

To whom it may concern,

I am making a submission as I have real concerns about Wollongong Coal's Revised Underground Expansion Project for Russell Vale for many reasons which include:

Impact on the Greater Sydney Area and Illawarra water quality,

Environmental impact including for Climate Change,

Lack of economic benefit for the area, the community, and Australia,

Increased risk of bushfire and ecological damage due to draining of the groundwater,

Impact on local communities, both human and ecological

I've chosen to highlight two:

**I feel that this mine upgrade threatens our short and long term water quality in the Greater Sydney Water Catchment** as it is proposed to go under the water catchment area. I find this amazing that this is even being considered.

The public are prohibited from entering these areas to protect the water quality. A few years ago working in Science at UOW I was required over a number of years to assist some of the researchers to obtain permission to access these special catchment areas. It was extremely difficult to obtain approval to enter these areas, even as scientists, despite the fact that the researchers were only collecting floral specimens and monitoring populations so I am amazed that this project can even be considered when it could have serious repercussions on our water quality into the future as the mine develops further under the catchment site. As kayakers on the Nepean River we have seen some of this damage first hand with methane gas bubbling up through the water in some of the tributaries. Again it amazes me that this project can even be considered. Why threaten our water quality?

**I question the economic benefits for the community and area into the future.** I think the only real benefits are for the company when it is able to ship the coal offshore while the local area, community and Australia will be left with environmental issues that will carry far into the future. With a company that appears to have a poor history in compliance and seems to be heavily in debt how will they be able to remediate any problems they cause and why should we take the risk with our environment?? It is already under significant stress so why undertake this further risky process for little benefit to the Illawarra, Sydney and Australia.

Why would we take a gamble on this project??