

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this submission to express my objection to the proposed expansion of the Dendrobium Coal Mine on the grounds of the untold environmental damage it will almost certainly cause to the above and down-stream ecosystems.

I am a 21 year old student that has lived in Southern Sydney all my life and spent many weekends and holidays bushwalking with my family and enjoying the rich biota that can be found in the Cordeaux, Nepean and Woronora catchment areas. Of particular personal interest to my younger self and now even more so as a Biology student at the University of Wollongong, is the rare upland swamp ecosystems that dot the region. Each individual swamp is a unique haven of biodiversity that acts as a 'water-bank' for the surrounding ecosystems, holding water and slowly expelling it down-stream during periods of dry affording the existence of rare and endangered biota.

Research has already shown that these ecosystems in the Woronora catchment area have already been directly impacted by subsidence and the consequent reduction in stream flow as a result of previous long wall coal mining in the area (1). These impacts included a reduction in down-stream water quality and a reduction in the diversity of aquatic species; both will have drastic and likely irreversible flow on effects throughout the ecosystem.

My understanding is that of 46 swamps in the mining area, 25 are expected to be desiccated by the proposed mine expansion. Not only is that 25 rare ecosystems lost but 25 opportunities for a young Australian, like myself, to develop an appreciation for the natural world. It does not stand to reason that my local environment should continue to suffer at the helm of out-dated coal-extraction enterprises when already there is an accepted local-to-global push for a reduction in emissions and adoption of cleaner energy alternatives.

In the event this expansion is approved, twenty years from now when coal is no-longer seen as a viable option for industry and all the coal from the Dendrobium mine has been extracted, the upland swamp ecosystems will still remain broken for thousands of years more. It is time to acknowledge the big picture and in doing so, protect the Nepean regions rich biodiversity for generations of young, inquisitive minds to come.

In conclusion, this expansion project is not in the public interest, nor the environmental interest, nor the interests of Australian Government as it seeks to reduce our carbon emissions in the immediate future. It must be rejected.

Thankyou for reading my submission,

Charlie Gluskie

(1) Cunningham, 2017. The effect of subsidence from long wall coal mining on the ecology and water quality of streams. B. App. Sc (Honors) thesis, Canberra University.