

JEWEL CAVE PRESERVATION AND REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association (AMRTA) recently received over whelming support from its membership, to undertake the well needed Jewel Cave Preservation and Redevelopment Project. The AMRTA, managers of Jewel Cave, are extremely excited about the project and are committed to cave management and tourism within the region contributing \$1.1 million of its own funds to the \$3.1million project.

The Jewel Cave project looks at eco-sensitive buildings and infrastructure that will compliment the natural environment, upgrading 50 year old wiring and lighting, creating an interpretive centre and cafe to increase education and visitor amenities and the re-vegetation (with endemic plants to the site) of the existing site to help recharge the water table and preserve site integrity.

Margaret River architects, Willcox and Associates have been awarded the contract to design and build the interpretative centre and café at the Jewel Cave site as part of the upgrade of the facilities. The Willcox and Associates concept was in keeping with our brief and in particular answered our requirement for environmentally sustainable features through its attention to passive solar design, natural ventilation, solar water heating, insulation, water storage and efficiency, minimal artificial light and waste management systems.

AMRTA CEO Francine Errico said the design created a sense of arrival into the cave precinct, through the Karri forest, and was somewhat understated keeping the cave as the central attraction.

'You could say it is anti architecture playing down its presence amongst its stunning environment and the cave', Ms Errico said.

The partially underground building with unique native vegetation rooftop garden and circular skylight is designed to both capture water and retain treated effluent to stop it filtering through into the pristine Jewel Cave below.

The AMRTA still have a long way to go but it is so exciting to start this project which has been many years in the making.' Ms Errico said.

It is anticipated that the whole project, including the new car parks, the building and the work within the cave will take approximately two years to complete. The full plans and working drawings will be available to view at the ACKMA 2009 conference and the AMRTA is excited to be able to walk delegates through the project. The initial project concept designs by Chris Willcox & Associates have been included with this article

This project has been at least 20 years in the development and the AMRTA would like to thank

past managers and committee for having the foresight and commitment to ensure the stunning Jewel Cave is preserved and protected.

For further information on this project please contact Lindsay Hatcher – Natural Environment and Projects Manager:
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Above: Architect's Concept Drawings of the new Jewel Cave Intrepretation Centre. **Below:** Lindsay Hatcher, Kent Henderson, Jayme Hatcher and Anne Wood at CaveWorks, Margaret River.



Lindsay Hatcher, Kent Henderson, Jayme Hatcher and Anne Wood at CaveWorks, Margaret River.