

Barry O'Farrell

2013-211255

13 - 13564
PO

From: Bjorn [boganbjorn@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, 29 May 2013 8:47 AM
To: <office@premier.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Letter from Nature Conservation Council

Dear Premier,

May I remind you that you made some promises before the election?

To walk away from them now will have devastating consequences for you as a politician – who could / would ever trust you again?

FYI I sent you this letter from the Nature Conservation Council. :

The resurrection of the Wallarah 2 coal mine proposal near Wyong on the Central Coast highlights the need for binding legal protections for the state's drinking water catchments, according to the Nature Conservation Council of NSW.

The state government is again calling for public comment on the project, which was rejected in 2011 because of its unacceptable risks to water resources and risks to wildlife.

"This project is only back on the table because Premier Barry O'Farrell has not fulfilled his pre-election promise to stop the Wallarah mine and protect water catchments from mining development," said NCC Chief Executive Officer Pepe Clarke.

"Before his election in 2011, Mr O'Farrell gave a personal guarantee his government would ensure that mining could not occur in drinking water catchments.

"At the time, Mr O'Farrell and Central Coast MP Chris Hartcher, who is now Minister for Resources, were photographed together wearing T-shirts with the words 'Water Not Coal' emblazoned across them. [See below]

"It's time the Mr O'Farrell delivered on his water catchments promise by creating binding legal protections to ensure proposals like Wallarah 2 cannot be approved by the Planning Assessment Commission."

Last Friday, the government called for public submissions on a revised proposal for the Wallarah 2 mine, which would result in the extraction of up to 5 million tonnes of polluting coal a year 28 years from an area north-west of Wyong, undermining several waterways. Public submissions on the proposal close on June 21.

The state government in early 2011 rejected Wallarah coal mine because of:

- uncertainty around subsidence;
- unacceptable impacts on surface water quality;
- uncertainty around ecological impacts; and
- uncertainty around heritage impacts.

30/05/2013

Then Planning Minister Tony Kelly in March 2011 concluded that the project was “not consistent with the principles of ecological sustainable development, including the precautionary principle, and as a consequence is not in the public interest”. [1]

“Changes made to the Wallarah the coal mine have not addressed the serious threats that long-wall coal mining pose to the Central Coast’s scarce water resources,” Mr Clarke said.

“The mine, if approved, would operate for less than 30 years, but the damage mine subsidence could do to local aquifers and streams would be permanent.

“This was a point that Mr O’Farrell clearly understood and was prepared to campaign on when in Opposition. Now he is in power he has the opportunity and a moral responsibility to ensure this project does not proceed.”

Regards

Birgit Graefner