

Submission
No 33

**INQUIRY INTO CURRENT AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS OF
GOLD, SILVER, LEAD AND ZINC MINING ON HUMAN
HEALTH, LAND, AIR AND WATER QUALITY IN NEW
SOUTH WALES**

Organisation: Yerranderie Arts Culture & Community Association

Date Received: 1 September 2023



*Submission by Rob Thompson on behalf of YACCA
(Yerranderie Arts Culture & Community Association)
www.ouryerranderie.com*

OUR BACKGROUND:

Our community of Yerranderie is next to the Tonalli River in the South Western Blue Mountains. Silver, gold and lead mining ceased nearly a 100 years ago but there is still unacceptably high levels of arsenic, cyanide and heavy metals washing down the Tonalli River into Lake Burragorang. The river is not safe to swim in. Even modern attempts to mitigate the pollution in our region have not been successful.

OUR CONCERNS - A SUMMARY:

We are extremely concerned about this proposal by Bowdens which will see a tailings dam with millions of tonnes of mining by-products contaminated with highly toxic pollutants such as cyanide, arsenic, caustic soda, copper as well as lead and zinc which is not captured in the mine processing. Our experience at Yerranderie is that these chemicals in the environment cannot be satisfactorily contained and will be released for hundreds if not thousands of years.

GEOLOGY:

We believe the geology (including fault lines) and river systems in the area of the new proposal are such that the pollutants can not be contained in the long term and that there will be leakage which cannot be predicted. There has been insufficient research and scientific evidence presented by Bowdens to establish a case otherwise.

THE "IMPERMEABLE" LINER:

The proposed "impermeable" liner for the tailings dam will need to survive **forever**. The pollutants it will contain last permanently. We do not believe there has been a sufficient scientific case presented that the liner will last forever.

CLIMATE CHANGE:

With La Nina weather, recent times have shown that extreme rain events are becoming more likely with Climate Change. There seems not to be a scientific explanation on how possible overflow situations will be dealt with in 20, 50, 100, 200 years in the future.

REMEDICATION:

We are also very concerned about what seems to be a lack of a remediation plan for when mining is finished. A situation which is all too apparent in Yerranderie.

MONITORING:

There seems to be an inadequate proposed monitoring program for leakages from the tailings dam.

CONCLUSION:

We believe that Bowdens **HAVE NOT** demonstrated that they have the experience to construct and maintain a highly toxic tailings dam **FOREVER**.

Thank you for taking time to read our submission. Please direct any enquiries to YACCA secretary Rob Thompson