

NSW Government Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Attention: Director Mining and Industry Projects
Re: Watermark Coal Mine
App No.: SSD – 4975, Watermark Coal Project

Name: David Simson
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Disclose reportable donations: I have made a reportable political donation No

Privacy Statement: I have read the Department's Privacy Statement and agree to the Department using my submission in the ways it describes. I understand this includes full publication on the Department's website of my submission, any attachments, and any of my personal information in those documents, and possible supply to third parties such as state agencies, local government and the proponent. I agree to the above statement? Yes

I am a Carroona Coal Action Group member and object to the Shenhua Watermark Coal Mine at Breeza. I write in support of the Carroona Coal Action Group submission prepared by Earth Systems. My main concerns are:

1. Risks to our water supplies
2. Rehabilitation / Restoration of Mine Sites

I am a retired farmer of 81 years and have spent my entire life working on and with the land. My family have been involved with the land and agricultural industries in Australia consistently since 1842. Bearing in mind these facts, I consider I have established a considerable understanding of the fragility of the Australian environment, soils, water, flora, fauna and the unreliability of seasons plus low rainfall. Therefore I consider I am well versed to make comments/advice on the subjects listed above.

Firstly we will deal with water without same man can do nothing i.e. not even survive.

I wish to stress we live on the driest continent on earth and **SHOULD NOT** be running the risks currently occurring in relation to coal mining open cut and underground long wall mining plus coal seam gas with its terrible system “fracking” which has been granted an unconditional green light in New South Wales.

1. Risks to Our Water Supplies

- (a) Water supplies, both above and below ground level in Australia, are so precious that the dangerous activities being carried out by the mining companies should be stopped immediately.
- (b) We know that some of our creeks and rivers are already polluted by mining activities and the current extensions proposed in the Liverpool Plains area could see pollution ending up in the Darling River and then the Murray River. The Murray Darling River system, being the most important river system in Australia, pollution of same will be a monstrous disaster with devastation spin offs in all directions.
- (c) If and when the availability and supply of underground water and aquifers are gone by pollution, penetration by bore holes or mining activities or overuse and waste water from Miners, it will be a very sad day for Australian people, for it will mean the loss of vast areas of Australian land for **ANY** use including the production of agricultural items; food and clothing.
- (d) A land with no water and no food can support **NIL** as far as population or life of any sort is concerned.

2. Rehabilitation and Restoration of Mine Sites

(a) It is physically and technically impossible to restore mine sites to anything approaching their former fertility or production potential, for a start, there is a shortfall of backfill of millions of tonnes caused by the removal of coal from the site.

(b) The thought that the backfill can be returned to the hole in anything approaching the order it came out in, with the top soil on the top, is nothing short of a dream i.e. a total impossibility.

(c) The leaching that will occur on site, renders it an impossibility for the use of fertiliser to improve the fertility of the site at all.

(d) The effect on the flow of water above and below ground will be dramatic in its effect on the natural flow patterns of the water before mining took place.

(e) In regard to underground long wall mining sites the same criteria will apply, basically and will have this situation brought about by major subsidence, plus some additional problems, e.g. uneven top soil cover brought about by levelling projects and or considerable leaching occurring.

(f) The effectiveness of capping and sealing of bore holes that have punctured aquifers or other underground water supplies, even if done very carefully and efficiently, the damage has been done and it would be an impossibility to rectify the situation.

(g) It should be remembered that the miners have got what they wanted from the site and their wish will be to vacate same as quickly and cheaply as they can, as far as any restoration is concerned.

A good example of this is taking place at the Werris Creek mine site at the moment, where a good case of window dressing is occurring for the general public to observe and think what a good job of restoration is being carried out, due to the inability to see anything behind the large "show" bank hiding the awful devastation behind said bank.

Restoration may occur naturally after million or years have elapsed. The Liverpool Plains and similar areas in Australia on which we are limited, should and must be declared prohibited areas from mining **NOW**.

(h) For God's sake, let's stop this terrible destruction of Australia before it is too late as we are nearly to the end of the eleventh hour now.