



PO Box 114
Mudgee 2850

Submission of Objection to Ulan Coal Mine Modification 4

To: anthony.ko@planning.nsw.gov.au

Mudgee District Environment Group objects to Ulan Coal Modification 4 for the following reasons:

Impacts at ‘The Drip’:

Our members and the general public have contacted us about their concern that the Goulburn River stopped flowing at The Drip over the summer period. This happened despite large storm events and smaller nearby creeks continuing to flow. Two local families, who have lived near The Drip, for many years, have informed us that even in the worst droughts the headwaters of the Goulburn River continued to supply water. At Christmas 2017 Ulan Mine stopped releasing water into the river. The dry river bed this season is clear evidence that mining in this area has significantly damaged the natural flow. The drawdown of groundwater and interception of surface flows over a large area of the river catchment has impacted on essential base flows that sustain the headwaters of the river. The Goulburn River is now highly dependent on the discharge of treated mine water.

Any increase of drawdown by the expansion of underground mining by Ulan Coal will further threaten regional natural groundwater sources to The Drip gorge. The flow of groundwater to the river and to this popular natural landscape feature will be intercepted.

The NSW government made a commitment in 2014 to the preservation of The Drip. This has led to National Parks and Wildlife developing the walking trails, picnic area and infrastructure. In recent (2017) correspondence the commitment to “Nil Water and Environmental impacts” has been reiterated. The increasing numbers of the public walking to The Drip are concerned about the detrimental impacts of Coal Mining on the water at The Drip.

Impacts on the Goulburn River:

Since the mid-1980s Ulan Coal Mine has been extracting up to 23 million litres per day of groundwater from the Headwaters of the Goulburn River. This important river is the major western rising tributary of the Hunter River.

The cumulative damage to the river of the two additional neighbouring mines, Moolarben and Wilpinjong is evident. Any more expansion will increase the drawdown of groundwater and interception of surface flows over a large area of the river catchment and impact on essential base flows that sustain the Goulburn River.

To sustain the base flow to the Goulburn River at its Headwaters, The Drip and Downstream Mudgee District Environment Group is asking that:

1. Ulan Coal Modification 4 not be approved
2. Ulan Coal Mine enter into an "Agreement" to consistently release good quality water into the Goulburn River that mimics natural flows based on environmental flow rules.
3. An assessment be conducted looking into the cumulative impacts of the regional mining on the health of the Goulburn River. This needs to be an independent regional water study conducted before any expansion of mining is approved.

Further requests:

1. Mining under the Durrigere State Conservation Area should not be approved
2. Due to the increase the impacts on climate change by the additional extraction of coal do not approve this project.

Yours Truly

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "P Setchell".

Phyllis Setchell
President/Chairperson
Mudgee District Environment Group
26.4.2018