



Caroona Coal Action Group Inc.

www.ccag.org.au PO Box 4009 Caroona NSW 2343

Secretary: Kate Davidson Ph: 0428 447152 Email: ccagweb@gmail.com

CCAG NEWSLETTER – OCTOBER 2009

The fight for prime land and water continues

We are now 3 years into this battle. But, if the community had not kicked up a real stink; if the Blockade had not been established and kept going to press for a water study; if CCAG had not received your financial support, time and energy; if the community hadn't received the support of politicians and, through media interest and personal networks, the backing of country and city-folk across Australia; if the whole exploration process and its irregularities had not been brought out into the open via the courts, mining may well have started by now. We, a proud rural community, have shown how credible demands, backed by facts, figures and "People Power" really can have a dramatic impact on events.

In this newsletter, we are offering an update on where the fight is at. We thank those who were present at our recent AGM to hear some of this. We have a long way to go, but remain confident the tide will continue to turn in favour of food production and protection of vital water supplies. These issues are gaining traction in the wider community as people wonder where indeed our food will come from if Australia has 40 million people to feed by 2050!

This newsletter is necessarily a brief summary, so if you have any questions, or suggestions, please let a committee member know or email us at: ccagweb@gmail.com.

Your committee

After 3 years, Doug Ranken has handed over to our new President, Sandy Blomfield and our stalwart Treasurer, Frank McKinley, has also retired to be replaced by Tony Todman who is also VP. We express our sincere thanks to Doug, Frank and Michael Clift (retiring VP) for their unstinting efforts on behalf of the community, and welcome Sandy and Tony to these important positions. Kate Davidson has taken up the role of Secretary. All the retiring executive and previous members 08/09 remain on the new committee.

In order to better coordinate the myriad of fronts on which CCAG necessarily needs to work, we have now implemented a subcommittee structure – admin/legal/policy/PR/science/finance. We are always happy to consider new committee, or sub-committee, members if you want to become more actively involved and/or feel there's a niche role you'd like to contribute to.

Membership – subscriptions now due

A membership form FY 09/10 is attached to this newsletter. Our admin costs remain minimal and committee members absorb many other costs but having a vibrant membership is important to us so please get your form in! Tell your friends and join them up too!

Bush Spirit Award – we're in the final!

CCAG is a finalist in the Bush Spirit Award run by NSW Tidy Towns. There is a presentation dinner in Tamworth on Saturday 31st October to find out the winner – all welcome, call Tim Duddy (0400 356059) for details!

The Water Study

The process for the catchment-wide water study is coming along. There is still negotiation over funding, although BHP has pledged to contribute, as has the Federal Government. The make up of the Ministerial Oversight Committee has been determined and the Stakeholders Advisory Group (SAG) is in progress. From our community, John Clements, Fiona Simson and Tim Duddy are all on the SAG.

Legal challenges We have two main fronts here: a Supreme Court action challenging the Mining Warden's rulings re: access in Brown and Alcorn supported by the AFFF (Feb 2010). The Land Environment Court is presiding over the issue of the validity of the Licence 6505. The Minister for Mineral Resources and BHP-Billiton has been jointly named as

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defendants in these proceedings. Following our enquiries we believe that EL6505 is not valid, we believe that the proper process of tending and re-issuing of the licence did not occur and the environmental issues the Minister was obliged to address PRIOR to the issuing of the licence were not properly taken into consideration. Again we are looking to set precedents.

The Political arena

Political understanding and support is crucial to the success of this campaign. We have hosted many visits by politicians from all political parties and have been encouraged by their interest and the resulting greater understanding of the issues. CCAG and the community recently took part in two Senate enquiries: *The Agricultural and Related Industries enquiry into Food Production in Australia*, and *the Environment, Communications & Arts enquiry into the Impacts of Mining in the Murray Darling Basin*. Thanks to all in the community who contributed written and oral submissions – these really make a difference. Transcripts are available via the Senate and CCAG website – they make fascinating reading. Both of these enquiries also visited the “at-risk” farming communities on the Darling Downs in QLD. We await the outcomes of these important enquiries with great interest.

Media presence

We continue to enjoy strong media interest and are grateful to all of those who write into the local, state and national press, please keep going. The 4 Corners program in July generated a lot of enquiries regarding how to help and also financial support. Many city folk were appalled that mining was even being contemplated on Prime Agricultural Land.

The Blockade

Now going strong for 15 months, Blockade support is as committed as ever. It remains a focal point of our campaign to ensure the independent water study occurs and we welcome visitors from out of the area and the frequent politician visits. If you would like to ‘do a stint’ at the Blockade with morning and afternoon tea and varied and stimulating conversation, please contact Stru Willis (02 6747 4768) for a ‘slot’.

SOS Liverpool Plains

The Girls are hard at work organising “*Taste of The Plains*”, a showcase of local produce at the historic Walhallow Homestead on 8th November 10.30 - 4pm. Following on after the Blackville Art Show, this day is shaping up to be a real culinary experience including Penni Scott of Bush Goddess foods and Jack Munday as speakers! There’s still time to be involved and show off your expertise, please ring Prue Lee (02 6747 4674) and see p4 for your invite!

Grain drive (November)

Our finances are stable but legal and media commitments continue. We believe that we make the most of every dollar contributed and are grateful for your support in this way. We hope that you will consider donating grain this Summer for our grain drive. If you are not a grain grower a pen of livestock or cash donation would most appreciated. Details to follow shortly.

Water Quality Benchmarking Programme

CCAG Round 1 water quality testing is complete with Round 2 in progress for consistency. Many in the community, inside and outside the ELs, are to be congratulated for their personal commitment to the forensic benchmarking of their economic base without any Government or other financial support. Round 1 and Round 2 testing needs to be completed as a matter of urgency, ideally before any exploration drilling occurs in the landholder's area. Applications from anywhere in the Liverpool Plains catchment are still invited. No Round 3 testing will be done in the short-term. Round 4 testing will not be required if the previous rounds are consistent. Please address interest and queries to John Polglase (0407 011 732).

Website: www.ccag.org.au

We update this site during each week with the latest stories, pictures and events pertaining to our battle. If you see an item in the news that you think we’ve missed, please email our webmaster office@wombalong.com. Paper-based clippings should also be sent to CCAG (via PO Box) for our archive.

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CCAG SUBS AND DONATIONS

Here are some of the financial ways you can contribute to this battle to protect prime agricultural land and its water supplies from the damaging effects of coal and gas mining.

All the volunteers on the committee truly appreciate your support, we can not do this without you!

1. Membership

Subs for 09/10 financial year are \$25 per person or \$50 per family (incl GST).

Cheques, made payable to CCAG Inc. and accompanied by this form, should be sent to:

Mr Tony Todman, Treasurer, CCAG Inc. PO Box 4009 Caroona NSW 2343.

Receipts will be issued per your details below.

Please add phone/mob/email so we can keep our contact lists up to date.

Please enter all names covered by membership fee(s).

Name/s:
.....
.....
.....

Address:
.....
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Phone:

Mob:

Email(s):
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2. Donation

Yes, I would like to make a donation. (As a guide, we are suggesting that those within the EL Zone might use their quarterly rates notice. For those outside the zone, any amount welcome!)

Name/s:

Address:
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3. Other methods of financial support

We are very grateful for other donations of support through cattle sales, grain drives and sponsorship, please let us know if you have a particular way you'd like to contribute:

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taste of the *Liverpool Plains*

SOS Liverpool Plains committee invites you

to a showcase of Liverpool Plains Produce,
Food Stalls, Celebrities & Music.

When - Sunday 8th November 2009
10.30am - 4pm

Where - Historic "Walhallow" homestead
Caroona NSW

Entry - Gold Coin



Featuring stalls with:

- Wine
- Lavender
- Free Range Eggs
- Linseed Products
- Cheeses
- Yabbies
- Coffee
- Pasta
- Koolkuna Berries
- Cotton Products
- Honey
- Olives, Olive Oil
- Innovative Farm Products
- and much more...

Gourmet Lunch & Morning / Afternoon Teas:

- Patchetts Perfect Pies
- Gourmet Sausages BBQ
- Lemonade and Pancakes

Plus:

- Celebrity Chef Demonstration
- "Slow Food Movement"
- Sustainable Energy
- Plant & cake Stalls
- Childrens Activities

Guest Speakers:

Nell Schofield - Television presenter and broadcaster, Al Gore climate project ambassador

Jane Singleton - Respected journalist

The Bush Goddess - Bush Goddess foods straight from the producer

Jack Munday - Living legend and environmental activist

Entertainment

Gomeri Dancers
Didgeridoo Player & Others

Further Enquiries:

Prue Lee - 6747 4674, 0429 990 388 or abbottlelee@bigpond.com

Kirrily Blomfield - 6747 4724, or kirrily.derek@clearmail.com.au

EVERYONE WELCOME

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