

SUBMISSION

Attn: Executive Director, Resource Assessments,
Department of Planning and Environment,
GPO Box 39, Sydney, 2001.

HUME COAL PROJECT EIS SSD 15_7172

I wish to make the strongest possible objection to the coal mine proposed by Hume Coal in the NSW Southern Highlands, and I recommend the government reject this proposal for the following reasons:

The beautiful Southern Highlands are subject to strong to gale force, generally westerly winds which would carry black coal dust from stock piles and trains directly to Berrima and New Berrima, and to neighbouring villages, and towns of Bowral, Mittagong, Moss Vale, Exeter and Bundanoon, causing harmful respiratory difficulties for asthma sufferers, especially children and the many retired elderly people the Highlands have been attracting increasingly.

Hume Coal's own EIS admits it plans to drain the Highlands main aquifer leaving more than 90 mainly agricultural water bores partially or totally dry for decades. It would be gross irresponsibility for the government to allow destruction of groundwater reserves and of hundreds of agricultural livelihoods. The Berrima and Sutton Forest water table would be particularly vulnerable and in hot dry summers many of our famous trees' survival would be under serious threat. Hume Coal plans to release waste water directly into various creeks that feed into Warragamba Dam, and there is a high probability that at some stage by accident or error toxic water would escape and so contaminate the Sydney water supply.

Clean air, tranquillity, quaint historic villages and gardens over decades have attracted tourism as a large part of the Southern Highlands economy. A coal mine with its eight huge daily trains would seriously impact on the very qualities that have built this economy over many years. If we lose our visitors the amount of lost business and employment would far outweigh the total employment created by a mine to last less than twenty years.

The proposed mine would be relatively small with around half of its output cheap thermal coal. Royalties the state could expect to receive would be a relative pittance, and all to subject the Southern Highlands to inexcusable risk.

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

I have not ever made a reportable political donation.