

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Mudgee community rallies to save local koala populations from mining threats**

The Mudgee community mobilised last Friday to highlight the threats to local koala populations due to multiple mining projects impacting their habitat. Residents voiced strong support for koalas and called for an end to the destruction of habitat and breeding sites for these iconic marsupials.

There are two mining projects currently in train that will have a significant impact on the Mudgee Region's koala populations:

- The 'Bowden Silver Mine' has recently been approved by the NSW Government to clear 381.7 hectares of core koala habitat. It is not yet approved by the Federal Government.
- The Moolarben Coal Mine is seeking approval to clear 113 hectares of koala habitat for a mine expansion.

The Save Our Koalas Rally, organised by Mudgee District Environment Group and supported by Nature Conservation Council (NCC) NSW, called on the NSW Government to recognise Mudgee's koalas in the NSW Koala Strategy. The Strategy currently focusses on coastal habitats.

NCC Chief Executive Officer Jacqui Mumford stated, "Across NSW koalas are under threat from mining, logging and habitat clearing. In this instance, a woefully inadequate koala management strategy risks seeing two of the most important areas of koala habitat destroyed. If we can't turn this species decline around, in NSW koalas face extinction in the wild by 2050. It is critical that remaining koala habitat is appropriately mapped, prioritised and protected."

The rally heard from Bev Smiles, spokesperson for the Mudgee District Environment Group. "Our koalas are facing annihilation from multiple major projects that will wipe out hundreds of hectares of koala habitat," she said.

Mick Boller, Mudgee Region Action Group gave observation figures and local counts from the Lue area, "The Lue area has a significant Koala population and core Koala habitat threatened by mining. Local people have been recording regular sightings of Koala in our area."

The submission period for public comment on the NSW Koala Strategy has been extended and closes on 24<sup>th</sup> May. More information is available on the [NSW Dept of Environment and Heritage website](#).

**ENDS**

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