

WOLLAR PROGRESS ASSOCIATION

C/O- POST OFFICE

WOLLAR NSW 2850

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Anthony Ko
Department of Planning and Environment
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Wednesday 2 May 2018

Dear Mr Ko,

Wollar Progress Association members with basic rights access to the Goulburn River have had their rights impacted by the cumulative take of water from the river by mining in the upper catchment.

The Association strongly objects to the proposed expansion of the Ulan Mine underground operations as exhibited as Modification 4.

This proposal will further impact on base flows to the river system. The Assessment Report prepared by Eco Logical Australia does not assess the cumulative impacts of surface flow capture and loss of groundwater base flows to the Goulburn River over the three operating mine sites.

The Association is greatly concerned about the volume of water now being stored collectively across the three mines that would have originally reported to the Goulburn River.

Surface flows in the top of the river during dry periods appear to now be dependent on water discharges from Ulan Mine. This appears to be the case even after storm and rainfall events across the headwater catchment.

Association members were impacted by the Ulan Coal Mine Ltd decision in December 2017 to redirect water discharge away from the Goulburn River to support the irrigation project at Bobadeen. This caused the river to cease flowing even though other waterways in the area had low flows at this time.

The proposal to capture even more base flow to the river system will further impact the basic rights of Association members.

Increasing levels of salinity in the Goulburn River is another impact on downstream water users.

The Association notes a lack of consistency in the regulation of salinity levels in mine discharge to the Goulburn River system.

The Wilpinjong Mine has a limit of EC 500 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ in the environmental pollution licence (EPL) for mine water discharge. The Ulan Mine has a limit of EC 900 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$. This is well above the background salinity levels.

The accumulation of salt load in the river sediments and increasing poor water quality downstream is a critical issue for Association members with property on the Goulburn River.

Recommendations:

1. That the proposed expansion of Ulan Mine be rejected due to cumulative water impacts
2. That rules be put in place to regulate mine water discharge so that natural flows and flow variability in the Goulburn River is restored.
3. That salt load in the Goulburn River be better managed through lower EC limits for mine water discharge in the Ulan Mine EPL.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'B Hughes', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

Bruce Hughes
President