

environmentally concerned citizens of orange

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Mr. Paul Freeman Assessment Project Officer Resource and Energy Assessments Department of Planning and Environment GPO Box 39 Sydney NSW 2001 Nov. 5, 2017

Submission Re: Moolarben Coal Operations Stage 1 Mod 14, Stage 2 Mod 3. Dear Sir.

On behalf of the Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Orange I am lodging a submission of objection to the above proposed modification of mining operations in the Ulan district by Moolarben Coal Operations.

Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Orange (ECCO) is a community based not for profit organisation committed to the promotion of environmental values, and is an independent advocate for the environment. ECCO is also a member of the Central West Environment Council, an umbrella organisation representing conservation groups and individuals in the Central West.

ECCO objects to the proposed Moolarben modifications for the following reasons.

The water discharge into the Goulburn River from surrounding mining activity is already excessive. The estimated extra discharge from the proposed MCO modifications would further degrade water quality and add extra stress to an already stressed system. Additional discharge is likely to increase the additional salt content of the water. There is also the issue of groundwater disturbance caused by extended mining activity.

Although a biodiversity assessment has been undertaken, there is no evidence to suggest that a survey of how many hollow bearing trees will be lost in the modification process. The proposed modification, if successful, will result in the destruction of two critically endangered ecological communities, which provide habitat for nine threatened bird species and five threatened microbat species recorded in the area. Other species likely to be affected by habitat removal include the koala, regent honeyeater and the rock wallaby.

Australia has made a commitment under the Paris Agreement of 2015 to work towards reducing global carbon emissions. If this is to be achieved, the extraction of fossil fuels such as coal should be discontinued, not increased .

The proposed MCO Stage 1 Mod 14 Stage 2 Mod 3 must be rejected.

Yours sincerely Nick King President, Environmentally concerned Citizens of Orange