Noondoo Partnership

David & Maree McPhie

Ross & Phyllis McPhie

Committee Secretary

Senate Standing on Rural Affairs & Transport

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We are writing this submission today in response to a request for feedback on the topic of Coal Seam gas Mining.

Our family have been ratepayers, farmers, graziers and active community members for over 100 years and have grave concerns relating to Coal Seam gas mining on our Prime Agricultural land.

Ross & Phyllis McPhie had respect & passion for the land instilled in them by their parents and have carried this respect & passion down to their children and grandchildren.

Ross & Phyl have been married for over 50 years and during this time have not only forged a successful family farming business, but have been an integral force in their community. They have been instrumental in the evolution of the grains & livestock industries, served many years on local school P & C Committees, a driving force of the Moree Show Society and very active members of the NSW Farmers Association and Rural Counselling Service. They have fought many battles over the years, not only for their families but the greater community.

After so many years of working to give back to the land that has been so good to us, it is heartbreaking to now have to fight the battle over Coal Seam Gas.

Our Moree community relies heavily on agriculture and the Hot Spa Baths for it's survival. Clearly, the threat of Coal Seam Gas Mining poses a real threat to both. The miners wish to set up camp on the properties they are mining and fly their food in, so it is difficult to see any real benefits for our town. One of the big outcomes of mining on Moree will be that it will become more difficult to get flights for locals as the miners will be flying in & out on their rosters.

All of that aside, without a doubt, our foremost concern is the effect coal Seam Gas mining will have on our water aquifers. We all rely on our water for our livelihoods. Surely the potential risks far outweigh any perceived gains. At the very least, Coal Seam Gas companies should have to follow the same strict regulations that other water users have to adhere to.

The impact of Coal Seam Gas mining on our farming land is untenable. Will these companies follow our lead in wet weather, when we do everything we can to stay off dirt roads and paddocks to minimize damage? Or will they just keep ploughing under the promise of *"Don't worry, we will grade your road"?*

The flow on effect of forming new roads to well sites will not only be felt by the landholder but also possibly neighbouring properties. The altering of the landscape could lead to water pooling in new places, soil & wind erosin and the loss of vegetation.

The safety of our family & property is another real sticking point. We are cautious as to who we allow access of our land. Can the mining companies provide us with security & police checks on their many staff that they will have coming and going on our land? We have our children to look out for, who up until now have enjoyed the freedom that living on a farm has afforded them. That will all change. This is not just our home, but our business.

Up until now landholders have been very underinformed and at a distinct disadvantage in dealing with these companies, which they have taken full advantage of. Unfortunatley, at this stage, legislation holds no protection for us.

It is our belief that farming areas should be exempt from any form of mining, especially when it puts our ground water in peril. So much is being put at risk for short term gain. We don't need another "Gold Rush".

Thankyou for allowing us to voice just some of our many concerns.

Yours faithfully