

SYDNEY WATER SUPPLY AT RISK

This submission to the DPE is based on my concerns that the Hume Coal project has the potential to jeopardise Sydney's water supply.

In the mid 1970's I served as a Soil Conservationist based in Goulburn. It was well known at the time that there was only one suitable site to supply the bulk of Sydney's water - Warragamba Dam. The only other possible site was Welcome Reef on the Shoalhaven River near Braidwood. This site was subsequently dismissed due to the porous nature of the limestone on which the site was to be built.

The Warragamba catchment extends south of Goulburn just past the township of Tarago. The proposed Hume Coal mine sits within this Warragamba catchment.

During my time in Goulburn, the state government was so concerned about possible contamination of Warragamba, that they offered a 50% subsidy on any soil conservation works undertaken in the catchment area. Other potential contaminating activities such as land clearing and farming within a specified distance from the water source, were strictly prohibited.

The previous government body overseeing the Warragamba catchment is now known as Sydney Water. I strongly urge the DPE to review this historical data from Sydney Water and to fully assess their express concerns within the current environment.

If contamination of Sydney's main water supply was an issue in the 1970's, surely now in 2017 with a city population of more than 5,000,000, the Hume Coal project should be a major cause of concern.

Finally, I would also like to remind the DPE that the State Government recently refused a license to extract Coal Seam Gas from the Woronora Catchment because of possible contamination of Sydney's water supply. If the Government refused this Woronora application then it follows that the application by Hume Coal should also be rejected.