



THE NIMBIN GOOD TIMES

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CSG miners prepare to return to Northern Rivers

Plans by CSG companies Metgasco and Dart Energy to return to the Northern Rivers have sparked community outrage.

Metgasco CEO, Peter Henderson told the recent AGM in North Sydney that the company intends to drill its Rosella-1 well at Bentley in the first half of 2014, and is expecting the environmental approval for this within the month.

Ian Gaillard, Northern Rivers regional co-ordinator for Lock The Gate, who attended the meeting with several other gasfield-free activists, said, "The CEO told the meeting that the investment climate for the industry in NSW is zero, and that 'no-one wants to come into our acreage.'"

He also revealed that the company had expected community concern would subside after March 2011 state election but it didn't, it escalated.

Ian Gaillard said, "The gas industry has no social licence in NSW, yet despite community opposition, the state government is pushing ahead with plans to impose this industry on unwilling communities, from the Pilliga in the North West to Gloucester and the Northern Rivers, by force."

85% voted against gasfields in Lismore in 2012 and the latest University research shows 65% of the Richmond Valley, where Metgasco's field operations are based, are also opposed to CSG mining.

All communities in the Tweed Shire that are covered by PEL445, now owned by Dart Energy, declared themselves Gasfield Free in 2012 at levels over 95%.

Dart Energy is reported to be sending its subsidiary Macquarie Energy back to the Northern Rivers to get things moving in PEL445.

The new federal Minister for Industry, Ian McFarlane is keen to develop the industry.



Idyllic rural lifestyle or industrial wasteland?
Homestead near Lynch's Creek. Photo: Sue Stock

Michael McNamara from Lock the Tweed said, "Mr McFarlane is in for a surprise if he thinks that Northern Rivers communities are just going to roll over and allow CSG companies to come back to the area."

"The only thing that will stop them is a strong, united community, willing to stand up and defend itself," he said.

Lock the Tweed will be hosting a series of Community Meetings during November in communities covered by PEL445, to hear about the latest developments in the

campaign against CSG and other unconventional gases and to discuss how they plan to protect their local community.

Meetings will be held in Tyalgum on 2nd November, Uki on the 9th, Burringbar on the 16th, Stokers Siding on the 22nd and Murwillumbah on the 23rd. All meetings will start at 6pm. Admission is \$10, which includes a meal.

Information on the meetings is available on the *Lock the Tweed* website or Facebook page.



Drilling rig leaves Doubtful Creek
Photo: Marie Cameron, March 2013



Food security: p.4



Tunable at 40: p.8



Benny in NY: p.17



Permaculture: p.26