

**Submission
No 151**

**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**

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My submission is about water security.

The NSW government has just established the department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. The Minister is quoted in the smh this week

“ we know our regional communities always bear the brunt of devastating droughts and it is crucial that they are given the resources and infrastructure to improve water security at the local level to ensure the dry times .

The water source for the proposed Bowdens’s mine is Lawson creek .

During the recent drought this creek was non existent .

Indeed at the height of the drought Dubbo’s water supply Burrendong Dam was at minus capacity and plans were in place to dredge the bottom of the dam to extract whatever water remained.

Given that we appear to be entering another drought period in western NSW the reliance upon Lawson Creek as the water supply appears unrealistic.

The proposed solution is that water would be trucked in.

From where ?

This also has the potential added impact on surrounding agriculture of increased competition for whatever scarce water is available to purchase, adding to the pressure of surviving drought.

Of course the ravages of climate change also saw unprecedented floods in this region in 2021/2022.

The previously dry Lawson creek was a torrent that flooded into the Cudgong river which is Gulgong’s water supply and flows into Burrendong dam (Dubbo’s water supply). If Lawson creek was to be contaminated by its proximity to the proposed mine

this would impact the township of Gulgong and also the city of Dubbo’s water supply.

Water security is of utmost importance.

For this reason I ask that the newly created Department of Climate Change Energy the Environment and Water be required to investigate all such existing and proposed mines with a particular emphasis upon water security.

While this submission is primarily concerned with water security I also find it unacceptable that such a mine is located within 2.5 kilometres of a village school .

The potential health impacts of dust and lead exposure are well documented and a more cautionary approach is required .

The proposed Bowden's mine is too close to Lue villlage.

Lawson creek in times of drought will most likely fail as the water supply for the proposed mine. Trucking in water from a drought stricken area does not seem a viable solution .

Water security must be a priority as recently recognised by the NSW government.