

## **RESPONDING TO THE RIDGELANDS COAL THREAT**

### Our Commitment to Our Members & the Public

The Wybong Action Group is seeking specialist legal advice from the Environmental Defenders Office and other sources concerning Landowner rights. We will make this advice available publicly to all members as received by us.

## **PRELIMINARY LEGAL ADVICE**

Preliminary Legal Advice provided by the Caroona Coal Action Group (who have been successful in delaying Exploration Drilling at Caroona to date) is:

- Ensure your personal and business (if you operate on/from your property as any business) opposition to the Grant of an Exploration Lease is on record with the Department of Mineral Resources.
- If a licence to explore is granted, everyone within the lease generally then has an opportunity to object (presuming they want to) within 28 days. **Note: with the Ridgeland Exp. Area this objection period will expire during Christmas school holidays.**
- **Objectors to the issue of an Exploration Lease have further grounds to impact on approval that are not available to any person who did not earlier object.**

## **THE NPWS WILDLIFE ATLAS**

<http://wildlifeatlas.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/wildlifeatlas/watlas.jsp>

This atlas contains recorded sightings of plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and endangered invertebrates in New South Wales. Users can freely search recorded sightings and maps of plants or animals in their area.

To record sightings in our area for inclusion in the atlas the public can download a spreadsheet <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/nature/scientificLicenceDatasheet.xls> and information pack <http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/nature/WildlifeAtlasFieldDataBook.pdf>. **The only essential details are Species name, Date of sighting, Location (location description, lat/longitude), observation type (for fauna only) eg observed, heard call etc. Latitude/Longitude can be found using the zoom and details tools on the maps at <http://imagery.maps.nsw.gov.au/>. The more flora & fauna that is listed the harder for miners to destroy the habitat.**

## **COUNCIL REJECTS MANGOOLA "MINERS ESTATE"**

At its ordinary meeting on Nov 10 2008 Muswellbrook Shire Council REJECTED the "Miners Estate" proposed for a site in the Urban Buffer Zone next to the Sewerage Works in Skellatar Stock Route in Muswellbrook. The estate was planned to house some 400 construction workers and miners for the Anvil Hill Mine.

The rejection of the proposal was made over the recommendation of Council Executive Mr Gidney and Planner Mr Jeuken. The rejection, by unanimous vote of the Councillors, was made on the sound planning ground that the application was not consistent with the zoning of the land, following several submissions including the Wybong Action Group Submission prepared on zoning grounds for lodgement with the Land and Environment Court.

CONGRATULATIONS to Cr Phelps and the other councillors for arriving at the correct decision on this inappropriate development.

## **XSTRATA FAILS THE BICENTENNIAL NATIONAL TRAIL**

The Australian Bicentennial National Trail (BNT) is a 5,330 kilometre self-reliant trail through virgin bush, wilderness and mountain areas. It is designed specifically for trail horse riders and pack horsing, horse drawn vehicles, bushwalkers, and mountain bike riders. Motorised vehicles are NOT permitted. The Trail winds through some of the most magnificent terrain in Australia including through the Wybong-Yarraman-Ridgeland area en-route from Wollemi Wilderness to Barrington Tops. The Wybong Road Route is the only feasible route for the BNT through the Upper Hunter.

**Xstrata Mangoola, in what has become their trademark contempt for anything non-Xstrata failed to consider the needs of the Bicentennial National Trail users in their plans to use Wybong Road west (Yarraman Road to Golden Highway) as the unimproved route for its Heavy Vehicles to the Anvil Hill Mine.**

The Xstrata plan pitted heavy, long, wide, explosive, toxic and special purpose vehicles up to 8 metres load widths and 64 tonne up to every two minutes at up to 100 km/hr against horses, pedestrians, wagons and sulkies on the narrow Wybong Road section of the BNT. This section has road widths as low as 5.2 metres and narrow, soft unformed verges less than 1m width. Xstrata should have engaged properly with BNT and the Wybong Community to develop a real solution for its safe use of Wybong Road.

## **THE SIGNAGE PLACED BY XSTRATA MANGOOLA POINTED BNT USERS IN THE WRONG DIRECTION.**

Xstrata Mangoola have only themselves to blame.



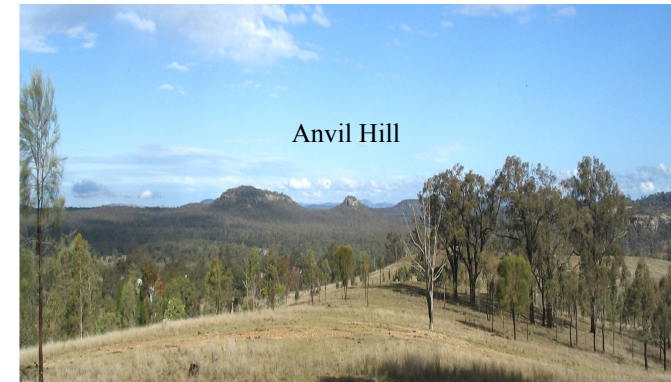
# Wybong Action Group

Incorporated

## **Newsletter 3, Oct-Nov 2008**

### **INSIDE:** (from the Presidents Desk)

- **NEW** Ridgeland Coal Exploration Lease Threat
- Responding to the Ridgeland Coal Threat
- Council rejects Xstrata Mangoola "Miners Estate"
- Xstrata Fails the Bicentennial National Trail
- Recording our Flora & Fauna on the Wildlife Atlas
- Action Wybong Membership Form



Anvil Hill

### **ACTION TO TAKE**

**To stop the destruction of the old growth woodland habitat and the environment we live in we can object the Mining Exploration Leases to:**

The Hon. Ian Macdonald MLC  
Minister for Primary Industries  
Governor Macquarie Tower  
Level 33, 1 Farrer Place, SYDNEY NSW 2000

The Hon. Carmel Tebbutt, MP  
Minister for Climate Change and the Environment  
Street Address:  
Governor Macquarie Tower  
Level 30, 1 Farrer Place, SYDNEY NSW 2000

The Hon. George SOURIS MP  
Member for Upper Hunter  
98 Bridge Street,  
MUSWELLBROOK NSW 2333

## New Threat by Minister issue of Ridgелands Coal Exploration Lease

On 10 November 2008 an observant Sydneysider first alerted one of our members to the Dept Primary Industry advertisement for Expressions of Interest in Ridgелands Coal placed in "The Land". A follow-up of the advertisement revealed that the NSW Minister for Mineral Resources has offered the Central Ridgелands Road area for exploration beginning 15 January 2009 and an active coal mine by 2016. The document calling for Expressions of Interest does not mention that any person actually lives in the area, does not mention that any dwellings are located in the area, does not mention the generations of investment in family farming and cropping and does not mention the existence of large tracts of Remnant vegetation and numerous rare and endangered flora and fauna of the area.

The threat posed by this Coal Exploration Area is a direct threat to our residences, livelihoods, investments, families and heritage.

The development of a Ridgелands Mine has the potential to completely destroy the environment we live in and place at extreme risk the habitat of our ever marginalised native flora and fauna.

A Ridgелands Mine will mean that every person will be removed from the Lower Wybong Valley and Dry Creek tributary.



NSW DEPARTMENT OF  
PRIMARY INDUSTRIES  
New South Wales Government

### Ridgелands Coal Exploration Area – Expressions Of Interest

The Government of New South Wales, Australia, invites Expressions of Interest for the awarding of an Exploration Licence, in accordance with the Mining Act 1992, over the Ridgелands exploration area, about 20km west-northwest of Muswellbrook in the upper Hunter Coalfield. The subject area covers approximately 80km<sup>2</sup> and is expected to contain large resources of export and domestic quality thermal coal.

Expressions of Interest should be submitted to the NSW Department of Primary Industries with details of an exploration and development program.

Applications should be delivered to Development Coordination, Department of Primary Industries, 516 High Street Maitland NSW 2320 prior to **12 noon on Monday 15 December 2008.**

For a copy of the Ridgелands Expression of Interest Information Package, contact Ms Julie Moloney, Principal Adviser, Development Coordination, Department of Primary Industries on +61 2 4931 6549 or email [julie.moloney@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:julie.moloney@dpi.nsw.gov.au).

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## RIDGELANDS COAL EXPLORATION AREA



### THE MINISTERS TIMETABLE

"Although broad-scale exploration by the Department has been carried out in the Ridgелands area, it is recognised that there is a need for more detailed exploration to determine geological constraint and potential mineable reserves prior to any proposed mine feasibility studies. An indicative timeframe for future exploration and development is: Exploration 3 years, Feasibility and preliminary environmental studies 1.5 years, Approval 1.5 years, Commencement of Development 1 year," **Operational Mine 1 year. Total 8 years.**

**"The Government intends the successful applicant to apply for a mining lease and operational mine development..."** within 8 years, or forfeit title.

## PROTECTION FROM INTRUDERS

- No person has any right to enter your home or traverse your land without your permission.
- Permission for Access for mining related purposes MUST be in writing from the landowner.
- You have the right to demand Identification from any person requesting to enter on your land and to refuse entry until their bona fides are established eg by telephoning their employer or Police
- If you are pressured to permit entry on or over your property OR HOME or entry is demanded, REFUSE ENTRY, take the persons details including vehicle registration details and ring Muswellbrook (65426999) or Denman (65472400) Police or Crimestoppers 1800 333 000.
- Call 000 if your personal safety is threatened.
- To report a crime where you are the victim, call 131 444.

## MEMBERSHIPS OR DONATIONS

Like to become a Wybong Action Group member?  
 Ordinary Membership is \$2 per person single or \$5 per family, pa. Affiliate (Business) Membership is \$20pa.  
 Donations accepted with thanks. A receipt is provided for all cash contributions and membership fees.  
To Join the Wybong Action Group or make a donation:  
 Send the section below with the correct membership amount to "Wybong Action Group, 740 Ridgелands Road, Manobalal NSW, 2333". Write "Donation" for any donation amounts.

Name	Address	Amount	Phone	email

Printed by:

*Wybong Action Group Incorporated.*

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