**Can you Write to Your State MPs and Ask them to Support Cancelling the Peabody Licence?**

**Heathcote Candidates:**

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**Cronulla Candidates:**

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**What? A Coal Mine in Our Back Yard?**

The Peabody Pollution Licence issue is an important issue especially in the lead up to the State elections in March this year. It is vital that we protect the integrity of the Royal National Park, its associated waterways and also the Woronora Reservoir, our drinking water.

We want to make sure our State representatives know that this matter is important to their constituents.

The fact that there is a coal mine approved near a precious water catchment area and so close to a major capital city is outrageous and the NSW Government should be working to transition this coal mine out of action.

#### Write to your MPs and tell them:

#### The Shire is NOT the right place for a coal mine

#### Please refer to the information below to help you write a letter. Your letter does not need to be long, or include all the details below, you can select key points which concern you. It is important to personalise your letter.

#### Letter Template

                                                                                          Your Address here

                                                                                          Email address here

Date here

Title/First name, last name MP

Their address here

Dear Title/Last Name MP

Begin the letter by stating who you are and tell them if you are a member of their electorate. Include a personal experience/message of concern relevant to the Peabody Pollution Licence issue, or add if you have applicable connections with a community group.

Identify the issue and use simple points and facts to state your case. Write clearly and logically in well set out paragraphs.

Next tell your MP what you are asking of them and what you want them to do. Your aim is to bring about change so your letter needs to say more than just how you feel about the issue. Make sure you state what you want your MP to do clearly and to the point.

Finally finish your letter requesting a reply to your letter.

Yours faithfully

Your name

Signature

#### Keys Points You Can Include:

* Peabody's Metropolitan Colliery is failing to meet the requirements of the Licence and failing to protect the water quality in Camp Gully Creek, the Hacking River, and the surrounding ecosystems. I am writing to call upon you as my state representative to support the move to cancel EPL 767.
* It is understood that when the government regulatory body, the Environmental Protections Authority (EPA) reviews the licence, the EPA has to assess from the Protection of the Environment Operation Act 1997 these matters:
* the “**environmental values** of water affected” and
* “the **practical measures** that could be taken to restore or maintain those environmental values”.

When you consider these two matters above, it is clear, that the **value**of the Royal National Park means that it deserves to be protected. It is also evident that from the **clean-up undertaken, it has only been partially successful.**Heavy rain has washed most of the black sludge waste material kilometres downstream, and no containment measures were put in place. To date the EPA has decided that remediation should only take place to [the intersection of McKell Avenue and Lady Wakehurst Drive](https://www.google.com/maps/place/McKell%2BAve%2C%2BNew%2BSouth%2BWales%2B2233/%40-34.1522771%2C151.0271471%2C464m/data%3D%213m1%211e3%214m5%213m4%211s0x6b12c3181bab85c5%3A0xe8260eb888abc2db%218m2%213d-34.1471521%214d151.0095443%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). Over the new year holiday period coal sediment waste material has been sighted in Port Hacking itself, at [Swallow Rock Reserve](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Swallow%2BRock%2BDr%2C%2BGrays%2BPoint%2BNSW%2B2232/%40-34.0623258%2C151.0771432%2C225m/data%3D%213m1%211e3%214m5%213m4%211s0x6b12c71d683c21b3%3A0xe11b1286cbb31837%218m2%213d-34.0606701%214d151.0804264%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). The EPA has accepted that this is coal from the mine.

*[I ask you to consider, should the Royal National Park and its associated waterways, continue to be risked in this way?](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Swallow%2BRock%2BDr%2C%2BGrays%2BPoint%2BNSW%2B2232/%40-34.0623258%2C151.0771432%2C225m/data%3D%213m1%211e3%214m5%213m4%211s0x6b12c71d683c21b3%3A0xe11b1286cbb31837%218m2%213d-34.0606701%214d151.0804264%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)*

*[From Peabody’s track record, coupled with the limitations for a mine to be situated at this location, it begs the question whether it is appropriate to allow this Licence to continue. The site is not suitable for coal mining and is constrained and Peabody cannot adequately manage coal washing facilities and coal sediment dams in this sensitive location.](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Swallow%2BRock%2BDr%2C%2BGrays%2BPoint%2BNSW%2B2232/%40-34.0623258%2C151.0771432%2C225m/data%3D%213m1%211e3%214m5%213m4%211s0x6b12c71d683c21b3%3A0xe11b1286cbb31837%218m2%213d-34.0606701%214d151.0804264%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)*

*[The fact that there is a coal mine approved near a precious water catchment area and so close to a major capital city is flawed and State Government should be working to transition this coal mine out of action.](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Swallow%2BRock%2BDr%2C%2BGrays%2BPoint%2BNSW%2B2232/%40-34.0623258%2C151.0771432%2C225m/data%3D%213m1%211e3%214m5%213m4%211s0x6b12c71d683c21b3%3A0xe11b1286cbb31837%218m2%213d-34.0606701%214d151.0804264%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)*

*[It is NOT appropriate to have a coal mine in a location where it has the potential to do such damage](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Swallow%2BRock%2BDr%2C%2BGrays%2BPoint%2BNSW%2B2232/%40-34.0623258%2C151.0771432%2C225m/data%3D%213m1%211e3%214m5%213m4%211s0x6b12c71d683c21b3%3A0xe11b1286cbb31837%218m2%213d-34.0606701%214d151.0804264%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)****[,](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Swallow%2BRock%2BDr%2C%2BGrays%2BPoint%2BNSW%2B2232/%40-34.0623258%2C151.0771432%2C225m/data%3D%213m1%211e3%214m5%213m4%211s0x6b12c71d683c21b3%3A0xe11b1286cbb31837%218m2%213d-34.0606701%214d151.0804264%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)*** *[it is not acceptable to risk the Royal National Park and I ask that you please support that the Licence be cancelled.](https://www.google.com/maps/place/Swallow%2BRock%2BDr%2C%2BGrays%2BPoint%2BNSW%2B2232/%40-34.0623258%2C151.0771432%2C225m/data%3D%213m1%211e3%214m5%213m4%211s0x6b12c71d683c21b3%3A0xe11b1286cbb31837%218m2%213d-34.0606701%214d151.0804264%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)*

**Further proof for cancelling the Peabody Licence includes:**

* **Peabody** has included multiple "Invalid sample" test results on their monitoring summaries submitted to the EPA. Most concerning too is there have been months where testing showed no breaches were recorded, even when it is known for a fact that coal sediment and waste material was released. **This raises the question of whether we can rely on Peabody to do the right thing.**Multiple pollution events occurred in 2022, in January, July, August, September, and October. With heavy rainfall earlier in 2022 coal sediment waste may have been released in other months, and not reported or recorded. Even if spills occurred due to a significant amount of rain, that is no excuse. Should the Colliery be operating in this location if it is unable to manage conditions at the site? The holding ponds where the coal waste sediment is kept are directly adjacent to Camp Gully Creek. Any overflow will go into the creek, and from there into the Hacking River. If rainfall continues to increase in the future, how can we be certain the Royal National Park will be protected?
* Another case for cancelling of the licence, is that independent water testing by Dr Ian Wright on 14 August this year showed that the Colliery discharged saline wastes at twice the rate of ANZECC salinity guidelines. Peabody has also been discharging waste containing barium, lithium and strontium. Dr Ian Wright's test results found increased concentrations of these metals at the mine site, substantially higher compared to levels upstream. Peabody has no authorisation from EPA to do this. Again, it highlights can we really rely on Peabody to comply to the Licence?
* Since the most recent pollution events several Sutherland Shire Environment Centre members and highly qualified in science and ecology have carried out preliminary surveys of the impacted areas. Recently they have found dying frogs in waterways downstream from the mine. Frogs found in those areas had a diminished body condition compared to frogs in nearby control sites (streams nearby not impacted by the mine pollution).

Other independent local researchers also highly qualified have carried out informal surveys and found a "**significant** impairment of the benthic macroinvertebrate community", and a marked reduction in the diversity of families of such organisms. (In Camp Gully Creek, 4 families were collected compared to an average of 13.3 at other non-impacted sites).  At Camp Gully Creek they found no pollution-sensitive riffle beetles (Elmidae) or mayflies (Leptophlebiidae, Baetidae, Caenidae).

**All these studies raise questions and concerns about ongoing flow on effects through the ecosystem: Should Peabody’s Licence be allowed to continue if the ecosystem is being affected in this way?**

* Another compelling case to consider that the Licence be cancelled is in regards to other spills in previous years. Old coal waste material is still visible along the length of the Hacking River. The EPA refers to coal waste that has accumulated from previous spills as "**legacy issues"**. Will such "legacies" be ongoing? We know the latest 'clean-up' has only taken place to the intersection of McKell Avenue and Lady Wakehurst Drive. Coal waste and sediment has been seen much further downstream and the EPA have not provided any justification as to why that intersection was chosen as an arbitrary cut off point for remediation.
* Another important point to note is that the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 requires national parks to be **managed in a manner that protects the integrity of ecosystems for future generations.** This means:
* conserving biodiversity, maintaining ecosystem function, protecting geological and geomorphological features and natural phenomena, and maintaining natural landscapes
* conserving places, objects, features and landscapes of cultural value and significance

The Peabody Metropolitan Colliery has shown it is unable to align its operation with requirements of the NPW Act. It has been unable to protect the ecological integrity of Royal National Park. This makes a strong case to cancel the licence altogether.

Click here for

[**More Information**](https://www.ssec.org.au/help-protect-the-royal-national-park-submission-guide-for-the-epa-review-of-peabodys-metropolitan-colliery/)