

**Submission  
No 75**

**IMPACTS OF THE WATER AMENDMENT (RESTORING OUR RIVERS) ACT  
2023 ON NSW REGIONAL COMMUNITIES**

**Name:** Mrs Sonia Christie

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Firstly, thank you for holding this important inquiry into our very precious water systems in NSW and their effects on regional communities—and, importantly, the environment we all live in.

My husband and I own and manage a 2,400-acre beef cattle property, following regenerative and sustainable grazing practices. This land management approach, which we've implemented over the past 30 years, mimics natural herd movement to improve soil health, biodiversity, and water cycles. As a result, we ensure that water leaving our property is improved in quality, as we reduce surface runoff and use vegetation as natural filters.

Our concern relevant to this inquiry is the impact of the unlicensed take of both clean and contaminated water under Excluded Works Exemptions by proposed mineral mines across the state—and more specifically, a nearby proposed zinc, lead, and silver mine at Lue (Bowdens). The proponent of this mine proposes to capture 924 megalitres of rainfall and runoff, which it states will not leave the site or be released, due to the toxicity associated with the mining process and acid mine drainage. There is a real possibility that during flood events and heavy rainfall, contaminated water could escape and pollute Lawson Creek, which currently supports populations of platypus—sadly not even mentioned in the company's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

During dry periods, as landholders, we rely on this valuable water source to maintain the health of our animals and plants. It has long been vital to sustaining our business, homes, families, and local communities.

This presents a clear risk to us locally—and to the broader Murray-Darling Basin—if, as seen with other proposed mining sites, the full volume of contaminated water captured under these exemptions is unlicensed and the cumulative impacts are not assessed.

Secondly, it is deeply concerning that the NSW Government and its agencies appear not to have considered the needs of long-term, sustainable water users when applying this rule.

Thank you for your time in considering our submission. We look forward to hearing the outcome of your inquiry.