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CC: "savethedrip@mdeg.org.au" <savethedrip@mdeg.org.au>
Date: 2/24/2012 8:23 am
Subject: Moolarben Coal Complex Stage 2 - PPR - Project No: 08-0134 [Scanned]

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to you to object to the MCC PPR Stage 2 Plan, and are calling for the area known as The Drip and Corner Gorge to be transferred to the Goulburn River National Park to ensure the long term protection, appropriate management and legal public access to this regionally significant cultural, educational and recreational river corridor.

Already the coal mining boom, while economically beneficial to NSW, has caused major and unrecoverable devastation to the local catchment areas, and Ulan, Wilpinjong and Moolarben Mines are planning even further expansion.

The most significant impacts to the local environment, and the people of the Mudgee area and beyond who currently enjoy and respect the pristine area of The Drip and Corner Gorge, if MCC PPR Stage 2 is allowed to go ahead as planned will be:

- a. The offset package does not include the culturally and scenically significant area of The Drip and Corner Gorge, thus not securing its long term protection, management and public access.
- b. The threat of permanent damage to the Goulburn River and connected ground water system, especially in an area reliant, to a great extent, on bore water, is unacceptable.
- c. Water use for the three local mines is estimated at 30-40ML per day, which must lead to a water deficit in the near future.
- d. We have no confidence in the ground water modelling accurately predicting water impacts, as there are significant disparities between the Moolarben and Ulan Coal Mines groundwater impact assessments.
- e. MCC PPR Stage 2 requires the clearing of an additional 900 hectares of native forest, and there will be a disturbance footprint of 1450 hectares of native vegetation, including 4 km of Murrumbidgee Creek, 4 km of Eastern Creek and a direct impact on nearly 150 significant native archaeological sites.

As a History and Geography teacher and as parents, it is heartbreaking that such a significant and unique cultural and environmental landscape could be at risk. Just recently we took our two young sons, who are 2 and 3 years old, for a bushwalk through the area for the first time. We were able to marvel at the unique plants, rock formations and beautiful river system. We were also privileged to be able to show them the amazing Aboriginal cave paintings, one of the last links to Aboriginal heritage in the area.

For a landscape of such historical and environmental significance to be simply handed to the mines is criminal. It is our responsibility to be stewards of such places, preserving the unique environmental and historical features of the area for our children and grandchildren into the future.

We call on the Department of Planning to appoint an independent expert panel to fully scrutinise the strategies, assumptions and actions associated with the Moolarben Coal Complex Stage 2 Projected Project Report, and their acquisition of The Drip (and walking track) and the southern cliff of the Corner Gorge.

Yours sincerely,

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