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Date: 9/13/2012 4:12 pm
Subject: Submission Details for Lynden Jacobi (object)

Confidentiality Requested: no

Disclosable Political Donation: no

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Content:

I am a concerned citizen who is quickly becoming alarmed. I feel the following issues must be addressed before CSG extraction is approved in NSW.

Failure of well casings - It should be shown without doubt that the concrete used will not crack, crumble or fail in some way allowing the gas to leak into aquifers. Incidences of this problem have been documented by the CSG industry in the USA. South Western Energy has a document with diagrams showing a cement barrier around the sides of the well preventing gas from migrating to upper levels and into aquifers but when it fails the gas leaks into the surrounds contaminating the drinking water.

The following figures are collected from CSG industry reports in the USA where the problems with CSG are well known. Schlumberger has a review published in 2003 showing that casing failure occurs at alarming rates. It shows that 6% fail immediately upon drilling and that well casings deteriorate over time. Over a 30-year period 50% of well casings failed. An Alberta Energy Resources Conservation Board report shows gas migration at astronomical rates in deviated or horizontal wells and that surface casing doesn't help the problem at all. Archer Well Services shows enormous rates of leakage - 45% in wells in Gulf of Mexico, 34% in the UK and a 40% risk of uncontrolled discharge. In Pennsylvania well leakage is between 6.2% & 7.2% rate of failure for newly installed wells with gas migrating into aquifers.

A recent Queensland report found that over 50% of the wells tested in Qld were leaking.

It has to be shown that the cement and steel used in the construction of well casings have to last forever in order to be safe for future generations. Cement failure caused the blowout in the Gulf of Mexico. Cement failure caused the massive gas leak in the North Sea.

A full health impact assessment should be conducted before permits are issued.

Various studies about the effects of gas drilling have found that there are acute health problems relating to gas drilling activities and that the magnitude of these effects was from moderate to high.

It would be better to know the health consequences now before we allow this irreversible damage to our water supply to take place.

Although the gas industry insists that gas drilling is safe, there are numerous reports showing that there are risks to the environment and health of the community. As well as the problem of chemicals and compounds leaching into the water table, there have been many accidents with spillage of produced water. As far as I know, there is no known way to fix the problem once gas and chemicals (naturally found in coal seams) migrate into the ground water or find their way out through other cracks and fissures exposed when the water pressure is removed. So far there is no guaranteed safe drilling for coal seam gas.

At Fullerton Cove no Groundwater Assessment program will be implemented until this project begins! It seems the Newcastle and Lower Hunter residents and all the animals and birds and fish which rely on the aquifers that supply 20% of Newcastle's drinking water, are being used as an experiment!

There should be no risk of failure if water supplies are at stake. Clean safe drinking water should not be put at risk for the entire future in return for a possible supply of gas from a project that may not be viable at all.

In the USA some gas companies have shown that the gas leaking into the water is not the gas they were drilling for and therefore feel they are not responsible. The drilling process caused the gas leakage. Pockets of shallow gas can find a way to escape up failed well casings and into the aquifers. This has been the subject of a study by the Slumberjay 2010 groundwater report. I could find no information in Australian reports.

The CSG Industry should be responsible for rehabilitation of drill sites.

Dart Energy doesn't have a good record regarding this responsibility. They have compliance issues recorded against them at Fullerton Cove regarding 'the failure to properly rehabilitate a site ... possible acid sulphate soil issues' and a 'lack of appropriate surface water and groundwater monitoring'.

It seems the typical way of the mining industry is to lie, contaminate, pollute, take the profits then walk away and let the taxpayers pay for the cleanup. As well as the contamination of our water supplies, gas drilling causes massive land scarring, pollution, truck traffic and habitation fragmentation by pipelines.

The NSW government needs to step in immediately, call for a Moratorium on CSG and respond to the concerns of NSW residents and prevent drilling until all concerns are satisfactorily answered.

There is enough science out there pointing to huge problems but if we don't talk about this and get concerned and ask the right questions it will just go ahead regardless of future problems and then it will be too late. All costs must be considered (not just the jobs and profits).

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Submission: Online Submission from Lynden Jacobi (object)
https://majorprojects.affinitylive.com?action=view_diary&id=41447

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