

**Submission
No 572**

INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

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A submission for the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Coal Seam Gas

We live on the western edge of the Liverpool Plains on a mixed farm. We have been here for two years and have grave reservations about the development of a coal seam gas industry in this agricultural region. We have seen exploration holes drilled by Santos on neighbouring properties and Eastern Star Gas wants to build a whopping great pipeline past our front gate. It is obvious to all, that the private sector, and perhaps even the government, want to see a full-scale gas industry on the Liverpool Plains. Our submission will aim to detail why we are opposed to such an outcome.

1. Undesirable outcomes from the extraction process.

- Millions of tonnes of salt will be brought to the surface, for which there is currently **no** acceptable means of disposal. Storage in evaporation ponds on prime farming land should not be an option and poses a very serious contamination risk, especially during heavy rainfall events.
- Potential drawdown and contamination of vital surface aquifers. Connectivity between aquifers will remain a possibility for eternity once the hole is drilled. De-watering of the coal seam along with the drilling, fracking and BTEX chemical released from the coal seam all induce the possibility of aquifer contamination and drawdown.
- Before the extraction process begins, the company must demonstrate through an independent scientific body, that it poses NIL threat to the integrity and cleanliness of any aquifers that are interfered with.
- There is currently no known method, nor is there any foreseeable method for the companies to 'make-good' any damage they do to our vital aquifers. **This point cannot be ignored, these aquifers are essential for food production and to permit a process that threatens their integrity should be criminal.**

2. The surface footprint of a gas field is incompatible with modern farming and intensive grazing operations.

The mosaic of well pads, interconnecting roads, pipelines and water pipes would simply play havoc with farmers implementing best practice farming methods such as minimum till, controlled traffic farming or cell/rotational grazing.

3. The cumulative impacts will create an industrial landscape.

All the infrastructure associated with a full scale gas field, scattered across the landscape will ruin its visual amenity. Based on images seen in the US and Queensland, it will resemble an industrial wasteland.

4. The current legal framework relies on the goodwill of the company, rather than the law, to ensure that landholders have valuable input and are adequately compensated.

5. The industry will place unwanted pressure onto already deteriorating regional road systems. This point should not be ignored as truck movements are considerable in a full scale gas field.

6. The industry roll-out must be planned and incorporate the strategic land use plan currently being developed. However, for the land use plan to be implemented effectively, it is essential that landholders accept it.

Sincerely,

James and Maddy Adams