

I oppose the expansion of Dendrobium mining in the Sydney water catchment area for the following reasons.

WATER CATCHMENT DAMAGE

Sydney is the only city in the world to allow long wall mining under its main drinking water catchment areas. Do you think there's a reason this is so? Because it's madness to allow the destruction of your drinking supply. Once damaged the catchment area will be damaged forever. With a rapidly expanding population relying on this water with increasing droughts and threats from global warming our drinking water will become a more threatened commodity. With this catchment providing 30% of Sydney's water and in times of stress or pollution of other dams this increases, 5 million rely on this water currently and predicted to grow to 10.6 by 2041. We are expecting this water to supply double the residents it currently does and think it's ok to allow the loss of 10's of millions of litres of water a day to profit a private company? Dendrobium's past and current mines already are known to be causing significant water losses of around 10 million litres PER DAY. The expansion is acknowledged by South 32 to result in subsidence in the catchment of 2-2.45m (which is thought to be too conservative based on other examples), causing the loss of million of litres more a day. The financial offset offered can't replace drinking water. You can't drink money.

This mine expansion impacts on the ability of the water catchment to collect, clean, and store water and negatively impacts on the sustainability and resilience of the supply of drinking water for Sydney and Wollongong, in terms of both water quality and quantity. Water that enters and then flows out of mines picks up contaminants along the way. Current measures for managing this problem have been shown to be insufficient to prevent impacts on waterways.

Should this proposal be approved, the mine will still come within 1000m of the Avon Reservoir. It will result in water losses from Avon,

which is the only source of water supply to over 310,000 residents and businesses in the Illawarra region. In dry years, the watercourses in the mined area that flow into Avon Reservoir are expected to totally dry up.

WATER QUALITY

According to DPIE's report on South 32's previous unsuccessful application to expand Dendrobium Mine, as water courses fracture due to mining induced subsidence, metals will be dissolved and leach into the water. This will lead to an increase in metals in the water courses and reservoirs. Furthermore, this increase will worsen in the 100 – 200 year period of groundwater recovery. I particularly enjoy good quality water and oppose any mining that may reduce that quality.

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE

There are 31 Aboriginal Heritage sites in and close to Area 5, with 6 of these sites directly over longwalls. Sites named in the Environmental Impact Statement include: 13 axe grinding grooves, 8 shelters with art, 2 shelters with deposits, 1 shelter with art and deposits, 6 shelters with art and potential archaeological deposits and 1 isolated find. As an ingenious resident I oppose any mining that threatens my heritage. Its another Juukan Gorge incident with mining companies prepared to destroy indigenous heritage for profit. There is no requirement for South 32 to preserve any sites they know are there and our elders aren't allowed access to the site to inspect current or future damage. South32 has an open license to destroy sites of cultural significance that are 10's of 1000's of years old.

KOALAS

Koalas have recently been declared Endangered in NSW. The Environmental Impact Statement notes that there are koalas living in the area that will be undermined, but includes no current survey of

koala numbers or locations. There is no management plan for koalas who may be living in the ecosystems that would be cleared for infrastructure, other than offsetting that includes a bio-banking scheme that has not yet been negotiated, and payment to a government trust. It is hard to see how these future arrangements will prevent a devastating impact on actual, living koalas who may be present in land to be cleared for infrastructure. Losses of groundwater from subsidence will also further stress wildlife with the loss of current lagoons and swamps.

WASTE/POLLUTION

One fifth of the Dendrobium mine output is waste material that is trucked through the Special Area to another lease area and dumped into bushland. One million tonnes of coal wash per year will be piled at the head of George's river in the West Cliff Coalwash Emplacement. Emplacement mounds will leach contaminated water into the headwaters of the Georges River.

Expansion of this mine would mean an increase in water discharged from the mine into Allans Creek, Unanderra. This is the same creek that was recently identified as exceeding safe levels of heavy metals. I was involved in the citizen science collection and testing of pollution in Allens Creek that identified the unacceptable and off the chart pollution in this creek and also witnessed South32's unacceptable pollution by coal fines of Brandy and Water Creeks that was also identified by residents and not cleaned up properly. This company has shown again and again they aren't capable of containing their pollution and it's the community that suffers and will continue to suffer long after they have shut the mines and taken their profits away.

RELEVANCE

South32 claims that the mine is essential to provide Port Kembla's Bluescope steel with coal. This is incorrect as the steelworks has other

suppliers organised and available. Plus the state and federal governments along with private parties have invested millions to transition the steelworks to low or zero carbon steel. Coal is a dying commodity and we shouldn't be sacrificing our precious water supply so carelessly for such short term gain.

The IPC found the expansion plan to have serious flaws and unacceptable long term consequences and was damning in its refusal. For the NSW Minister for Planning to override that determination by declaring the plan to be State Significant Infrastructure is itself a flawed decision. The Liberal party were long known to be overgenerous in its determinations involving its mining party donors and this particular determination should be overturned and the expansion of the mine denied.

YOU CANT DRINK MONEY!

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