

Submission Opposing the Narrabri Gas Project

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission opposing the Narrabri Gas Project.

My name is Brenda Gerrie and I live on a rural property about 75 km south of Canberra.

I generally support the development of renewable energy technologies and see the push for coal seam gas shortsighted and environmentally damaging.

When I first heard about the Narrabri Gas Project my initial thought went to how inappropriate that location because of its extraordinary biodiversity. It will clear close to 1,000 hectares of the Pilliga Forest, fragmenting the largest temperate woodland in New South Wales, home to unique wildlife.

I am opposed to the project and opposed to Santos whose poor environmental and ethical track record in many areas are on public record.

Why do we continue to sell our natural resources to the lowest bidder using jobs as an excuse and giving unfounded responsible environmental management without guarantees as the excuse?

Reasons for Opposing This Project

I understand that this proposal will extract over 35 billion litres of toxic groundwater, much of it in the first five years. This water will be treated and in the early years will generate tens of thousands of tonnes of salt, for which there is no safe disposal plan.

It will cause significant diversion of water from a recharge aquifer of the Great Artesian Basin, which is a water resource relied upon by rural communities across western NSW.

It will lead to large deliberate and fugitive emissions of methane, adding to climate change.

It will cause more trauma to the regional Aboriginal community because the area of impact is crucially important to the spiritual, cultural and social life of Gamilaraay people.

Most of all it is a step in the wrong direction. Show leadership and vision for a change. Follow due process if you must, then reject this proposal for the greater good of Australia's future and wellbeing.

Santos' coal seam gas export activities in Queensland have caused gas prices to rise and supply to become unpredictable. NSW should respond to this by investing in more reliable and ultimately cheaper renewable energy, not by letting Santos inflict more environmental, social and economic harm.

It will cause economic upheaval in Narrabri and put agricultural industries at risk, as well as causing light pollution that will ruin the dark night sky needed by the internationally renowned Siding Spring Observatory.

Coal seam gas is harmful to health. Neither the NSW Government nor Santos have investigated or dealt with the serious health effects of coal seam gas now appearing in peer-reviewed research in the United States. I urge the Government to reject this project and make the Great Artesian Basin recharge off-limits to gas mining.

I do hope that the DOPE representative who went on a tour of the Queensland gas field brought back messages on how not to do things.

Do what is right and reject this project.

Brenda Gerrie, 21 May 2017