

**From:** [Sue Gay](#)  
**To:** [IPCN Enquiries Mailbox](#)  
**Subject:** OBJECTION TO COAL EXPANSION SOUTH 32.  
**Date:** Sunday, 13 December 2020 7:17:02 PM

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**Attention: The IPC, [ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ipcn@ipcn.nsw.gov.au)**  
**Objection to the Dendrobium Coal Mine Extension (SSD 8194) beneath the Cordeaux and Avon Dam catchments within the Sydney Metropolitan Water Catchments. (SMWC)**

Save Sydney's Koalas Inc. is a group that incorporates interests from all over metropolitan Sydney who act to protect the koala population that is known to have its centre around Campbelltown-Appin but then radiates in each direction to occupy suitable habitat, so as to continue to breed and increase its numbers. It has been recognised as a very significant population by both the NSW Chief Scientists Report (2019) into its status and the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Koalas of NSW (2020). Part of its long-term survival does depend on the ability to 'meet' other populations and achieve greater genetic diversity. One of the nearest other populations is that recently monitored is around Wilton, and their home range extends will into the Sydney Metropolitan drinking water catchment lands, so we have grave concerns for its future now also, as it is threatened by this mining proposal.

So, we particularly object to the fact that the proponent suggestion via the Niche Report for the EIS, that the impact on koala habitat can be offset, as in reality there is no offset for the koalas who live and move through these lands. In any case the Niche Report admits the koala survey limitations, and thus it is highly likely the presence of koalas and impacts upon them have been understated.

Since our group has also very strong commitment to other nature, ecosystems and all native flora and fauna species, we object to the expansion of mining into SMWC in general because:

1. Long wall coal mining subsidence causing irreversible cracking and draining of creeks, rivers and upland swamps, will cause the loss of the flora and fauna dependent on such habitats, many of which are rare and threatened. Those include the Platypus, Water Rat, Swamp Rat, Large-footed Myotis Bat, Littlejohn's Tree Frog, Giant Burrowing Frog, Red-crowned Toadlet, Southern Emu-Wren, Beautiful Firetail and potentially the Eastern Ground Parrot, Eastern Bristlebird, Giant Dragonfly and Long-nosed Potoroo.
2. The Coastal Upland Swamps are Endangered Ecological Communities (EEC's) protected under Threatened Species legislation and should be protected as they are irreplaceable. We also are alarmed that 3 other EEC's, are to be adversely affected, they are
3. The general drying out and desiccation of the landscape will remove vital drought and fire refuges for fauna species such as the threatened Koala, Eastern Pygmy Possum and Southern Brown Bandicoot, as well as others. The moist forests within the project area, now about to be dried by longwall mining impact, are some of the few forests in eastern Australia that didn't burnt in the 2019/2020 fires. They now are even more essential as some of the only remaining functioning habitat on the NSW eastern coast for many species such as the Koala, flying foxes and birds, as burnt forests take many years to recover.
4. The drying the of the landscape and increase its flammability and vulnerability to wildfire with the expected complete loss of peat swamp substrates by fire and erosion and their irretrievable loss as upland swamp habitats, converting vegetation to much drier fire prone vegetation communities. This will direct detrimental impacts on stream flows and consequently flows into Avon and Cordeaux Dams

Quite apart from these flora and fauna impacts, we make the point that what is good for nature is good for the long term viability of the landscape that produces, nurtures and stores the very pure drinking water of these dams, that then require little treatment.

Like so many other objectors we re-iterate that it is entirely unacceptable that long-wall mining will come within 300 metres of the edges of the Avon and Cordeaux dams, and to within 1000m of the dam walls, threatening dam infrastructure, and this is too great a risk. We re-iterate that it is entirely unacceptable that the credible agency Water NSW are predicting a loss of “5.2 megalitres per day” and this could continue in perpetuity.

An IPC approval of this project is an unacceptable denial of the overwhelming belief by ordinary people, that our government can be trusted to look after water resources, in our dry continent and especially when our drinking water supplies are threatened by climate change and ever increasing demand from population growth.

We remind the IPC that these coastal Sydney Metropolitan Water Catchments have the highest annual rainfall of the catchments. Warragamba by comparison is climatically drier. So the coastal catchments therefore provide some of the most reliable inflows to dams. This project could move these dams catchments towards a functional ecosystem collapse. Once past the tipping point, with no swamps and stream function, their water supply function could be effectively gone.

The DPIE have failed to seek alternatives to this proposal and rather has accepted the mining proponents flawed analysis.

Some alternative that the IPC should consider are;

Alternatives coal sources outside the SMWC.

Urging industry and the government to seek innovatory ways of firing the Blue Scope Blast Furnace.

The long-term objective of phasing out all coal mining in the SMWC.

In the interim, change mine layouts and utilising board and pillar extraction techniques which can drastically reduce subsidence impacts, as the nearby Russell vale mine does.

Kate Bannister

Committee Save Sydney Koalas Incorporated

Wildlife & Koala Carer & Rehabilitator WIRES

References

DECC (2007) *Terrestrial Vertebrate Fauna of the Greater Southern Sydney Region: Vol 1 Background Report, Vol 2 Fauna of Conservation Concern including Priority Pest Species, Vol 4 Fauna of the Metropolitan, O'Hares and Woronora Special Areas*. A joint project between the Sydney Catchment Authority and the Department of Environment Change (NSW) (DECC) under the Special Areas Strategic Plan of Management by the Information and Assessment Section, Climate Change and Environmental Protection Branch, DECC, Hurstville.

NSW Parliament Koala Inquiry 2020,

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/committees/inquiries/Pages/inquiry-details.aspx?pk=2536>

NSW Chief Scientists Advice on the Campbelltown Koalas,

<https://www.chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au/independent-reports/campbelltown-koala-advice>

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