

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Friday 7 March 2014**

### **Cobbora mine next on Planning Assessment Commission agenda**

Mudgee District Environment Group (MDEG) will be attending the next Planning Assessment Commission (PAC) meeting in the region on Tuesday 11 March in Dunedoo to discuss the large Cobbora coal mine proposal.

'The Cobbora mine at Laheys Creek is a state owned proposal put up by the discredited ALP Minister for Mining and Energy, Ian McDonald,' said Bev Smiles, spokeswoman for MDEG. 'The fact that the O'Farrell Government is still pursuing the uneconomic project and has spent a significant amount of tax payer dollars on it, is quite astounding.'

'The state owned Cobbora Holdings Company now owns over 458 square kilometers of land in the Laheys Creek/Cobbora area, displacing a large number of farming families from the region. The NSW Government has also acquired over 5,000 million litres of water licence to service the water requirements for this large mining operation.'

'The revised proposal before this second PAC has not adopted all of the recommendations made by the first review PAC that held a public hearing in Dunedoo in December 2012.'

'There are still significant issues with this mine relating to the quality of the coal, the extent of the social, biodiversity and water impacts and the transport impacts.'

'The cumulative impact of this proposal on the region with coal trains through Gulgong, increased competition for rail space on the Ulan to Muswellbrook line, more mine traffic on regional roads, ongoing loss of established communities and competition for regional water supplies has not been taken into account.'

The outcome of the tender for the \$20 million transition fund has yet to be announced, while the social and economic impacts of the proposal, particularly on the township of Dunedoo, have been extensive.

MDEG believes that the O'Farrell Government should sell the land back and stop throwing good money after bad.

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