Inspection

The inspected cattle and pastures in the study area.

Next meeting

Proposed that next meeting would be at HVO in approximately 6 months.

Note: general agreement that advisory panel meetings would alternate between HVO and MAC and that we would aim to visit each site annually ie two meetings per year unless need to change due to unusual circumstances.

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Agenda Item 5

BENEFICIAL REUSE OF VOIDS PROJECT

Issue

Golders has provided the draft literature review and end use review reports (attached). The next stage will involve consideration of water quality in local voids.

Background

The draft reports provide an in-depth summary of voids in Australia and in the Hunter, and considers options for beneficial reuse. These reports may be updated to include a case study of Glencore's Westside mine, and any potential additional information relating to closure of some of the Hunter mines analysed.

The next stage of the project involves assessing the historical water quality of the following voids:

- Westside (Glencore).
- Mt Arthur Coal (BHPB).
- Ravensworth West (Glencore) - to be confirmed.

Golder Associates has provided a scope of work for this next stage, which has been approved. It involves:

- Collating key water quality data for three pit void lakes from operations in the region.
- Undertaking a gap analysis of parameters, sites and dates where any key water quality data is missing and is required.
- Conducting multivariate and time-series statistical analysis and presenting a summary of water quality data as:
 - Trends for key water quality parameters over time.
 - Differences and commonalities of water quality between the different void lakes.
- Comparing and contrasting water quality data against pit void lake predictions.

FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION

**NSW Minerals Council
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Agenda Item 6

2014 REHABILITATION REPORTING RESULTS

Issue

NSWMC is currently preparing to report rehabilitation data for 2014.

Background

The 2014 collated industry rehabilitation data as well as individual company reports are currently being prepared.

NSWMC will present the results at the meeting, if completed in time.

FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION

NSW Minerals Council
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Agenda Item 7

REHABILITATION MAPPING AND SIGNAGE IN THE HUNTER

Issue

NSWMC would like to consider a project idea around mapping and signage of existing rehabilitation land in the Upper Hunter.

Background

NSWMC believes it is a good idea to be showing existing areas of land that have been rehabilitated to either bushland or agricultural areas in the Hunter region. This could be undertaken through road signage and supported mapping.

It is understood that most of the existing rehabilitated areas are located in the area between Singleton and Maitland. The Division of Resources and Energy (DRE) could be approached to assist with the identification of rehabilitated areas. In the past DRE has indicated a willingness to contribute financially toward some form of rehabilitation project.

Recommendation

NSWMC recommends that the working group approve the commencement of investigations into this initiative as part of the working group's activities.

FOR DECISION

**NSW Minerals Council
UHMD Joint Working Group Land Management Meeting – 8 May 2015**

Agenda Item 8

2014 UHMD WORKSHOP - IDEAS AND ISSUES - LAND MANAGEMENT

Issue

The working group needs to consider the issues and ideas raised at the 3 December 2014 annual UHMD workshop.

Background

More than seventy people attended the Annual UHMD workshop in Muswellbrook on 3 December 2014. The workshop aimed to evaluate the direction of the Dialogue and what the key issues are. There were a number of ideas developed for dealing with existing issues such as air quality, rehabilitation and the future use of mined land and social impacts, as well as new issues relating to economic diversification and industry-government partnership.

There was a strong focus on improving both government and community relations and communication. One of those key issues was a drive to invest, develop and ‘diversify’ the Upper Hunter economy so it can remain strong through the commodity cycles of the resource sector. Another key issue was the desire for an advocacy role to drive stronger industry-government partnership.

Part of the Annual UHMD Workshop involved prioritising issues and identifying ideas for action. These have been outlined in a workshop report (attached).

Issues and actions - land management

There were a few specific issues and related tasks that were identified at the workshop that relate to the Land Management Working Group. NSWMC note that some of the ideas need to be interpreted by the working group to be understood.

Key land management issues

- Biodiversity offsets (management of and policy details)
- Lack of progress of synoptic plan
- Strategic approach final land use e.g. voids, economic use
- Strategic approach to future (mine affected) land use
- Future land use and future economy
- What will the valley look like? Voids? Biodiversity?
- Recognition of end of mine life use for biodiversity offsets
- Rehabilitation (principles, policies and communication)
- Management of ex mine land. Who and how?
- Updated “synoptic plan” to inform future Regional growth and Infrastructure plan

Ideas for action

Action to be considered	High/ Medium/ Low	Why is the priority set this way?	Dialogue action or advocacy	Who should be involved?
Collation of existing baseline approvals – Geographic Information Systems (GIS)	High	Hasn’t been done. Needed for future approvals and rehabilitation outcomes	Advocacy	Assist Division of Resources and Energy (DRE)
Gain agreement on	High	Hasn’t been done.	Advocacy	Role for Dialogue

presentation of spatial data		Needed for future approvals and rehabilitation outcomes		
Prospective areas for future mining - offsets		Hasn't been done. Needed for future approvals and rehabilitation outcomes	Both	Mining companies, DRE
Rehabilitation policies guidelines models	Medium	Can use info from grazing trial etc.	Dialogue can be sounding board	DRE, Department of Primary Industries (DPI) and Dialogue
Feed into vision for what region looks like			Both	Broader community, Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), Dialogue, broader industry
Ongoing management ex mining land and tenure of that land	Medium	Need to know who will be responsible in the future and that the land is managed sustainably	Advocacy	

Other land management issues

There was also some general discussion of issues that related to land management. They are:

- Alluvial lands should not be touched.
 - Look at what has been mined.
 - Identify areas in the Hunter Valley
- Tourism opportunity for rehabilitated mine land - improve cultural / physical
- Biodiversity offsets versus final land form
 - Ratios = problematic
- Grazing within Biodiversity offsets land - UHMD advocacy
- Public communication about biodiversity offsets
 - Challenges faced by mining industry - best solution?
- Information sharing (mines and public) regarding rehabilitation (best practice etc.)
 - ACARP = resource / forum
 - NSWMC Conferences
- Regional and strategic approach to final land management
- Agriculture / aquaculture opportunities should be investigated.
- Mining companies to assist local Aboriginal groups by providing Aboriginal artifacts kept at mines for a museum.

Summary

Overall, the ideas and issues raised appear to seek a better understanding of biodiversity impacts, rehabilitation approaches and land use strategy across the Upper Hunter, at present and into the future. There are also some specific suggestions, such as mapping rehabilitation areas and providing Aboriginal artifacts to Aboriginal communities. Several of the ideas may already be being addressed through initiatives such as:

- Upper Hunter Synoptic Plan

- Upper Hunter Strategic Assessment
- Rehabilitation Guidelines
- Strategic Regional Land Use Plan for the Upper Hunter

Recommendation

NSWMC recommends that the working group considers the ideas and issues raised at the annual workshop and provides advice to the Steering Committee on the relative merit and priority of the various initiatives suggested, together with any other relevant observations.

FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION