

# DARLING DOWNS SET TO BE TURNED INTO A QUARRY

## If you love the Darling Downs – please help us save our Homeland

You may not be aware that around **95%** of the Darling Downs is now covered by coal mining permits of one form or another. In fact, Environmental Activists now warn there will be **THIRTY OPEN CUT COAL MINES** on the Darling Downs **within the next ten to twelve years.**

They not only plan to turn our rich farming land into a worthless lunar moonscape, they also plan to mine a number of suburbs and towns as well.

While many are still in the permit stage, no coal mine has ever been blocked on environmental grounds in Queensland. Which means that once these applications progress, there will be absolutely no hope of stopping them.

Why is the State Government allowing mining on the prime farming land and scarce water resources of the Darling Downs, the richest food bowl in Australia?

Good question. The simple truth is that after nearly twenty years in power, the State Government is broke. They have already sold off State assets such as the railways and the ports. They are now determined to give the Mining companies every thing they want – even if it will wipe out our lifestyle, our livelihood and our farming food bowl.

They are doing this for the money: Governments need mining royalties in order to hold onto power – in this case, to spend on social programs for their favoured city voters – the very people who keep them in power.

Clearly, these politicians believe that the Bush no longer matters, that country people are completely expendable, right down to driving them off like homeless refugees from their own land - and slowly and deliberately removing the sovereign rights of ownership over their own land.

Did anyone ask you – do you mind if I take your land rights away? Do you mind if I say there is nothing you can do to stop miners entering your land and doing exactly what they want, right down to the destruction of your land and water? You can go to court and make a fuss, of course, and spend all your money on lawyers, but the truth is that the Government simply doesn't care. In fact they will send you out a special little handbook they have written on how you need to behave when the miners enter your land – and they expect you to cop it sweet.

You may ask – why haven't I heard of this before? Why haven't I read any of this in the Courier Mail and the Chronicle? Well, we all asked ourselves the same question. It seems that democracy is dead in Queensland and the Media is too afraid to speak out against their masters. So we have decided to truthfully and fully inform the people ourselves.

We have carefully researched the following facts, and we believe it is your right to know what is happening here. We are all working closely with Alan Jones and other prominent Australians who are equally outraged by what is happening here and joined us in our fight to protect the Darling Downs. Alan was here with us on Sunday, he covers our battle every day on his national radio program - and he will be back again to help us very soon.

We would welcome any help or support that you can offer us, especially in attending forthcoming Protest events and Town Hall rallies. **THIS IS REAL, AND THIS IS DEMOCRACY AT WORK.** Please step up and become involved in the fight to save our Homeland before it is too late.

- **First step: send this email to ten people you know, and ask them to send it to ten people, and so on. INFORMATION IS POWER!**

For further information, you can contact

- Friends of Felton - [www.fof.org.au](http://www.fof.org.au)
- Toowoomba Coal Mine Action Group (Glen Zimmerle): <http://twmbacmag.wordpress.com>
- Lock the Gate Alliance – [www.lockthegate.org.au](http://www.lockthegate.org.au)
- The Hunter Valley Thoroughbred Breeders is strongly against coal - <http://www.htba.com.au/default.aspx?pageaction=news&articleid=40>

## **MINING PROJECTS – DARLING DOWNS**

- Most of the land on the Darling Downs is under both a mining permit for either coal or bauxite **AS WELL** as permits for Coal Seam Gas.
- In other words, the Darling Downs gets the **DOUBLE WHAMMY!**

### **Coal Seam Gas Mining:**

- There will be anywhere from **30,000 to 100,000** wells across the Surat Basin. The land will resemble a pin cushion, and **the effect on farmers – and their vital water resources – will be catastrophic.** Watch the documentary [GasLand](#) – available at the ABC Shop in Toowoomba (also available to order on line) You'll be very pleased that you did.

### **Darling Downs**

- **Acland (New Hope** mine) is currently in Stage Two which covers 2,200 ha. By Stage Three – with the Environmental Impact Study now awaiting rubber-stamp approval – it will include an additional 5,400 ha, giving the mine a total area of 7,400 ha. **New Hope Coal owns all the farmland almost to Oakey showground, and east out to Goombungee.**
- Other mining leases in the **East Acland** area amount to an area around **40 sq km.**
- **Ambre Energy** has a mining lease application over **2,000 ha** of **Felton Valley**, which would include a large open-cut mine and a petrochemical plant, as well as around **70,000 ha** under exploration permits all the way from Toowoomba to Warwick.
- **Newmont** has a mineral development license over **13,000 ha** south of **Felton.**
  - **Haystack Plain:** 13,000 ha of iconic Darling Downs farmland. **Tarong Energy** – which is wholly owned by the Queensland Government – owns the Mineral Development Licence for the coal deposit under the Haystack Plain.

Tarong Energy representatives have stated that they have more than enough coal to service the Tarong Power Station for its entire operating life (25years+) without using the Haystack coal deposit.

They are, however, now reviewing the asset with the intention to sell the Mineral Development Licence to another company. The Haystack coal deposit is export quality coal and is likely to be exported.'

### PERMITS OVER HORSE FARMS,

- There are now exploration leases or applications for leases over almost every major grain farm, thoroughbred farm and beef farm on the Darling Downs.

### PERMITS OVER TOWNS AND SUBURBS

- **There are exploration leases or applications for leases over the entire Toowoomba suburbs of Cotswold Hills and Wilsonton.**
- **There are exploration leases over the entire towns and communities of Hodgson Vale, Gowrie Junction, Kingsthorpe, Oakey, Gowrie Mountain, and Cabarlah.**
- **There are exploration lease applications over the communities of Highfields, Meringandan, and Murphy's Creek.**
- **There are exploration leases over the entire towns and communities of Hodgson Vale, Highfields, Meringandan, Gowrie Junction, Kingsthorpe, Oakey, Gowrie Mountain, Murphy's Creek and Cabarlah.**
- **There are exploration lease applications over the entire towns of Warwick, Pittsworth and Southbrook**
- **There are also applications for bauxite mines near Crows Nest and Geham.**
- There are **bauxite** exploration permits for 7,000sq kms of Qld, focused around **Kingaroy** and **Pittsworth** in particular.
- There is a permit granted for a coal mine in the **Brisbane Valley** which is only 5 kms upstream from Somerset Dam – Brisbane's major water catchment area.
- There is a permit granted for a coal mine at **Granchester** and **Ebenezer**

### DANGEROUS AND TOXIC INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

- The Qld State Government, the Toowoomba Regional Shire Council and Wagners are currently forcing through **the biggest noxious and dangerous toxic industrial estate ever seen in regional Australia** at Wellcamp Downs – only **ten minutes from the city**.

- At **600ha**, it is **double the size of the heavy industrial area for the entire city of Brisbane**. The site is an old koala habitat crossed by a creek that flows directly into the Murray-Darling. When the south-westerly winds blow in winter, noxious emissions will **settle on the roofs** of Toowoomba – and go **straight into rainwater tanks**.
- Despite the fact that Toowoomba is a Garden City with an economy based on farming, tourism, education and retirees, there have been **NO ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES HAVE BEEN DONE** on the site or buffering to protect nearby farms. One of Australia's leading Urban Planners has described the proposal as 'simply unbelievable - a blight on the landscape'.

### **SALE OF WAGNERS TO BORAL**

- The Wagner family sold their company to Boral for \$173 million in May. At the time, they explained this decision as a planned move into the mining and resources sector. It was believed that this simply referred to the Surat Basin, which is based further west around Dalby and Roma.
- The recent revelations by Environmental Activists that thirty open cut coal mines are planned for Toowoomba and the Darling Downs better explains their sudden decision to sell and why they are so anxious to develop Wellcamp Downs into a dangerous and noxious heavy industrial estate that will affect the health and wellbeing of this beautiful city forever.

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