

18th November 2013

Submission of Objection

Zirconia Project Dubbo

Application No: SSD-5251

Central West Environment Council (CWEC) is an umbrella organization representing conservation groups and individuals in central west NSW working to protect the local environment for future generations.

CWEC does not support the proposal to develop a 170 ha open cut mining operation close to the village of Toongi in the Dubbo region to extract 20 million tonnes of rare earth elements including uranium and thorium.

The environmental assessment for the proposal has identified high and extreme risks associated with:

- Leachate from evaporation ponds affecting aquifers and bores
- Radiation impacts during mining and processing
- Chemical spills contaminating surface and groundwater
- Reduction in flows to Wambangalang Creek and the Macquarie River
- Clearing of endangered ecological communities and impacts on threatened species habitat
- Increased noise levels from blasting and processing
- Removal or destruction of Aboriginal heritage items

CWEC does not agree that the proposed mitigation of these impacts or the statement of commitments will address the extent of the risks.

CWEC does not agree with evaporation ponds for managing tailings and excess mine water. This issue has been highlighted with management of highly saline water from coal seam gas extraction.

The increase in truck movements and other social impacts will also cause unacceptable impacts from this project.

CWEC particularly objects to the possibility of this project opening up uranium mining in NSW in the future.

This project is not appropriate in its current format.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Cilla Kinross". The signature is written in a cursive style, with the first letter of each word being capitalized and prominent. The background of the signature area is a light, textured grey.

Cilla Kinross
President