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CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 9/14/2012 8:36 am
Subject: Submission Details for Alan Lindsay (object)

Confidentiality Requested: no

Disclosable Political Donation: no

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Content:

The Southern Highlands Coal Action Group wishes to register its opposition to the extension of approval for Coal Seam Gas (CSG) exploration activities by Apex Energy NL in the Illawarra upper escarpment. Our concern is that exploration of this type within the water catchment poses a risk to drinking water supplies and would set a poor precedent for similar approvals in other areas, including the Southern Highlands, which is also critical part of the Sydney Water Catchment area.

Furthermore we believe that exploration associated with projects of this kind that potentially involve massive interference with environmentally sensitive areas should not proceed until the environmental feasibility of the entire CSG extraction project is thoroughly evaluated. Our understanding is that the proponent is proposing a network of around 160 wellheads across the water catchment area, each connected by water and gas pipelines. They envisage this project as being capable in its final form of supplying up to 20% of the NSW gas requirements which would almost certainly require the pipeline network to extend across the catchment to the high pressure pipeline to Sydney near the AGL gas processing facility at Rosalind Park.

It is almost inconceivable that this level of development, involving a network of roads and pipelines capable of handling heavy vehicle traffic, gouged through an area that is for the most part environmentally sensitive wetland, will prove to be acceptable to the authorities concerned. However if Apex believes they have a workable plan, then let them make their case now, and show the community the extent and implications of their plans before any exploration is done and damage potentially incurred.

It should be understood that the process of exploring for CSG involves the depressuring of the coal seam and the extraction of water, in the same manner as the full-scale extraction process, albeit over a smaller area. However the environmental risk is there and with the structural damage that will certainly occur to the local ecology, we continue to be astounded that the Government allows poorly capitalized companies such as Apex and their drilling partners Ormil to conduct speculative drilling for a project that is almost certainly environmentally infeasible in such an sensitive area- so sensitive in fact that public access is denied.

We note that in the last few days the application by Apex Energy NL for a 3-year extension of exploration activities in the water catchment areas of the upper Illawarra escarpment has been approved, however we urge you to review the any decision to allow drilling to proceed on the basis of the information we have outlined above.

Alan Lindsay

On behalf of the Steering Committee of the Southern Highlands Coal Action Group

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Submission: Online Submission from Alan Lindsay (object)

https://majorprojects.affinitylive.com?action=view_diary&id=41541

Submission for Job: #5550 Apex Gas Exploration Project Mod 2

https://majorprojects.affinitylive.com?action=view_job&id=5550

Site: #877 Illawarra Coal Seam Gas

https://majorprojects.affinitylive.com?action=view_site&id=877