



Country Women's Association of NSW

ABN 82 318 909 926

Incorporated in 1931 by an Act of NSW Parliament

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The members of the Burren Junction Country Women's Association (BJCWA) are genuinely concerned about the future of our area if the Narrabri Gas Project (NGP) goes ahead.

The very notion that an industry can 'dewater' an aquifer and treat that water as a nuisance product is beyond belief. Even the salty water that is not used for drinking from our aquifers is essential to the aquifers themselves. The pressure is what allows us to use artesian water. Without this pressure, the water used for stock and domestic and town water will not be able to be pumped up. These towns, farms, businesses and livelihoods are at risk of collapse without water.

Many farming businesses have spent significant amounts of money, in conjunction with Federal and State governments to Cap and Pipe. This has resulted in pressure and water savings in the Great Artesian Basin (GAB). We cannot allow the 'dewatering' of aquifers to undo all the great work paid for by these people, not by the CSG companies.

Our members live in PELs 238 and 428. PEL 238 expired on 2/8/2016 and PEL 428 expired on 14/9/2012. Even though these PELs have been expired for a considerable period of time they are still on the government website and not been extinguished. The Boggabri Branch of the National Party successfully moved a motion at that party's state conference on 4th July 2019 *That Conference calls on the NSW Government to extinguish Petroleum Exploration Licenses as soon as they expire*. This has still not happened and the worry that we may yet have to live in a gasfield is of great concern.

There is ample anecdotal evidence of the negative health impacts of living in a gasfield. Two of our members went to Queensland and met families that are living with symptoms like bleeding noses, headaches and sick children. They did not have these symptoms before the CSG industry arrived but the residents bear the onus of proof to prove their symptoms are caused by living in a gasfield. They have to live with noise, light, dust, fugitive methane emissions and many other impacts. There was also evidence of companies causing conflict between lifelong friends due to saying one thing to one but something different to the other. Mental health problems are rife with both the worry that your family is sick but you can't sell to leave, as well as the time and money you have to spend fighting against an industry that you never wanted in the first place.

<https://www.northerndailyleader.com.au/story/6835916/safety-concerns-enough-to-turn-off-coal-seam-gas/?fbclid=IwAR22ix4I2IwrzF04MYNyf33H6KbyJHshuVwLg6QrIUumCgHCv1Z2vx2qQLw>

<https://ntn.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Symptomatology-of-a-gas-field-An-independent-health-survey-in-the-Tara-rural-residential-estates-and-environs-April-2013-1.pdf>

Santos has had about 30 years to find a use for the estimated 800,000 tonnes of salts they bring up. They have still not done so and if they did they would already be using this method to dispose of it. If it is left above the ground it will eventually leach into our aquifers.

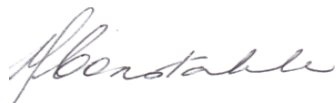
They do not 'make' jobs. They take jobs from other established industries in the community. This takes families out of their communities.

Our area undertook a gasfield free survey that asked 'Do you want your land/road gasfield free?' Covering an area of over 437,500 hectares 99%, 100% and 98.3% of respondents in three local areas said yes to being gasfield free. We had no one wanting to live in a gasfield and 1%, 0% and 1.7% of respondents were unsure. Results like this should be taken into consideration, the wishes of the people over big companies should be considered.

Agriculture is sustainable. Why risk an area that has been settled and farmed since the 1860's for a quick, 30 year industry that could leave our water inaccessible or contaminated.

Climate change, by any other name, is changing our seasons. Even if it isn't fossil fuels causing it isn't it worth trying renewables? What have we got to lose?

8 members of our branch returned a brief survey. They have lived in the area for a combined 493 years. A total of 38 generations have called this area home. How does anyone have the right to come and put sustainable agriculture and our lives at risk for a short term fossil industry?



CWA Burren Junction Branch Secretary