

To the members of the Independent Planning Commission,

I am writing to object the continuation of underground longwall mining, relative to the South Tahmoor Coal Project. I reside at 10 Caloola Rd, Bargo and above proposed Longwall 103A.

Subsidence Advisory NSW acknowledge the likely subsidence impacts to properties relative to Longwalls 103A and 104A. I do not understand the ramifications of said impacts, as I have not been provided with an appropriate level of information. In addition to concerns for property subsidence, the following is a list of environmental, health and financial concerns shared by myself and neighbouring homeowners.

- **Degradation of surface water quality due to coal mining activities:** A 2017 study by Strezov et al. sampled water upstream and downstream from discharge points near six mines in NSW, including Bargo River, and found water downstream of mine discharge points contained higher metal content than upstream reference locations. In accordance with the Department of the Environment and Energy (DoEE), under the provisions of Division 1, Part 7 (referral) of the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conversation Act (EPBC), the Tahmoor South Project must demonstrate “controlled action”. The high levels of trace metals in Bargo River, which have not been addressed nor mitigated by the Project thus far, indicate a complete failure to show “controlled action”.
- **Health concerns corresponding to high levels of trace metals in surface water:** Trace metals have been linked to health concerns. Specifically, elevated levels of antimony are linked to an increase in blood cholesterol, high cardiovascular disease and cancer mortality (EPA, 2016; Esch & Hendryx, 2011; Hendryx et al. 2010).
- **Likely rejection of applications to rezone and subdivide land for urban development within proposed mining area to compromise Bargo as a potential investment/growth area:** The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) acknowledge that it is not possible to mitigate the predicted subsidence impacts through practical engineering design, hence applications to rezone and subdivide land within the proposed mining area will likely be refused. This ensures Bargo will not see further urban development, nor will it attract future buyers and continue to grow, relative to housing and population. This can affect the market value and desirability of houses in Bargo.
- **No information provided to homeowners relative to receiving current property market value for homes, following subsidence impacts:** Subsidence Advisory NSW state that progressing claims for subsidence damage resulting from Longwall 103A will be eligible to lodge, however propose no formal strategy to compensate homeowners at current property market value (i.e., prior to subsidence damage) if they choose to sell, following the completion of the longwall.
- **Noise pollution:** Tahmoor South Coal Project representatives have visited my house to address noise complaints and accept responsibility. Specifically, watching video recordings of shaking

windows and acknowledging that mine activity is responsible. Representatives organised the installation of additional sealing for all windows, to reduce the noise caused by shaking windows. Despite these measures, the windows continue to shake and disrupt the sleep of all residents in the home.

- **Mental health of community:** No formal strategies have been put forward to address community concerns for mental health and wellbeing. The Bargo community combated fires recently, with some residents, including myself, sustaining significant property damage. Should no formal strategies be implemented to ensure homeowners in Bargo are not subject to lacking compensation for subsidence damage to their property, it is my concern that residents may experience depression, anxiety and other associated mental health problems.

With reference to the concerns explained above, I do not support the continuation of underground coal mining via longwall methods, relative to the South Tahmoor Coal Project. Given the overwhelming concern regarding the environmental and community impact of mining operations to date, any consideration of approving the proposed extensions to mining operations is irresponsible and unconscionable.

I recommend further community consultation is undertaken and extensive information is provided to the affected community by the proponent, prior to a decision being made by the consenting authority.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Tahmoor South Coal Project. I have included full references to the articles cited, for further review.

Regards,

Barbara Celan.

## References

- Ali, A., Strezov, V., Davies, P. *et al.* Environmental impact of coal mining and coal seam gas production on surface water quality in the Sydney basin, Australia. *Environ Monit Assess* 189, 408 (2017). <https://doi-org.ezproxy1.acu.edu.au/10.1007/s10661-017-6110-4>
- EPA U. 2016. Table of Regulated Drinking Water Contaminants. <https://www.epa.gov/your-drinking-water/table-regulated-drinking-water-contaminants>
- Esch, L., & Hendryx, M. (2011). Chronic cardiovascular disease mortality in mountaintop mining areas of central Appalachian states. *The Journal of Rural Health*, 27, 350–357.
- Hendryx, M., Fedorko, E., & Anesetti-rothermel, A. (2010). A geographical information system-based analysis of cancer mortality and population exposure to coal mining activities in West Virginia, United States of America. *Geospatial Health*, 4, 243–256.