

National Parks Association of NSW
Southern Sydney Branch
PO Box 528
Pyrmont
NSW 2009

The Chief Scientist NSW
Attention Catchment Panel

National Parks Association of NSW Southern Sydney Branch would like to add further comments to the major NPA submissions already listed in your notice of this Inquiry related to **“the environmental consequences for swamps”** as listed in your areas of particular interest.

Our Branch has already made a number of submissions to local environmental studies related to these catchments and especially enunciated in some detail potential impacts for endangered swamp ecosystems at the Planning and Environment Commission related to BHP's interest in mining the Bulli Seam beneath the then Dharawal State Conservation Area (Attached) which we further submit as it provides many cogent arguments, which with those provided by other NGOs and community members led to the Planning and Assessment Commission and then the NSW Government formally rejecting the request to mine this seam in this location, especially because the PAC was not convinced that it could be done on the scale envisaged without not some viable risk to the extensive swamplands on which a rich flora and fauna depended.

These lands are now National Park Status demonstrating that there is at least one example locally where coal mining impacts on lands similar to those in the formal drinking water catchment areas led to conservation of these lands via a strengthened tenure. The mandate to protect the floral, faunal and water quantity and quality values in the water catchments is no less than were acknowledged through the strong protective measures implemented.

NPA has further produced a paper (attached, Author Tom Kelly) that summarises the faunal values, in particular, that continue to be threatened as more upland swamps are impacted and river beds drain due to long wall mining impacts. While this paper was catalysed by threats from Coal Seam Gas exploration and development, the enunciation of faunal values at risk from long wall mining of the scale happening at the moment, is still relevant to the current Inquiry. It documents what can be lost if the endangered swamps continue to be threatened and the tributaries drained...containing water important to local fauna, not just human users.

These impacts and not inconsiderable risks have been known to the NSW Government over many years. This is not the first time that there has been a review of these risks.

NPA Southern Sydney Branch requests that the Panel and Chief Scientist recommend, based on extensive evidence and detailed predictive impact analysis, that floral and faunal impacts together with real risks to water quality and quantity be finally considered as pressing reasons why coal mining using such massive, damaging long wall technology be phased out in the shorter term. We understand that the existence of coal mining in drinking water catchments worldwide is a rare phenomenon indeed, and well documented floral and faunal values that are threatened demand that the NSW government acts quickly to negate these existing and predicted impacts.

NPA shares with other key NGOs the belief that these catchment lands be gazetted as nature reserves under the NPW Act to better protect their natural values once mining is phased out urgently in the short term.

Gary Schoer
(Secretary)
Southern Sydney Branch
National Parks Association of NSW
12/11/18