Colin Phillips - Online Submission from Tony Hill (object)

From: Tony Hill <tkhill@activ8.net.au>
To: Colin Phillips <Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 1/02/2011 10:56 AM
Subject: Online Submission from Tony Hill (object)
CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>

Leard State Forest is an important remnant of the Liverpool Plains vegetation, contains endangered ecological communities and threatened species, and contributes important ecosystem services to the local area. This forest should be conserved and not sacrificed to unsustainable coal mining.

Name: Tony Hill

Address:
280 Teudts Rd., Bundanoon, NSW 2578

IP Address: - 123.100.34.54

Submission for Job: #3562 Project Approval
https://majorprojects.onhiive.com/index.pl?action=view_job&id=3562

Site: #2081 Boggabri Mine
https://majorprojects.onhiive.com/index.pl?action=view_site&id=2081

Colin Phillips
Environmental Planning Officer, MDA

P: 02 9228 6483
F: 02 9228 6466
E: Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au

Colin Phillips - Online Submission from Ed Valk (object)

From: Ed Valk <jaspan@cirruscomms.com.au>
To: Colin Phillips <Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 2/02/2011 11:11 AM
Subject: Online Submission from Ed Valk (object)
CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>

? Leard State Forest is an irreplaceable forest ecosystem in a degraded landscape. The 1385 ha of critical habitat planned for clearance will not be adequately replaced by species-poor plantings.

? Endangered Groundwater Dependant Ecosystems in the vicinity of the Boggabri Coal project will be damaged by water chemistry alteration and permanent water table-reduction of up to one metre. Cumulative permanent reductions in the water table of up to 2 metres are anticipated to result from the Boggabri Coal and Maules Creek Coal projects.

? Approval of the Boggabri mine will result in the imposition of large-scale mining. The proposed Maules Creek and Boggabri mines will produce up to 20 million tonnes of coal per year. This is larger than any existing Hunter Valley mine, and will induce significant social impacts.

? The Boggabri mine will destroy an existing carbon sink and produce 16.9 million tonnes of greenhouse gases each year. This is equivalent to 10% of all greenhouse gases emitted annually in NSW.

Name: Ed Valk

Address:
Forresters Beach NSW 2260

IP Address: - 125.254.77.147

Submission for Job: #3562 Project Approval
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Colin Phillips
Environmental Planning Officer, MDA

P: 02 9228 6483
F: 02 9228 6466
E: Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au

Colin Phillips - Online Submission from vanessa howe of private (object)

From: vanessa howe <vhowe60@optusnet.com.au>
To: Colin Phillips <Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 2/02/2011 3:54 AM
Subject: Online Submission from vanessa howe of private (object)
CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>

Please do not build another mine.
This proposed mine will destroy the groundwater for the area and destroy the ecosystem

Name: vanessa howe
Organisation: private

Address:
116 Barrenjoey road , Mona Vale 2103

IP Address: c220-239-116-185.belrs4.nsw.optusnet.com.au - 220.239.116.185

Submission for Job: #3562 Project Approval
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Colin Phillips
Environmental Planning Officer, MDA

P: 02 9228 6483
F: 02 9228 6466
E: Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au

Colin Phillips - Online Submission from Patrick Norman (object)

From: Patrick Norman <pat_norman90@hotmail.com>
To: Colin Phillips <Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 1/02/2011 5:04 PM
Subject: Online Submission from Patrick Norman (object)
CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>

Leard State Forest is an irreplaceable forest ecosystem in a degraded landscape. The 1385 ha of critical habitat planned for clearance will not be adequately replaced by species-poor plantings. The necessity of keeping any remnant bushland is crucial in keeping our native species in existence. Coal is becoming increasingly unpopular as a choice of power and as a source of heat. Is this mine going to be productive enough to out way it's environmental damage.

Name: Patrick Norman

Address:
98 Reynolds rd Currumbin Valley. QLD

IP Address: cpe-121-223-81-234.lnse2.woo.bigpond.net.au - 121.223.81.234

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Colin Phillips
Environmental Planning Officer, MDA

P: 02 9228 6483
F: 02 9228 6466
E: Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au

Colin Phillips - Online Submission from Yvonne Lollback of NPA (object)

From: Yvonne Lollback <vonnie.lollback2@gmail.com>
To: Colin Phillips <Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 1/02/2011 1:57 PM
Subject: Online Submission from Yvonne Lollback of NPA (object)
CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>

Leard State Forests is an irreplaceable forest ecosystem in a degraded landscape. The 1385 ha of forest that will be cleared by Boggabri Coal, including Grassy White Box, can never be replaced and neither the 'offsets' nor the 'rehabilitation' can ever reproduce this unique, intact ecosystem. Public forests should not be destroyed for private gain.

Farming communities and groundwater dependant ecosystems in the vicinity of the project will be damaged by reductions in the water table of up to 2 metres from the cumulative impacts of the four mines.

The Boggabri Coal mine will produce up to 7 million tonnes of coal per annum, and the four mines combined are expected to produce more than 22 million tonnes of coal per annum. This is larger than any existing Hunter Valley mine, and will cause major impacts on local communities, their health, their way of life and their livelihoods.

The Boggabri Coal mine alone will destroy an existing carbon sink and produce 16.9 million tonnes of greenhouse gases each year. This is equivalent to 10% of all greenhouse gases emitted annually throughout the whole of NSW. The cumulative impacts in conjunction with the other mines are immense and will make a massive contribution to accelerated global warming.
The Boggabri Coal mine proposal must be referred in it's entirety to the Federal Minister for Environment for consideration under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Name: Yvonne Lollback
Organisation: NPA

Address:
156 Railway Pde, Warrimoo, 2774, NSW

IP Address: cpe-121-216-136-251.lnse2.ken.bigpond.net.au - 121.216.136.251

Submission for Job: #3562 Project Approval
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Colin Phillips
Environmental Planning Officer, MDA

P: 02 9228 6483
F: 02 9228 6466
E: Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au

Colin Phillips - Online Submission from Adrian Pottow (object)

From: Adrian Pottow <apottow@virginbroadband.com.au>
To: Colin Phillips <Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 1/02/2011 1:43 PM
Subject: Online Submission from Adrian Pottow (object)
CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>

? Leard State Forest is an irreplaceable forest ecosystem in a degraded landscape. The 1385 ha of critical habitat planned for clearance will not be adequately replaced by species-poor plantings.

? Endangered Groundwater Dependant Ecosystems in the vicinity of the Boggabri Coal project will be damaged by water chemistry alteration and permanent water table-reduction of up to one metre. Cumulative permanent reductions in the water table of up to 2 metres are anticipated to result from the Boggabri Coal and Maules Creek Coal projects.

? Approval of the Boggabri mine will result in the imposition of large-scale mining. The proposed Maules Creek and Boggabri mines will produce up to 20 million tonnes of coal per year. This is larger than any existing Hunter Valley mine, and will induce significant social impacts.

? The Boggabri mine will destroy an existing carbon sink and produce 16.9 million tonnes of greenhouse gases each year. This is equivalent to 10% of all greenhouse gases emitted annually in NSW.

Name: Adrian Pottow

Address:
8 Homestead Court
Dayboro
QLD 4521

IP Address: - 119.12.251.220

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Colin Phillips
Environmental Planning Officer, MDA

P: 02 9228 6483
F: 02 9228 6466
E: Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au

Colin Phillips - Online Submission from Erica Rink ()

From: Erica Rink <earink@alphalink.com.au>
To: Colin Phillips <Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 2/02/2011 10:07 PM
Subject: Online Submission from Erica Rink ()
CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>

Please do not allow mining to go ahead in this delicate region. I would have thought that with all the climate change warnings we should be looking at alternative forms of renewable energy. the coal industry should be reduced not expanded.

Name: Erica Rink

Address:
2/24 Gardyne St
Bronte MSW 2024

IP Address: 220-245-25-240.tpgi.com.au - 220.245.25.240

Submission for Job: #3562 Project Approval
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Site: #2081 Boggabri Mine
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Colin Phillips
Environmental Planning Officer, MDA

P: 02 9228 6483
F: 02 9228 6466
E: Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au

Colin Phillips - Online Submission from John Talary (object)

From: John Talary <talaryjh@yahoo.com>
To: Colin Phillips <Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 2/02/2011 3:37 PM
Subject: Online Submission from John Talary (object)
CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>

zi oppose the proposed open cut mininin the Leard State Forest which i believe to be not only largely insensitive to the broader ecological concerns of the locality, but also out of step with broad national and global concerns. Most notably, concerns about species loss, loss of bio-divesity and the growing loss of genuine attention to public oppinion regarding the social and existential impact of the project on other supposely minor stakeholders. The myopia of outdated economic management in matters now understood to extend beyond the local, confined to the immediate in time and space is obvious to me.
A naive question. Do the individual decision-makers in the state government and the mining company involved government and the mining company and the on local communities intend to compensate the local, national and global community for the adverse impact of the project, or is accountability waved through minimalist, really token, evaluation processes, which effectively leave the human commuities on the grond acroos the planet to foot the bill for generations to come.
But we the public are no longer ignorant regarding the human consequences (e.g. on functionality and well-being) of environmental degradation for local, national and global communities (i.e. humankind. No longer ignorant that ecological consequences are accumulative and never never self-contained.
the granting of permit for the project in a region already severely affected by caol mining appears grossly myopically - grossly out of touch with current understanding of the importance of the ecology for life especially in mass human societies.
The following points sums up of the major aspects of my opposition to a project whose merit for the state goverment and the mining company is, rhetoric aside, purely economic.

?
Leard State Forest is an irreplaceable forest ecosystem in a degraded landscape. The 1385 ha of critical habitat planned for clearance will not be adequately replaced by inadequate and species‐poor plantings.
?
Endangered Groundwater Dependant Ecosystems in the vicinity of the Boggabri Coal project will be damaged by water chemistry alteration and permanent water table‐reduction of up to one metre. Cumulative permanent reductions in the water table of up to 2 meters are anticipated to result from the Boggabri Coal and Maules Creek Coal projects.
?
Approval of the Boggabri mine will result in the imposition of large‐scale mining. The proposed Maules Creek and Boggabri mines will produce up to 20 million tonnes of coal per year. This is larger than any existing Hunter Valley mine, and will induce significant social impacts.
?
The Boggabri mine will destroy an existing carbon sink and produce 16.9 million tonnes of greenhouse gases each year. This is equivalent to 10% of all greenhouse gases emitted annually in NSW.

Name: John Talary

Address:
4/140 City Road
MEREWETHER, NSW 2291

IP Address: - 120.16.95.233

Colin Phillips - Online Submission from Jane Judd (object)

From: Jane Judd <jandmjudd@dodo.com.au>
To: Colin Phillips <Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 2/02/2011 12:42 PM
Subject: Online Submission from Jane Judd (object)
CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>

The extension of coal mining leases in the Leard State Forest should not go ahead.
* The forest to be removed is not an example of a degraded logged-out area but is actually an excellent example of a good quality forest ecosystem containing extensive areas of Grassy White Box Woodland, an Endangered Ecological Community. I've seen it.
* Rehabilitation after mining can never replace what is being lost. The rehabilitation process being used at present is totally inadequate and basically unsuccessful. Nor will offsets replace what is lost.
* Open-cut mining inevitably disrupts groundwater. The Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems in this area are unique. The stygofauna apparently helps keep aquifers open thus assisting farming production in the area. These ecosystems barely rate a mention in the EIS and yet they form an EEC under the EPBC Act.
* The consultation process did not include any consultation with the Namoi Community Conservation Area Advisory Committee, the Advisory Committee established under the Brigalow Belt and Nandewar Act to oversee all zones of the CCA. This function is described in the Community Conservation Area Agreement. The Leard State Forest is Zone 4.
(I have never made any political donations)

Name: Jane Judd

Address:
PO Box 420
Coonabarabran

IP Address: 122-151-78-205.static.dsl.dodo.com.au - 122.151.78.205

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Colin Phillips
Environmental Planning Officer, MDA

P: 02 9228 6483
F: 02 9228 6466
E: Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au

Colin Phillips - Online Submission from boudicca cerese (object)

From: boudicca cerese <bcerese@activ8.net.au>
To: Colin Phillips <Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au>
Date: 2/02/2011 11:24 AM
Subject: Online Submission from boudicca cerese (object)
CC: <assessments@planning.nsw.gov.au>

I strongly object to this proposal due to the negative impacts it will have on the biodiversity of the region. I have detailed the reasons for my objections below.

I am an Environmental Scientist and I recently had the opportunity to visit Leard State Forest in the Namoi River floodplain in northwest New South Wales, where the continuation and extension of Boggabri coalmine is currently proposed. I am convinced from my study of the environmental assessment for the proposal and the environmental attributes of the area in which the mine is situated that this proposal should not proceed.

Grassy Woodlands comprise one of Australia?s most cleared and degraded ecosystems, with only a small fraction of the original area they covered now remaining (Keith 2006). According to the Boggabri Coal Environmental Assessment, some 624 hectares of the threatened Box-Gum Grassy Woodland (predominantly White Box Grassy Woodland type) will be cleared to facilitate open cut mining of the Project Area. The Box-Gum community is listed as an Endangered Ecological Community in New South Wales and a Critically Endangered Ecological Community under the federal EPBC Act. The expert advice given to the federal government in relation to listing of this community states that less than 5% of the original extent of this vegetation type remains in New South Wales (Beeton). It is unacceptable that such a large area of a threatened community can even be considered for destruction when there are coal resources in other areas that would not require the clearing of this irreplaceable biodiversity asset.

Though the Project Area is located within State Forest, the dominant tree type within the threatened community, White Box (Eucalyptus Albans), does not have commercial value as timber so many of these areas have not been extensively logged. These areas of woodland are in very good condition, with an intact overstorey, an abundance of old hollow bearing trees, and a diverse understorey with very little weed invasion. This contrasts with the majority of the endangered Box-Gum community across the state, which exists largely as small patches, often less than one hectare in size, scattered within a fragmented agricultural landscape. According to the listing advice to the federal Department of Environment, these remnants are often severely degraded, with the health of overstorey trees declining as a result of clearing and dieback and reduced understorey diversity due to grazing and pasture improvement (Beeton). Patch diversity and integrity is also compromised by weed invasion, soil erosion, salinity and overgrazing (Ketith 2006). Thiele and Prober (cited in Beeton) state that less than 0.1% of Grassy White Box Woodlands remain in near intact condition and given this precarious situation I strongly suggest that it is crucial to protect the precious area of this community that remains within Leard State Forest.

In addition to the special significance of the endangered ecological community, Leard State Forest as a whole represents a very important refugia for plant and animal species, being the largest area of native vegetation remaining on the Liverpool Plain and as such, retaining exceptional habitat attributes. As the Environmental Assessment details, some 21 threatened fauna species listed under environmental legislation have been found to occur within the Project Area, with four listed flora species likely to occur there. The clearing of 1,385 hectares of native vegetation for the mining proposal represents a key threatening process for these threatened species. This scale of clearing represents significant habitat loss for many species that are only just hanging on in the largely cleared and fragmented agricultural landscapes of northwestern New South Wales. Many of these species, such as owls, parrots and bats, rely on hollows for breeding and roosting, whilst insectivorous woodland birds need complex understoreys to forage in- attributes that are amply provided for in Leard State Forest but that are often lacking in the small degraded vegetation patches in agricultural landscapes (Keith 2006). The proposed vegetation clearing would lead to significant loss of food resources for threatened species, a major reduction in the tree hollows needed for roosting and breeding, and further fragmentation and degradation of treed habitat in the region. The Threatened

Species Act was implemented to protect populations of fauna and flora that are in danger of becoming extinct and it behoves the state government to take appropriate action to protect them once the rigorous process of assessment determines that they are vulnerable or endangered.

The Environmental Assessment (Hansen Bailey 2010) has a number of inadequacies in its sections on the ecology and biodiversity of the Project Area. It portrays Leard State Forest as an extensively logged landscape, which fails to adequately represent the real situation, vis a vis that due to the lack of commercial interest in certain species, large areas of high quality forest remain. As mentioned above, these areas have intact overstorey with many old hollow bearing trees and a diverse and largely weed free understorey, which are vital habitat attributes for a range of resident threatened fauna.

Secondly, the Assessment (Hansen Bailey 2010) glibly asserts that the clearing of such a large amount of an endangered community is allowable because it will be ?offset? by protection of other areas of biodiversity, rehabilitation of cleared land, the provision of habitat corridors and nesting boxes and the relocation of threatened fauna. It is fantasy to suggest that an intact, functioning natural ecosystem high in biodiversity values can be easily recreated on agricultural and ?rehabilitated? mining land. Natural ecosystems represent a complex web of life with living components and interactions that have evolved together over very long time frames, they cannot be simply recreated by replanting local species in topsoil replaced after open cut mining reduces an area to ground zero. Keith (2006) states that ?restoration of fully functional woodlands is technically difficult, costly and slow? and that attempts to do so on former pastoral lands have not achieved the desired outcomes. The Assessment (Hansen Bailey 2010) maintains that the offset scheme and mitigation measures will result in habitat for threatened flora and fauna remaining ?viable in the long term? (my emphasis) - are they talking in thousands of years? A little longer than the average lifetime of a Koala or Masked Owl I would suggest.

Overall the Assessment is light on detail about the how the offset and mitigation programs would actually function to conserve biodiversity in the region. The actual condition and amount of vegetation on designated ?biodiversity offset? areas (which appear from the project maps to be predominantly cleared agricultural land) outside the project boundary is not detailed, nor is it made clear how they will be ?enhanced?. There is no detail about the means by which ?rehabilitated land will be returned to native woodland,? with the preparation of a rehabilitation/ revegetation plan just a proposal at this stage (Hansen Bailey 2010). In addition, there is there is no mention of any research having been done to determine if the hollow dependent threatened species resident in the forest are likely to use nesting boxes or if the threatened species that would be relocated have been relocated successfully in other circumstances. In total, the whole mitigation and offsets plan fails to convincingly explain how the desired outcome of mitigating and compensating the impacts of the project on biodiversity in the region will be achieved. The assertion that the mitigation and offset measures proposed in the Assessment (Hansen Bailey 2010) would at a minimum ?maintain the biodiversity conservation value of the region? (Hansen Bailey 2010) is simply not true. The loss of 624 hectares of endangered ecological community and the clearing of 1385 hectares of threatened species habitat entails a net loss of biodiversity and severely compromises the conservation values of the region. No amount of fantastical mitigation or offset measures can hide the fact that once that forest is cleared, it, and the life that depends upon it, is gone- forever. As Keith (2006) notes, the ?difficulty in re-creating the composition, structure and function of grassy woodland underscores the value of conserving what remains?.

I therefore strongly urge you to conserve what remains of the endangered community and threatened species habitat in Leard State Forest by rejecting the proposal for the continuation and expansion of the Boggabri coalmine. It is vital that this important area of biodiversity be conserved, not cleared for short-term economic gain.

References

Beeton, R.J.S. (Threatened Species Scientific Committee), Advice to the Minister for the Environment and Heritage from the Threatened Species Scientific Committee (TSSC) on Amendments to the List of Ecological Communities under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act): Box-Gum Listing Advice, retrieved 25th January 2011 from http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/communities/pubs/box-gum.pdf

Hansen Bailey 2010, Continuation of Boggabri Coalmine: Environmental Assessment, Boggabri Coal, P/L, Boggabri. Retrieved 25th January 2011 from http://www.hansenbailey.com.au/publications_on_public_exhibition.htm

Keith, D. 2006, Ocean Shores to Desert Dunes : The native Vegetation of New South Wales and the ACT, DEC (NSW), Hurstville.

Name: boudicca cerese

Address:
1157 stoney chute rd
wadeville 2474 nsw

IP Address: - 116.250.89.13

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Colin Phillips
Environmental Planning Officer, MDA

P: 02 9228 6483
F: 02 9228 6466
E: Colin.Phillips@planning.nsw.gov.au
