**Office of Independent Planning Commission**

**Level 3 201 Elizabeth Street**

**Sydney 2000**

**Phone 02 93832100**

Dear Commissioners

This is a submission to **object** to the Pilliga Coal Seam Gas Project.

My name is Diane Rooney. I was born and raised in Gunnedah, North West NSW. I married in Narrabri to a man raised on a farm adjacent to the Pilliga Forest. I am a nurse of almost 50 years experience, mother of 2 and a grandmother of 4. I have been aware of the science related to climate change for many years but have become alarmed over recent years as Australia continues to exploit fossil fuels regardless of the impact burning of these fuels is having on our atmosphere. My concern developed to the stage that I became actively involved in groups organising to prevent further exploitation. I am an active member of the Knitting Nannas against Gas (Hunter Loop).

I have been aware of the Santos CSG Project for some years, am aware of community opposition to the project and the serious damage the conflict is having on community spirit. On a recent trip to Narrabri I mentioned the Pilliga project. I was told that locals no longer discuss the issue as it is too divisive, with some championing the opportunity for jobs and development but the majority recognising the negative consequences of such a project. Concerns include the serious impact posed to water supply in the Pilliga, the risks to farming land, threats to animals and plants and increased fire danger. Aside from these immediate local environmental concerns, the longer term impacts of extracting and burning gas are unacceptable for or future generations.

**Community**

**I know that a community survey has taken place that shows, when spoken to privately, the vast majority of local residents voice their concerns about the coal seam gas project. Locals are unsure of the claim that CSG and farming can coexist with farmers concerned about their ability to access public liability insurance if CSG wells are on their property. The local Aboriginal community, the Gamilaroi have voiced their opposition to the project and the Aboriginal heritage of the area has not been adequately assessed**

**Local Jobs**

Whilst Santos anticipates 190 jobs to be created locally, experience elsewhere indicates other industries and local jobs will be impacted negatively. For example the town of Chinchilla in Queensland has moved from a prosperous farming and tourist town to a welfare town with high unemployment, crime and drug dependence. Housing prices have plummeted over 4 years. For every job created , 1.8 jobs were lost. The majority of job roles to be created from the Santos CSG project will be for people living outside the community with little concern for the local negative impact.

**Water and Waste**

Santos has failed to provide enough information to claim that the project will have little impact on the Pilliga sandstone as a recharge aquifer for the Great Artesian Basin. Likewise Santos has failed to adequately plan for the safe disposal of salt waste.

I have seen in the Pilliga a spill of toxic waste has resulted in a failure to grow native plant life some seven years after the spill. An aquifer has already n=been contaminated with uranium and heavy metals.

**Biodiversity**

35 threatened animals and 10 threatened plants live within the project area. The mosaic effect of the land clearance planned will cause fragmentation of the habitat which of course will impact the environment on which they rely

**Forest and Fire**

The Rural Fire Service has repeatedly expressed concerns about operating a gasfield in the highly flammable landscape that is the Pilliga.

**Climate Change**

I am genuinely concerned about the future of our living conditions on earth and for the future generations, our children and grandchildren. Science is clear that continuing to exploit fossil fuels will continue to raise the greenhouse gasses in our atmosphere and in turn continue the warming of the atmosphere with the resultant extreme weather events. We have alternatives to fossil fuels in the form of wind, solar and hydro. We do not need new coal or gas projects.

Thank you for allowing me to comment and make my objection to the Pilliga Coal Seam Gas Project

Yours sincerely

Diane Rooney