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HUME COAL PROJECT EIS SSD 15_7172

I totally object to the underground coal mine proposed by Hume Coal in the Southern Highlands of NSW and ask the government to reject this proposal.

My friends and I visit the Southern Highlands because we love the clean air, peace and quiet, lovely villages and the beautiful trees and gardens. If these things are destroyed by this proposed mine visitors like us will go elsewhere.

My greatest concerns are as follows:

- Coal dust from the stockpiles and trains will be deposited over large areas of the Highlands by the wind. The Highlands is subjected to very strong to gale force winds from the west to south west in winter and northwest in summer. These winds will cover the beautiful villages and towns such as Berrima, Bowral, Moss Vale and Bundanoon in ugly, black coal dust.
- Coal dust carried by the winds will be in the air for everyone to breathe. Visitors from Sydney like me will not want to risk being exposed to the dust which causes respiratory problems. The poor residents of the Highlands won't have this choice and will certainly suffer, especially those with asthma and elderly people.
- If the mine proceeds the main aquifer for the Southern Highlands will be drained and more than 90 water bores, primarily used for agriculture, will be left totally or partially dry for decades. Even the mining company acknowledges this will happen in it's EIS. The government cannot allow the groundwater reserves of this area and agricultural livelihoods to be destroyed.
- There is a high risk that many of the beautiful, old trees that the Highlands is famous for will suffer or die. When the water is drained from the aquifer the general water table in the area will be lowered, especially in the Berrima and Sutton Forest areas. During our hot, dry summers the trees rely on the deep groundwater reserves to survive, and if these are depleted or non-existent many will be severely stressed or die. We just can't risk this happening.
- The economy of the Southern Highlands is very much dependent on tourism. My family, friends and I visit because we love the clean air, peace and quiet and the beautiful trees and gardens. Where these things are adversely affected by this mine, through the dust, the extra trains, the ugly mine itself, dying trees, visitors will go elsewhere. Thousands of people are employed by businesses which directly and indirectly service the people who come to visit the Highlands. If visitors stop coming these businesses will not survive.
- The mine plans to release waste water directly into the local creeks, which eventually flow into Warragamba Dam. There is a huge risk that Sydney's main water supply could be contaminated by toxic mine waste due to an accident or error.
- The proposed mine is relatively small, but will be extremely costly due to the groundwater issues, the limited amount of coal that will be extracted and the fact that around half the coal is cheap, thermal grade coal. The claimed royalties that the state would receive are tiny compared with the state's expenditure. It is not worth subjecting the Southern Highlands to all the adverse environmental and economic risk for such a pitiful return.

I therefore totally object to this proposed mine and ask the government to reject this proposal.

Signature

I have / have not made a reportable political donation in the last 2 years.