

Submission  
No 135

**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**

**Name:** Linda and Rick Field

**Date Received:** 5 September 2023

---

5<sup>th</sup> September 2023

## **WHO ARE WE?**

We are landholders and residents in the Mudgee region. Our property comes within the boundary of yet another proposed area of exploration for future mining by Bowden's over the range from the planned mine at Lue. Having raised our family here and now watching our grandchildren grow up in the same area we have some grave concerns for our health as we age, our children's health and now the growth and development of our grandchildren who are indeed more vulnerable for they are our future. They depend on us to do what is right for them and protect both their health and heritage.

### **Our concerns are:**

- 1. Health** – We have grave concerns for the health of all our community members due to the risk of lead contamination. But especially for the children decreased IQ, delayed academic development and dangers to the unborn are not risks that can be ignored. We can only assume that the placing of a lead mine so close to a community and a school is being disregarded under an assumption that the school will subsequent to approval of the mine be closed or else why would you be so irresponsible.

As ageing adults who already battle blood pressure and bouts of brain fog the possible effects of lead worsening this is not something to look forward to.

With elderly parents living in Gulgong and dependent on the Cudgegong for drinking water we also have grave concerns for their health should contamination Heaven forbid occur.

Mudgee has lived with mines for years and the impacts health wise with ever encroaching boundaries are sadly becoming evident. Our valley already at one end is the buffer zone for two mines not that the land between stops much. On a still day the drone of vehicles and the rumble and shock of blasting can be heard and felt. When the wind direction comes up the valley ammonia can be smelt on the air on blast days. That can't be a good thing to be breathing in.

Dust hazed blue is now the colour of our sky and over the past few years eye irritation and congestion of head and nose have become a constant companion. We assume adding lead to the mix wouldn't help.

The bulk of our water for both stock and domestic including vegetable growing comes from the local creek and rain water tanks dust and ammonia are one thing to contend with lead would definitely add a toxic note these are our health concerns in a nutshell once you lose your health what do you have left?

- 2. WATER:** In the country the only water we have comes from the sky or the ground when it is there that is. We were all carting water during the recent long drought.

How can the amount of water needed for the mine be guaranteed with no impact on the community and the environment?

We are highly restricted where we are what we are allowed to do on our land how many trees we cut, what chemicals we use, fires we light all due to being in the Hunter catchment so as to not contaminate the water ways. Water is our life blood without it we cannot live here nor raise livestock or crops or grow our food. Contaminated water is death and as bad as having no water.

The prediction that 1.6 Megalitres of toxic water leaching back into the ground water system daily seems a bleak one indeed. All water eventually flows somewhere else, joins something

else and ends up somewhere else its not rocket science, toxins will spread . Is the earths purification system meant to or able to handle this unnatural injection of toxins?

We are concerned that Bowden's or any mine for that matter wherever they mine be **held** to the strictest testing and guidelines and restrictions , if compliance makes mining too expensive, too bad it should not be negotiable under any circumstances in our view. People fauna and flora all depend on clean water. Bowden's will be taking clean water but not returning it and if and when it does return to its source , it will be toxic for all concerned.

On that note should the unthinkable happen and Gulgong's water supply become contaminated where will their drinking water come from? Who will supply it and who will pay for it and for how long? Who will be held responsible for this ? If it has happened before it will happen again. We all know from the past experience of mining that once leaching has occurred it is not an easy or quick fix if it can be rectified at all.

- 3. Traffic & Transporting Toxic Chemicals-** Having lived in the area for most of our life we don't have to be engineers to know that Mudgee roads are buckling under the pressure of mining and tourism already, pot holes , narrow roads numerous bends will make further traffic especially B- Doubles a dangerous prospect especially on the Lue road where accidents over the years have taken several lives. Add to this school buses and toxic chemicals and its an accident/ disaster waiting to happen. Enough said.
- 4. Environmental Concerns-** Our Valley as well as the Lue location has a great diversity of both flora and fauna which will be affected by these mining ventures . Due to the Mines that already exist gradually driving them out Koalas and other animals have been seen more frequently in the valley> The Koalas use us as a refuge and corridor to other Koala colonies in the Mudgee area. We also have spotted quoll and a variety of birds, Eagles, lyre birds, Bower birds, Parrots , the Regent Honey Eater rarer wallabies as well. If we keep destroying their habitat along with our own in pursuit of rare mentals to meet quotas and deadlines , to corner a world market or be seen as doing our bit towards a more sustainable world, aren't we in essence destroying the world we say we are trying to save?

Like these animals we feel we are being pushed or driven out of our environment which is rapidly changing and we too need to ask where will we go and how? Land values drop by 30% once a mining application comes on the scene and who wants to buy near a mine ?Like the animals endangered and of no consequence to those who are creating a new future for all?

Linda & Rick Field