

Why We Should Protect The Namoi River From Mining:

To whom it may concern, I am writing from the perspective of a concerned individual of the boggabri farming and community groups. These major concerns are in regards to the extension into the vickery coal mine and the impacts it will have on the namoi river and rural farming land. Not to mention the environmental impacts it also presents.

If the extension of the vickery coal mine is to proceed, a vast majority of the boggabri community would suffer the consequences. In recent studies we have found that due to the large extent of mines already conducted in the small community of boggabri around 80 farms have been lost already. This number will continue to increase in large amounts if the extension into the vickery coal mine is to proceed with future plans. Not to mention the large impact it will have on the water source that the namoi river supplies.

Due to the large extent of mines that have already been conducted throughout boggabri and surrounding communities such as 'WHITEHAVEN', 'DOWNER EDI' and 'MAULES CREEK' the namoi river is unable to provide a substantial amount of water to both the mining company and the community of farmers. The department of planning admits that whitehaven was scrambling for sources of water just only last year. They propose a borefield with a transect of 10 bores in the Namoi alluvium approx 6km from Boggabri town water bores. Our research shows that last year they would have needed 3300ML more than their current licence entitlements from this source. Therefore when rainfall exceeds just 38mm over 5 days, the Mine will be allowed to release water from sediment dams directly into the Namoi River. In more than six decades of research, sedimentation is still probably the most serious technical problem faced by the dam industry. However over time the dam gradually loses its ability to store water for the purposes for which it was built. This can have a negative impact on the namoi river if the sedimentation is to spread throughout the river. Thus impacting on the effects and benefits that the namoi can provide.

The Narrabri Shire Council has formally objected to the mine, believing that it is not in the community's interest and here are some reasons why. The mine site will include an overburden dump of 200 ha in size that will cover over the namoi alluvium that DPIES's own water supply division does not support due to the fears of toxic waste. If these toxic wastes were to contaminate the namoi river it would severely affect not just the vickery coal mine or the town of boggabri but the vast majority of people and towns such as gunnedah and narrabri who depend greatly on the namoi river as a main source of water. Due to toxic contamination studies it has been shown that the negative environmental impacts from contamination can have an impact on farming and agricultural lands that

depend upon these rare sources. If a farmer is unaware of the toxic chemicals that are within his water and throughout his property, he is exposing his entire farm to toxic and deadly chemicals which can negatively impact on his livelihood. For example: if a farmer is growing wheat and has exposed that crop to harmful and toxic chemicals it can negatively affect the plants growth and adaptability. Thus impacting on the farmer's life as he will be unable to economically benefit from a hazardous and contaminated crop.

However, the vickery coal mine does not only impact on the environmental side of the coin it will also impact on the historic background and heritage of the homestead 'KURRUMBEDE' which belonged to the mackellar family.

Therefore as a concerned member of the boggabri farming and community group, i believe it would be a major mistake not just environmentally but also economically and socially to allow the extension of the vickery coal mine to take place along the namoi river. By conducting this extension it poses many threats and uncertain futures to the namoi river and surrounding agricultural/farming lands. We must protect our namoi river from negative consequences and avoidable disasters in the future.

Vote against the extension of the vickery coal mine. Don't let the namoi river suffer for the price of a mining site. Don't let another coal mine take more away from the agricultural community of boggabri and its surrounding shires.