

To whom it may concern, re: **Centennial Coal Modification 11 to SSD-7592 (MOD 11)**

I am writing to express my great concern, horror and disappointment that Centennial Coal has applied to dump millions of litres of toxic wastewater into a reservoir which discharges into the Headwaters of Sydneys drinking water supply.

- Centennial Coal has a 23 year long history of ignoring and negligently disregarding the Garden of Stones environment with its nationally endangered unique ecosystems, and of causing permanent damage to the area.

***It has, so far, breached its environmental licence 1400 times across seven coal mine sites in the Blue Mts Region.***

Centennial Coal has proved itself to be an irresponsible environmental vandal without regard for anything outside its determined pursuit of coal and its profit making goals. Centennial Coal's business model is by definition of its actions, an exploitative business model of the worst kind.

In this time of urgent need to act on climate change, when it is critically important to shift to sustainable energy sources and away from fossil fuels, this application must be rejected. To genuinely act to protect fragile ecosystems like the Peat swamps, the Garden of Stones, and all other unique and irreplaceable fragile indigenous ecosystems, it is collectively our global and local responsibility, our moral duty to defend our Australian natural environments.

The intersect where Government works to build a healthy economy, with its historic reliance on the profits of coal mining to Government coffers, effectively disrupts and slows the transition away from fossil fuel industry.

Governments codependency on all large corporations who wield too much power and show blatant indifference to legislative rules, or social cohesion, disrupts real and meaningful environmental change, and pushes us at the cusp of an extreme crisis in regulating the worlds climate and protecting natural systems.

- It appears that effective environmental legislation and consequences to curb rogue operators like Centennial Coal, is lacking. I believe, in this case the current flawed application alone, should never have been submitted, and not even be considered. This application makes a mockery of the intentions of environmental legislation.
- *I strongly object to Centennial Coal's application to dump their toxic waste water into the Headwaters of Sydney's main drinking supply.*

Water is one of the most important resources of the natural world, and clean safe drinking water is increasingly becoming compromised globally, as is the case already in the Blue Mts where high levels of PFAS have been recorded.

- We are fortunate to have the option of such a magnificent water supply which is not yet, I hope, so compromised that peoples lives are put at risk. It should be protected for the long term, for the sustained future of the fresh water ecosystems of the headwaters, for our people, and not threatened by greed and power.

Most large corporations, like all small business models understand, do accept and should take full responsibility for, the fact that vagaries exist in running a business. Vagaries that can impact their profit margins and their usual methods of operation. That is the hallmark of risk in capitalism.

I have no sympathy for Centennial Coals predicament that Mount Piper Power Station will be offline for maintenance this year. Mt Piper Power Station usually accepts Centennial Coals waste water, but will not do so when offline maintenance is required. If Centennial is unable to discharge water to Mt Piper, Springvale mine must be closed and alternative coal supplies, or sustainable power supply found for Mount Piper power station.

- Centennial Coal seems to think it is acceptable that the Headwaters of the river systems, Sydney's water supply should be polluted, should be sacrificed because their business model has not planned to take full responsibility for the toxic waste water they produce.

Yet I am sure that their profit margins would cope in the short term, with accepting the financial cost, of their responsibility to act as a good corporate citizen. A large corporation whose business model relies on extracting coal (a fossil fuel) which is based on exploitation and destruction of the natural environments they operate in, must also comply with adherence to environmental rules.

However, to continue its mining, Centennial Coal, has come up with this application to discharge approximately 5,000,000,000 litres of mine wastewater which is stored underground in Angus Place mine as well as Springvale mine into Sydney's drinking water catchment. Centennial proposes to discharge this waste into Thompsons Creek Reservoir discharges via tributaries of the Cops River that flows through a World Heritage listed National Park and ultimately to Warragamba Dam.

- "Water scientists have previously warned that blending or dilution of dirty water with treated water will exacerbate, rather than address, pollution of the Sydney drinking water catchment as overall load of pollutants will drastically rise".
- "Centennial should be required to treat mine water to ensure that any discharge fully removes contaminants like heavy metals, salt and brine and deliver the zero release system they proposed when the water treatment plant was approved. Anything less threatens the safety of Sydney's drinking water supply and water dependent ecosystems, including endangered and threatened species". Nature Conservation Council NSW

As Mount Piper power station may remain open until the early 2040s, Centennial is seeking permission to dilute and discharge water from Thompsons Creek Reservoir during scheduled offline maintenance periods for the lifetime of the water treatment plant. This could mean up to or around 15 years of huge volumes of dirty water discharge for up to 111 days at a time.

- *Given Centennial Coals long history of environmental vandalism it is not appropriate that they self – monitor the level of contaminants, as they have proposed.*

Centennial mining operations are adjacent to the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area, a unique natural wonderland with more than 80 rare and threatened species and 16 threatened ecological communities.

- Centennial's underground coal mining has already damaged groundwater aquifers under the Gardens of Stone State Conservation Area, draining irreplaceable upland peat swamps, destroying them forever. Unique living species such as the Giant Dragonfly, a survivor from the dinosaur age are at risk of extinction because of the depletion and destruction of the swamps. *A coal mine spill from the Centennial Clarence coal mine into the World Heritage Area resulted in one of the largest fines in the EPA's history.* Centennial removes more than 20 billion litres of groundwater every year, interrupting groundwater supply and drying out peat swamps.

Centennial's operations should be stopped completely and yet they plan on expanding their Angus Place mine. To expand they need to offload billions of litres of toxic wastewater – a problem of their own making. *And a crisis for the remaining endangered platypus populations and other related marine ecosystems of the region.*

- I beseech you to act, to advocate to protect all the sensitive environmental ecosystems of all the areas impacted by Centennial Coal's mining activities. *I respectfully ask you to dismiss Centennial Coals current application, and any further applications to discharge toxic waste water into the Headwaters and to ensure that Sydney's water supply is protected for the long term future.*

Yours faithfully,

(resident Blue Mts)

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