

Media Release
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Coal Mining Water Study Missing in Action

Mudgee District Environment Group (MDEG) is asking the NSW Government to get on with the Regional Water Study required for the Moolarben Coal Project, near Mudgee in the central west.

While the farming community at Caroona is calling for a water study on the Liverpool Plains, the NSW Government has already required Moolarben Coal to conduct a Regional Water Supply/Monitoring Investigation across the three coalmines operating in the Mudgee area.

A condition of approval to the very large Moolarben Stage 1 project, granted in September 2007, required a water investigation be conducted by an independent expert appointed by the Director General in consultation with Department of Environment and Climate Change, Department of Primary Industries, Department of Water and Energy and the owners of Ulan and Wilpinjong coal mines.

This investigation was to be completed prior to the commencement of mining operations.

‘The three mines in the area; Ulan owned by Xstrata, Wilpinjong, owned by Peabody USA and Moolarben, owned by Felix Resources; are having a great deal of difficulty co-operating with each other on a number of levels,’ said Bev Smiles, chairperson of MDEG.

‘Meanwhile Moolarben has submitted a Stage 2 proposal for a fourth open cut mine and two more underground mines in the area. It is imperative that the impacts of these very large proposals on the water flows to the Goulburn River are studied and understood, before this next expansion is approved.’

‘There is still no sign of the study and the three companies are quibbling over sharing information. A thorough independent study of the groundwater system and base flows to the Goulburn River must be done properly before more mining goes ahead.’

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