



Senator Waters  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT

Attention: Ms Caroline Nordang

19 August 2011-08-19

Dear Ms Nordang

I refer to the private members [bill](#) which is being drafted for presentation to the House giving farmers the right to deny coal seam gas (CSG) miners access to their land, thereby protecting prime agricultural land.

A resident has contacted me to advise it does not include any mention or protection of our nation's water supply.

May I request that consideration be given extending the scope of the bill include water catchment areas plus significant parks and nature reserves. Farming requires significant water to grow the crops, it seems inconsistent to protect the land if water is not included in the same protection.

I justify my request in that the Illawarra receives its water supply from Woronora Dam and natural areas such as Royal National Park, Illawarra Escarpment, Garrawarra State Recreation Area, Dharawal State Recreation Area and Dharawal Nature Reserve are all under threat from Petroleum Exploration Licenses issued to Apex Energy NL for CSG exploration.

Recently I petitioned Wollongong City Council to pass a [resolution](#) *"requesting a moratorium on all Coal Seam Gas (CSG) mining exploration and fracking in NSW, more specifically a moratorium on CSG mining and fracking practices along the Illawarra escarpment and within the confines of Wollongong LGA.....Unreservedly acknowledge the importance of Woronora Dam in its role as the primary water source to the Northern Illawarra, and the risk of contamination of the water supply is far too great, Wollongong City Council demands the Petroleum Exploration License's be rescinded immediately"*.

Significant concerns have been raised with the Environmental Assessment provided by Apex Energy NL with independent reports showing the documentation supplied to the Department of Planning contained critical errors that could result in polluting our water supply. A statement from Dr. Steve Short, consultant to Apex, stated *"adopted design storm durations and intensities were incorrect as you identified..... I accept full responsibility for missing those errors as I had actually reviewed that part of the EA before release"*.

This falsity related directly to conditions where spills from bungs were grossly underestimated. This breach would result in every 61 days, “produced” water having the probability of joining the water table that flows to Woronora Dam, home of the Illawarra and Sydney’s drinking water.

Apex Energy NL has these very same PEL agreements situated on Dharawal State Conservation Area and Dharawal Nature Reserve land. The recently elected State Liberal government campaigned to have the Dharawal gazetted as a National Park. Again, I see your Bill as the appropriate means to ensure protection of our country’s parks.

I support Senator Waters’ private members bill and request your consideration to include water catchment areas plus significant parks and nature reserves.

I have taken the liberty of attaching a Press Release for your information.

For me, this issue is being fought as part of the Wollongong City Council elections. Local government has always been about **local issues for local people**.

My hope is the federal and state government see this NOT as an issue of party politics, but our future heritage of farm land, water supply and national parks that must be protected and preserved for future generations, not profit to a few lucky corporate titans that have the ear of all levels of government.

Warmest regards

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