From: coalcommunities-bounces@lists.nsw.greens.org.au on behalf of Sharyn Munro
To: Coal Communities
Subject: [CoalCommunities] Coal blight spreads in Margaret River
Date: Tuesday, 26 October 2010 6:57:00 AM
Attachments: ATT00061.txt

First there was one.....

from MLC Adele Farina **media release** 25 October 2010

Minister creating bigger, harder fight for community

The Margaret River community is facing a lifelong battle against mining, with the government recently receiving five reports from the Mining Registrar recommending approval of four exploration licenses and one mining lease in the Vasse Coal Shelf, South West MLC Adele Farina said today.

"Unfortunately, I think the Margaret River community is facing the very real prospect of the Barnett Government approving the 11 pending applications," Ms Farina said.

"On 4 October, another exploration licence was granted by a department officer under delegated Ministerial authority.

"In Parliament last week, Mining Minister Norman Moore justified the granting of the exploration licence applications on the basis that they provide a good opportunity to get geological and related information to assist decision making.

"The Minister knows that granting an exploration licence is an essential pre-requisite to the granting of a mining licence, which itself is a pre-requisite to carry on mining activity.

"He knows that the granting of an exploration licence, raises an expectation that the holder of the licence will get a mining lease.

"He is knowingly creating a bigger and harder fight for the community.

"The Minister declined to exercise his powers under section 111A and section 59 of the Mining Act to refuse an application for an exploration license or a mining lease, arguing that he was not aware of any 'reasonable' grounds on which to refuse the applications.

"The Minister's comments send the clearest message that there are no circumstances in which he is prepared to use his ministerial powers under the Mining Act to refuse an application for an exploration license or mining lease.

"He clearly doesn't consider strong community opposition, the impact on the underground aquifer, the environment, neighbouring properties and businesses, and raising an expectation of a right to mine when the Premier has clearly said he does not support coal mining in Margaret River, as being reasonable grounds for refusal."

Ms Farina encouraged members of the community to write to Minister Moore calling on

him to exercise his powers pursuant to sections 111A and 59 of the Mining Act, detailing the grounds for refusal and enclosing supporting documentation.

“It appears the Barnett Government is more interested in ‘preserving the integrity of the Mining Act’s title regime’, than it is in sovereign risk or the rights of landowners and the wider community,” she said.

Media Contact: Jordyn Rados 0402 297 388