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## **Beth Williams, of National Parks Association of NSW, Armidale Branch, made the following submission on the project:**

### **Cobbora Coal Project**

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#### **Objects to this project**

Re: objection to the Cobbora Coal Project - Preferred Project Report Application No: 10-0001

As a concerned citizen and member of the National Parks Association of NSW Armidale Branch, I wish to submit an objection to the proposed Cobbora Coal Project, presently being reviewed by the Planning Assessment Commission.

I object to the Cobbora Coal Project on the grounds that

1. it is unacceptable and fiscally irresponsible to spend \$3 billion building and operating a state-owned coal mine to provide half-priced coal to our state's polluting power stations for more than 20 years.

The PAC should reject the alleged justification for the mine because it is based on incorrect projections of demand for coal-fired electricity over the next 10 years, and false claims that failure to supply this cheap coal to the power stations will endanger energy security and cause more price rises for the general consumer. On the contrary, it is known that demand for coal-fired power has dropped significantly since this project was first proposed, as part of the Keneally government's electricity privatisation deal, and price rises in electricity are known to be mainly due to rules encouraging excessive construction of poles and wires infrastructure.

These so-called justifications are informed more by ideological opposition to the carbon tax than by proper economic analysis, and they fly in the face of the State's alleged commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and addressing climate change.

If the State's finances can find \$3 billion to subsidise production of cheap coal to prop up existing coal-fired power stations, the Government should instead commit the money towards funding renewable energy such as solar thermal and wind projects, which have been systematically defunded, downplayed and ignored in the life of this Government.

The Cobbora coal mine, if built, will cost taxpayers more than \$3 billion, destroy nearly two thousand hectares of wildlife habitat, provide half-priced coal to our state's polluting power stations for more than 20 years, and increase greenhouse gas emissions.

2. The social and biodiversity impacts, the water impacts and the economic impacts of

the project cannot be justified in terms of cost-benefit ratios and the best interests of the State of NSW, and cannot be ameliorated by the proposed biodiversity offsets

We call on the PAC to objectively assess the merits of the project as a whole, and to recommend that it should not proceed in the best interests of the State of NSW.

Beth Williams, 25 The Avenue, Armidale NSW 2350. Phone 02 6772 4454,  
on behalf of Armidale Branch, National Parks Association of NSW, 08/03/2013.