

Dear Commissioners,

I am writing to express strongest opposition to the Narrabri Gas Project and Western Slopes Pipeline. My children will be fifth generation on our property, in the Warren District. My great grandfather settled here in 1878, obviously pre the discovery of the Great Artesian Basin. The heritage of gut busting work sinking dams and ground tanks and the heartbreaking setbacks of drought, only to triumph and run a successful, TAX PAYING business for over 140 years is a source of great pride.

My family have been responsible for drilling and equipping 7 bores on the property, 6 of which have either been re-drilled or reconditioned in that 100 year period. Metal and cement both break down over time, causing bore failure. The most recent bore in 2015 was PVC lined, the PVC cracked during the cementing process on first attempt and had to be started again nearby. My point being the materials used can and do fail. Santos going through and below the GAB with these materials is risky, whether it be short term or in the words of Santos “tens of hundreds of years” risk is irrelevant because we are planning for the long term.

The discovery and use of the Artesian Basin has been the single most important breakthrough for agriculture and life in our region since white settlement. It's the single most important drought management and grazing management tool we have and will only become more so with global warming and increased evaporation of above ground storage. Without it we return to the pre 1900 levels of production and living standards. We have over a 100 years history of investment in it with the expectation of continuity.

The Department of Planning and Industry are undervaluing the contribution of agriculture to the nation's wealth through employment, taxation, creation of primary produce for secondary industry, value adding and GPP, not to mention providing the basic essentials for humanity – food. If they are not undervaluing these things, then they are undervaluing the importance of our only reliable source of water in dry times to its production . Or maybe it's both.

The Department of Planning are approving inadequate water planning from Santos and some plans that haven't been made yet, and claiming the risks aren't enough to “trigger the Precautionary Principle” I can only say it must be a very heavy trigger.

Not enough mention has been made of the Western Slopes Pipeline and the risks involved to landholders and communities in its corridor.

The 2015 Moomba to Adelaide Gas Pipeline explosion, from hairline cracks caused by environmental conditions such as soil moisture and ground movement, operating pressures and temperatures, highlights again the unreliability of the materials used, the dangers associated with the fires, floods. The people directly affected by this project are 95% against it and the world is moving away from gas, as we try to reduce emissions.

I question whether the Department is getting pressure from above to push the Project through, regardless of consequences and if so, who is benefiting? Pay offs and under table deals is not a new concept in NSW Politics. Are they happening now?

If our governing bodies want the next generation to return to the regions and continue in primary production, and if they wish to reduce the strain on mental health and anxiety in the current generation in this region, then they should firstly remove the threat to our only reliable source of water in drought and secondly remove the threat to our personal safety and public liability insurability, by putting an end to this reckless project.

Yours faithfully,

Colin Irving

Old Bundilla WARREN NSW 2824