

**Submission  
No 111**

**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:** Miss Julie Hunter  
**Date Received:** 5 September 2023

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Dear Committee,

My name is Julie Hunter and I have a home in the Central West of N.S.W. in the town of Rylstone. I am 23 km away from the proposed Bowdens mine at Lue and am within an exploration zone.

I would like to address the following:

1 (b) the impact on catchments and waterways, affecting both surface and groundwater destined for, local and town water supplies, including rainwater tanks, and on aquatic biodiversity

My concerns are:

-Managing of water resources in times of drought.

As we move towards El Niño and drought our farmers are selling down their stock by up to 40 percent. In drought, what do mining companies do? In time of drought what will the operators of the proposed mine at Lue do?

Like our agriculturalists, will it reduce its inputs and outputs due to water scarcity?

The Bowdens proposed mine at Lue is a water intensive project with an estimated use of 1,825ML water per annum with no external water supply. This equates to almost 5 megalitres of water a day.

Bowdens Mine has proposed that the Lawson Creek will be a source of water. It is reported that this will result in a loss of flow of 10.9 % to this waterway. What about in drought when there is no flow of water in the creek?

-Pollution of waterways.

The Lawson Creek Catchment flows into the Cudgegong River and the Burrendong Dam. In times of extreme weather events and flooding, the runoff from the proposed mine at Lue will run off into this catchment. There is a natural seepage that will occur as reported by Bowdens. This seepage is toxic. What will occur in extreme weather events and flooding?

-Accuracy of Assessment and Modelling:

At the IPC hearing, a speaker stated that modelling is based on 120 years of data.

I would like the committee to bring in to question, how is this past modelling now relevant or accurate with climate change and the frequency of extreme weather events?

In an independent report written by Shireen Baguley (March 2022), it confirms that the data relied on by Bowdens to conclude there will be no significant impact on other water users in the area is inaccurate and is based on inflated monthly rainfall averages and underestimates the frequency of drought.

-To conclude:

Water is an essential resource. It is a shared resource. It is resource that in drought is finite. It is unacceptable to allocate this resource to any mining company. It is unacceptable to allow toxins to go into the water catchment that is used by people and animals further downstream.

It brings into question what resource is more important for the community – minerals from mining or water?

We can recycle and reuse existing materials without extracting more from the ground.

We cannot eat rocks nor drink toxic water nor breathe polluted air.

References:

Aberton M and Serov P (2020) Review of EIS, report prepared for Lue Action Group, ABSolution Ecology and Stygoecologia.

Baguley S (2022) Independent Review of the Bowdens Silver Pty Limited Surface Water Assessment – Updated, report prepared for Lue Action Group.