

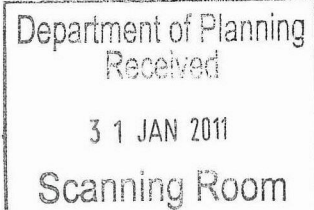
THE COLONG FOUNDATION FOR WILDERNESS LTD.

Friday 28 January, 2010



PCU018967

Colin Phillips
Acting Manager – Mining Projects
NSW Planning
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001



Dear Mr Phillips,

**Submission as an objection to Development Application No. 09_0182 -
continuation of Boggabri Coal Mine to mining in the Leard State Forest**

The Colong Foundation for Wilderness opposes open cut coal mining in state forests as such mining as it is incompatible with conservation and the sustainable use of state forest land and therefore incompatible with state forest tenure.

The proposed mining is not affecting a minor part of the forest. A small sand mining quarry that seeks to sterilise a small portion of a state forest could be excused. This proposal, and other coal mining proposals in association with it, would destroy the majority of the Leard State Forest and should not be tolerated.

The NSW Government has not decided to destroy the Leard State Forest, and it is not open to the proponent of this mining proposal to destroy a large portion of this state forest in apparent contravention to the *Forestry Act*.

Leard State Forest at 7,464 hectares extent is very diverse with two endangered ecosystems and it also contains the habitat for the Feathertail Glider, whose present is rare on the Liverpool Plains.

The unrestricted exploitation of the open cut coal resources would terminate the long-term benefit of conserving these publicly-owned native woodlands. The Leard State Forest was set aside in perpetuity for conservation and sustainable use, and major extractive use is not compatible with such conservation purposes.

The destruction of the recreational and ecological values of this public asset is not moderated in this proposed action. The current proposal seeks to maximise the recovery of the coal to the detriment of the broader public interest in the conservation of Leard State Forest. The 1385 ha of forest that will be cleared by Boggabri Coal,

including Grassy White Box, can never be replaced either through 'offsets' or by 'rehabilitation'.

The proponent has not provided scientific evidence that the species richness or ecological integrity will be retained (let alone enhanced) either through rehabilitation or by reservation of offset areas. The loss of native woodlands in this state forest, particularly the White Box woodlands, would be almost impossible to substitute, as there are so few native woodlands left in the Liverpool Plains bioregion.

A more reasonable mining proposal, one that recognises other values than coal, would propose underground operations, that could, if properly undertaken, protect much of the biodiversity in the state forest. Most of the biodiversity of this state forest is not groundwater dependent and could survive such mining operations.

The determining authority should refuse this application in the public interest. It would be in keeping with the precautionary principle as the Leard State Forest is the largest remaining area of woodland on the Liverpool Plain and should be conserved through appropriate regulatory actions, such as this determination.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'K. Muir', written in a cursive style.

Keith Muir
Director
The Colong Foundation for Wilderness Ltd