

Barry O'Farrell

From: Richard Hawkins [winbarst@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, 10 February 2013 9:32 PM
To: <office@premier.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Act to protect the Gardens of Stone from open-cut mining

Dear Premier Barry O'Farrell

I urge you to reject the 'Coalpac Pty Ltd Consolidation Project' proposal, Castlereagh Highway Cullen Bullen, NSW. This 'consolidation' involves extending open-cut and highwall mining into a large area of the publicly-owned Ben Bullen State Forest (BBSF) and will impact the adjoining lands of the Gardens of Stone.

I am opposed to the development of the proposed Coalpac open cut mine because:

- If approved, the mine would scalp all biodiversity from 1088 hectares of mainly old growth forest and habitat in the BBSF and turn its geodiversity into piles of waste rock.
- I support the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service wish to add BBSF to the conservation reserve system as a matter of priority; it is an area with outstanding natural values.
- Permitting this proposal would see the NSW Coalition Government privatising and liquidating a large part of public land, whereas I expect state forests to be protected from destruction in perpetuity.
- The Gardens of Stone's iconic and unique sandstone pagodas provide a safe haven for a variety of native flora and fauna; it is a biodiversity hot-spot. If approved, their features and stability may be threatened by partial or total collapse, compromising the region's tourism.
- Our iconic Lyrebirds use the sides of pagodas in this area to nest and raise their young. Mining will completely remove their food habitats.
- Habitats for the Regent Honeyeater, Tiger Quoll and Powerful Owl and at least 32 threatened native animals, 5 of which are listed under the EPBC Act, will be completely removed.
- The large open-cut will create significant dust and air quality issues which will directly affect local residents.
- The open-cut poses risks to the quality and quantity of westward-flowing surface water, and the quality of eastward-flowing groundwater.

Please reject this irredeemably destructive mining proposal and act to protect the region within a State Conservation Area.

Yours Sincerely,

Richard Hawkins

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11/02/2013