

CWA of NSW supports call to end 'zombie' mining licences

Hi , The Country Women's Association (CWA) of NSW is supporting a legislative push to extinguish 'zombie' Petroleum Exploration Licences (PELS) covering valuable NSW, agreeing it's time to end the uncertainty for affected communities. It comes as the NSW Upper House prepares to consider legislation introduced by Independent NSW MLC Justin Field to extinguish 'zombie' or expired PELs, in response to concerns of a return to widespread Coal Seam Gas exploration in the NSW North West region. "Communities in these affected areas have lived with the uncertainty of what these PELs will mean for their futures for too long, and it's time for confidence to be restored for the people who call these regions home and who rely on the land for their livelihoods," said Stephanie Stanhope, President of the CWA of NSW. The importance of protecting valuable agricultural, water and environmental assets was also discussed at this week's CWA of NSW state conference in Bega. Attached and below is a media release on the issue and for further information or media inquiries, please don't hesitate to get in touch. Kind regards, Kylie Galbraith
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supports call to end 'zombie' mining licences The call to extinguish 'zombie' Petroleum Exploration Licences (PELS) covering valuable agricultural land has the full support of the Country Women's Association of NSW, which says it's time to end the uncertainty for affected communities. It comes as the NSW Upper House prepares to consider legislation introduced by Independent NSW MLC Justin Field to extinguish 'zombie' or expired PELs, in response to concerns of a return to widespread Coal Seam Gas exploration in the NSW North West region. CWA of NSW President Stephanie Stanhope said the association recognised the importance of mining and gas projects to the state's economy and energy needs, but they needed to proceed in locations that didn't unduly impact NSW communities and other industries, like agriculture. "In the case of the 11 PELs in question, we believe they aren't in appropriate areas and now these licences have expired, there's no reason why they shouldn't be extinguished," Stephanie said. "Communities in these affected areas have lived with the uncertainty of what these PELs will mean for their futures for too long, and it's time for confidence to be restored for the people who call these regions home and who rely on the land for their livelihoods. "It's also time to secure the future of the valuable agricultural land covered by these expired PELs, as well as the irreplaceable water and environmental resources in these areas. They're too valuable to be compromised by poor planning and questionable decision-making." Stephanie said as well as the extinguishment of the expired PELs, there also needed to be a whole new process for considering and approving future mining exploration licences. "Just this week, members at our annual state conference endorsed a motion calling for the cessation of licences for '\$2 companies' that don't have the financial capacity to undertake mineral exploration. This current process is failing communities and landholders, with a lack of regulatory oversight and the potential to inflict enormous emotional and financial stress on landholders," she said. "It's just another example of the urgent need to overhaul the entire process and replace it with one in which rural and regional communities can have trust and confidence. We'd like to see a bi-partisan approach to this review process as well, ensuring the protection of our agriculture industry now and into the future. "We only get one chance at this, because once our fragile and precious farming land, water resources and significant environmental assets are damaged, or even destroyed, there's no coming back."

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