

From: [Levitt, Howard](#)
To: [Greg Moore](#)
Cc: [Frank Dean](#)
Subject: Re: Thank you
Date: Sunday, November 23, 2014 6:54:00 AM

Hi Greg:

I was thinking about you over the past three days, while we were on our excellent, but exhausting and blazing hot, tour of Uluru, Kata Juta, and Watarka NPs. Uluru is impressive, but somehow less so than expected. Maybe it's because we have some impressive monoliths in the US Southwest. Most likely, it was simply too damn hot to enjoy the place fully - for example, the 9.4 km base trail was closed due to extreme heat - over 41 C. Still, worth the visit, if for no other reason than that Uluru is key to many Aboriginal creation stories. Be prepared for a very long drive from Alice Springs, through country that resembles the Nevada desert. Ask the manager of Uluru NP why they haven't eliminated the option of climbing the rock ... even though the indigenous owners have stated unequivocally that they don't want people climbing it. Seems strange and insensitive to me.

Kata Juta was on day 2, and our visit included a dawn hike on a great trail in the Valley of the Winds. Another long drive followed, to the most beautiful of our three NPs - Watarka. We did another dawn hike this AM, a 4.5 mi loop trail up to and around the rim of a beautiful box canyon. Because we had heavy rains (and the most exhilarating electrical storm we have ever seen) last night, the creek in the canyon had flowing water - a rare treat.

Because of who is hosting your tour, you will probably be staying in some very nice lodges, all of which are located some distance from the various featured locales.

Be prepared for long hours in a vehicle, and very high temperatures. You won't need serious hiking shoes in any of the places you visit. Thunderstorms are a possibility, so bring a rain parka if you have one.

Let me know your impressions after you've done your tour.

Hope you blokes are having fun on your Vic tour - I'm sure you are.

We're heading to Melbourne tomorrow - having dinner tomorrow night with Jo Hopkins' family.

Sydney seems like weeks ago.

Howard

On Sat, Nov 22, 2014 at 10:54 PM, Greg Moore <GMoore@parksconservancy.org> wrote:
How are you doing Howard? How was Uluru?

Greg

On Nov 23, 2014, at 5:40 PM, "Howard Levitt" <howard_levitt@nps.gov> wrote:

Hi Doug and Matt:

Welcome to our world!

I have personally offered to meet w Andrea and Save Our Rec anytime, anywhere. But when they say they want dialogue, what they mean is that they want to enter into a negotiation w the park to open more areas than our Dog Mgt plan offers to off-leash dog walking. Us and them - that's it.

Hopefully, you didn't leave them with the impression that any of their worldview makes any sense.

Howard, from the Outback of Australia.

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 21, 2014, at 10:17 AM, Doug Overman

<DOverman@parksconservancy.org> wrote:

Hi, all.

As you know we recently received a request from Andrea Buffa to meet with Conservancy board members. As an alternative, we agreed to meet at the staff level, and Matt and I met with Andrea and Cassandra Fimrite yesterday.

We clarified the roles that the Conservancy does and doesn't play in our partnership work, i.e. we don't work to influence NPS park management policy. Mostly, they presented concerns that GMP includes multiple references to curtailing access to park sites – not just related to the dog plan, but in general. We didn't speak to that specifically, but we did highlight the ways the NPS and Parks Conservancy have worked consistently and over years to achieve both public access and resource preservation on the same projects, and that this combination is what attracts significant public support.

What they articulated to us is that they want more direct dialogue. We suggested that perhaps that could happen with the parameters of small numbers and very civil discourse and they seemed to agree. I'm not sure what this accomplishes, but if we can help in any way, please let me know.

dpo

From: Andrea Buffa [[mailto:\(b\)\(6\)](#)]
Sent: Thursday, November 20, 2014 1:57 PM
To: Matt Leffert; Doug Overman
Cc: cassandra fimrite
Subject: Thank you

Hi Doug and Matt,

We're writing to thank you for taking the time to meet with us yesterday. We better understand how you see your work and what your vision is for the Conservancy's work in the GGNRA. And we hope you better understand our perspective as well.

If you can figure out some way to help us ensure that recreation is preserved at the GGNRA and the community is heard as decisions are made about the GGNRA's future, we would greatly appreciate it. There does seem to be a real opportunity for the Conservancy to play a role in bridging the communication gap that exists right now between GGNRA and the surrounding communities.

And, as we said, we would still very much like the opportunity to present our perspective to your board of directors.

All the best,
Cassandra Fimrite and Andrea Buffa for Save Our Recreation

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