

## Modification to Springvale Extension Project

Springvale Coal should not be allowed to increase production, as they should not be financially rewarded for the continuing damage to protected swamps, damage which would in fact be *accelerated*.

Centennial Coal have continually lied to the media about not damaging the endangered swamps. Katie Brassil, spokesperson for Centennial Coal, has stated that no swamps have ever been impacted by coal mining, whereas the opposite is really the case. I contend that *every* swamp that Springvale Coal has mined under has been seriously impacted by longwall mining cracking and subsidence, including Kangaroo Creek, Junction, Narrow, East Wolgan, upper Sunnyside, Sunnyside East, and Carne West Swamps.

The report of the Independent Monitoring Panel (dated June 2016) states that Carne West Swamp shows evidence of longwall mining impacts, which occurred even before the swamp was directly undermined. I say that the same can be said for the next swamp to the west, which is Sunnyside East Swamp.

Unfortunately, last September the PAC (lead by Brian Gilligan) chose to ignore evidence of the existing damage to protected swamps presented by myself, Dr Anne Young, the Office of Environment and Heritage, and others. The PAC said that because Centennial Coal and its consultants disputed the claims, that it was “inconclusive”.

The extension approval should not have occurred, in the form proposed, based on this flaw in logic alone. With the restart of mining we are now seeing a continuation of mining impacts to swamps.

Rather than rewarding Springvale Coal with an increase in production, mining should proceed cautiously and the mining methodology should be examined to try to mitigate further damage to the protected swamps.

The Independent Monitoring Panel has stated the more (including different) monitoring of the swamps should occur, but I think that this has not gone far enough as continued damaging and then offsetting swamps is not the answer. Prevention of damage to swamps (e.g. by avoidance) is the only proper way to protect them from future mining damage.

As it stands, the current mining methods are not meeting the so-called strict conditions of the consent, so increasing mine output using these same methods is only going to accelerate the damage that is currently occurring to the protected swamps.

The mine must be made to change its mining methods to meet its current consent conditions, as what they have done up to now is not working, as evidenced by impacts to every swamp they have mined near.

The mine must not be allowed to accelerate the damage to protected endangered ecological communities using the current mining methods.

The production increase should be denied until if and when the mine can meet its consent condition obligations, and stop damaging the swamps.

9<sup>th</sup> August 2016

