

Date: 14.9.13
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GLOUCESTER
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Director, Mining Projects
Development Assessment Systems & Approvals
Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Sir,

ROCKY HILL COAL PROJECT – DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION SSD-5156

I oppose the Gloucester Resources Ltd's development application for an open cut coal mine near the Gloucester township because of the negative cumulative health impacts.

Distance from the mine. Statement from GRL... "The closest resident to any pit will be 1.7kms away."

Fact - From the main extraction boundary area are:

- the Forbesdale Estate, of 35 rural/residential properties, situated 900 to 1800m,
- the Thunderbolts Estate and Avon View residential estates, to the north, situated 1.8klms to 2.5klms,
- the rural/residential properties along the Bucketts Way situated 1.8klms to 2.5klms.

This is not one resident but many, who will suffer the noise and dust from this mine.

Doctors for the Environment (DEA), in a recent article, stated that they have serious concerns about Australia's addiction to coal. The health impacts of mining, transporting and burning coal are well known and pose one of the most significant health issues of our time.

Yet Gloucester Resources Limited are proposing to build a mine as close as 1.7kms from residents.

These health impacts involve physical damage to the cardiovascular system, respiratory system, brain, liver and kidneys. Additionally individual mental health damage, from psychosocial stressors, noise and sleep disruption. The intrusion of GRL even in its exploration stage has caused enduring psychological stress particularly for those residents in the direct path of the mine.

This damage involves both mortality, deaths and morbidity, which includes both disease and disability. These are both acute episodes of illness e.g. asthma and cardiac arrhythmias and chronic damage e.g. chronic obstructive airways disease (COAD) and strokes from cerebral arteriosclerosis, which involve damage accumulating over time.

Open Cut Coal Mining results in health damage in a number of ways:-

Dust causes multiple types of health damage both from the different sizes of particle and the different chemical contents of those particles. Dust is produced both from overburden and coal in extraction, processing, transportation and rehabilitation.

Mechanical processes tend to result in coarse, PM 10 or 10 microns, and very coarse sized particles PM 50. These cause amenity problems such as depositing coal dust on your roof accelerating rusting through the sulphur content and coating your washing line. Coarse particles get trapped in the nose and large bronchi and can exacerbate bronchitis, COAD and irritate the eyes.

Incendiary processes such as working diesel machinery, locomotives and blasting result in fine PM2.5 and ultrafine PM 0.1 particles. These fine particles can get into the lung tissue, between the alveolar cells, like bacteria. The particles set up inflammatory reactions, which release chemicals into the blood supply, which narrows fine blood vessels. This causes strokes, heart attacks, diabetes and reduces the birth weight of babies. Ultra fine particles, like viruses, get inside

cells where they can damage genes and lead to cancers and mutations. Toxic gases such as sulphur dioxide, nitrous oxides and carbon monoxide are also produced.

PM 2.5 and PM0.1 particles are like cigarettes, there is no absolutely safe level and the higher the dose the higher is the risk. If you live near a mine on average your life expectancy is reduced by nine months. The very young, the elderly, the chronically sick and the socially disadvantaged are at greatest risk.

There are no mandatory maximum levels for diesel exhaust emissions from off road machines. They use about a litre of diesel for each ton of coal produced i.e. 2million litres+/yr. Diesel exhaust fumes are a Grade 1 carcinogen.

The federal senate enquiry into air quality noted with alarm there are no emission standards for off road diesel vehicles. They recommended a buffer zone around mines to protect populated areas and 'pollution monitoring should accurately capture population exposure for communities and homes proximate to pollution point sources'.

Yet with all this proven scientific evidence the NSW Government allows mining companies to build open-cut mines within 200metres of homes.

The Rocky Hill Coal mine should never be allowed to be built so close to families. The NSW Government has a duty of care to protect its citizens from known harm.

I have not made a reportable political donation.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. F. Ross', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.