

**4<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

**CVA Submission of Objection Bylong Coal Project: SSD 14\_6367**

**Background:**

The Capertee Valley Alliance Inc. (CVA) was incorporated in late 2009. The Capertee Valley Alliance Inc. works for the people and businesses of Capertee Valley and surrounds. Membership in 2015/16 stands at 56 members. We are privileged to live, work in and enjoy a place which has been described as a place of natural beauty and special significance. Capertee Valley is a remote community and strives to maintain strong supportive links with the extended communities and surrounds and aims to represent the Capertee Valley community on issues which affect the sustainability and enjoyment of this unique place. It is situated in the Local Government area of Lithgow and on the southern boundary of Mid-Western, however our postcode is the same as Rylstone NSW. The distance to the mine from the localities mentioned below is approximately 60 kms directly north of Bogee. Google maps will show the closeness of the two areas.

Bogee (Capertee Valley) is the headwaters of the HNCM and runs into the Capertee River.

We share the western boundary of the Wollemi National Park World Heritage Area and as the crow flies (or wind, dust, noise and light transference) localities in the Capertee Valley closest to the proposed Kepco Mines are Mt Marsden, Bogee, and Glen Alice.

Kepco did not instigate public consultation with Capertee Valley residents nor CVA Ink's members prior to the EIS being published. Since, CVA contacted Kepco and requested a meeting to discuss our concerns. CVA did not receive direct notification of a meeting but have been invited to attend the RDES consultation meeting scheduled for 10<sup>th</sup> November 2015

**Key points;**

Korean power company, Kepco, is proposing to mine 6.5 million tonnes of coal per year (Mtpa) over 25 years from 2 open cut pits (8 yrs.) and an underground mine in the highly fertile Bylong Valley.

Directly our concerns are;

1. Dust
2. Noise
3. Light intrusion

4. Serious issues of Impacts on groundwater and surface water to the Wollemi National Park.
5. Spring Creek where the Wollemi Pine was first discovered.
6. Regent Honeyeater breeding ground links to the Capertee Valley breeding locations.
7. Environment, Social and Economic Impacts to the towns of Bylong, Rylstone and Kandos which since the sealing of the Bylong Valley Way enjoy significant tourist dollars which employs locals in these towns. There has been no thought to these impacts in the EIS. We disagree with the EIS in regard to their argument.
8. The predicted long-term impacts on prime agricultural land and water systems in the Bylong Valley are unacceptable and will not be mitigated through proposed offsets and rehabilitation.

The renowned Tarwyn Park natural sequence farming processes will be destroyed.

9. A significant area of prime agricultural land will be destroyed: the mine footprint will disturb 2,875 ha of land including 440 ha of Bioregional Significant Agricultural Land (BSAL), 260 ha being destroyed in open cut, plus 700 ha of mapped Critical Equine Industry Cluster land.

The proposal to replace BSAL at another location is untested and high risk.

10. Impacts on groundwater and surface water will be significant. The highly connected alluvial aquifer system within the stressed Bylong River catchment will have predicted peak losses of up to 295 million litres per year (ML/yr.). Loss of base flows to the Bylong River is predicted to be 918 ML/yr. The mine proposes to use up to 1,942 ML/yr. which is over 75% of the annual rainfall recharge. The river system is over allocated and local farmers will lose important water supply.
11. The mine disturbance area has very high biodiversity values that will not be mitigated through the proposed offset arrangements. Nationally endangered species recorded in the area include the Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby, New Holland Mouse, Regent Honeyeater and Spotted-tailed Quoll. Three entirely new plant species were recorded. A significant area of critically endangered Grassy Box Gum Woodland will be destroyed along with habitat for 17 threatened birds and 7 threatened plants.
12. The area has Aboriginal cultural heritage significance: 239 sites were recorded in the study area with 25 regarded as being of high local or regional significance (including an ochre quarry, grinding grooves and rock shelters); 144 sites have

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been identified at risk from mine impacts with 102 in the open cut area.

13. Important European heritage, including the Catholic Church Cemetery, Upper Bylong Public School and a number of historic homesteads and farm buildings will be destroyed in the open cut. The social impacts on the Bylong community has already been devastating.
14. Considering the number of mines that have been placed into care and maintenance, would it not be better to reopen these mines rather than creating a new mine which will be a blight on our region and communities. These mines in care and maintenance have already spent a large amount of money on infrastructure and impacted the areas where they reside. They could be reopened at small cost to fill the supply void rather than destroying the pristine Bylong Valley.

**For the reasons above CVA Inc strongly object to this proposal.**

**Donna Upton  
Secretary  
Capertee Valley Alliance Inc.**