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FIRST BIG OPEN-CUT COAL MINE APPROVED BY COALITION GOVERNMENT IN THE GUNNEDAH BASIN

Farmers and conservationists say the [approval](#) yesterday of the Boggabri Coal Mine expansion, the first major mine in the Gunnedah Basin under the Coalition Government, shows they have failed to deliver on pre-election promises to control inappropriate mining.

The Boggabri Coal Mine expansion will produce 7 million tonnes of coal per year, clear 1,300 hectares of Leard State Forest which is habitat for up to 34 threatened species and dump thousands of tonnes of dust on surrounding farms.

"The Boggabri Coal Mine is proof positive that the NSW Government has turned its back on the community and delivered business as usual for multi-national mining companies" said Phil Laird, spokesperson for the Maules Ck Community Council.

"The NSW Government promised pre-election that no mines would be approved before the Namoi Water Study was completed, but this mine breaks that promise.

"The NSW Government promised proper cumulative assessments of the full impacts of mining but the approval admits the combined impacts of mining in the area are unknown. There is still no certainty for communities in the region" he said.

"The NSW Government promised a strong Strategic Land Use Planning process but this mine has been approved even though there is no plan in place" said Carmel Flint, spokesperson for the Northern Inland Council for the Environment.

"The NSW Government itself has mapped this area as a Tier 1 Biodiversity Area with the very highest conservation significance and then opened it up for mining.

"The end result of this sequence of broken promises is that the health of the local community is at risk from dangerous coal dust and a unique forest will be destroyed forever" she said.

Interviews or comment: Carmel Flint 0400 521474 or Phil Laird 0428 712622

For more information on the Boggabri Coal Mine and adjoining mines, visit maulescreek.org

Extract from the Planning Assessment Commission Determination:

"Both the Review report and the Director-General's Assessment Report indicate:

- 1) That the potential impacts of this project on biodiversity are substantial; and*
- 2) That these project specific impacts may be considerably more significant when combined with the impacts from other mines in the vicinity (both existing and proposed)*

Both documents also indicate that the information on which to base a detailed final response to these potential biodiversity impacts across the mining precinct is not yet available".