

The Mines

Whitehaven Coal and Idemitsu own two open-cut coal projects in Leard State Forest, and one on the edge. Idemitsu's Boggabri coal mine, Whitehaven's Maules Creek project, and the co-owned Tarrawonga mine. The Boggabri mine is currently expanding and would produce up to 7 million tonnes of coal every year. Whitehaven's Maules Creek project, is about to start production. It would produce over 13 million tonnes every year.

These two mines are larger than any existing Hunter Valley mine, and would cause major impacts not only on environment but on local communities, their health, their way of life and livelihoods.

Community Impact

The mines would destroy the existing Maules Creek farming community. The deep pits would lead to a major drop of 5 – 7 metres of the underground water table and up to 18000 tonnes of dangerous dust would be dropped on the surrounding farms and residents each year. Families that have lived in the region for many generations are being forced to sell up and move. There would be many indirect impacts to the community such as; rural labour would be lost to the mines, they would lose their school, and service costs for maintenance of machinery is expected to double.

Climate Change

The Boggabri and Maules Creek mines would extract more 22 million tonnes of Coal. The total Greenhouse gas emissions from the coal produced when burnt, will exceed 60mt/yr of CO2 equivalent – a greenhouse gas impact greater than that of 165 individual nations, including Sweden Hungary and Finland. In June 2013 the Climate Commission advised at least 80% of coal must be left in the ground to avoid climate catastrophe.

Gomeri Country

The Gomeri People have cared for this country for thousands of years. Leard State Forest contains numerous cultural sites, deep in heritage and history. Whitehaven coal has been bulldozing dangerously close to burial sites. Elders have been refused to walk on their country. Traditional Owners have applied for an injunction that has been disregarded by the federal government.

Legal Challenge

On 19th July 2013 Northern Inland Council for the Environment lodged a legal challenge against the approval of the Whitehaven Maules Creek coal mine, and Idemitsu's Boggabri coal mine..

The most alarming evidence found by the independent assessment was that the offset

properties are not like for like and in fact very different vegetation communities and habitat to the forest being destroyed. Meaning critically endangered ecological community and threatened species impacted will not be compensated.

The case was dismissed Jan14. The application was dismissed on the 19 Dec 2013, leaving those who care for Leard State Forest and the surrounding health of Maules Creek no effective avenues for legal recourse to stop these mines.

Environmental Impact

The Leard State Forest has stunning old growth box-gum woodland forest, it is considered a national biodiversity hotspot. The list of significant threatened and vulnerable species habitat to be impacted includes: Swift Parrot , Turquoise Parrot, Regent Honey Eater, Large-eared Pied Bat, Spotted tailed quoll, Masked Owl, Squirrel Glider and the Koala. In total the mines would turn 3500 hectares of forest into an open-cut coal pit. Yet the actual impact on the forest and its flora and fauna would be considerably greater, as three and possibly four mines will work 24hrs a day resulting in impacts of bright lights at night, excessive noise from machinery and blasting vibration and dust. The full extent of those impacts have not been considered.

Community Action

There has been concerted community opposition to the two mines since 2010 from all sectors of the community including farmers, Traditional Owners and environmentalists.

There is a continuous blockade running against the Maules Creek Project as of the 13th January 2014. Actions have been varied since 2010 including mass community action, tree-sits and lock-ons. One of which was an 84 year old bird watcher Russ Watts OAM and another was a hoax media release by Jonathan Moylan that led to Whitehaven's price crash, he is presently being prosecuted by ASIC.

An activist camp in the Maules Creek area has been supported by many groups for well over 600 days, it has become the hub bringing together the local community and environmentalists.

As of December 2013 a number of environmental organisations formed the Leard Forest Alliance including Greenpeace, Lock the Gate, TWS, NCCNSW, AYCC, QuitCoal, have joined the fight,

There is a continuous community blockade to stop the mine construction.

What Can You Do?

- Come to camp, see what's happening and support on the frontlines.

-FOR FULL DIRECTIONS TO CAMP VISIT FRONTLINEACTION.ORG

- Ask your bank why they are using your money to fund an open cut coal mine. (ANZ, Commonwealth, NAB, Westpac, Macquarie, Deutsche Bank and Credit Suisse)
- Spread the word. Tell your friends and family.
- Organise an Event or Action in your own town. (Idemitsu has an office in Brisbane; Whitehaven and ANZ have offices in Sydney.)

Check out

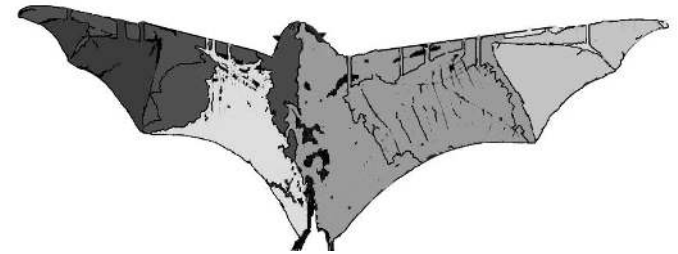
Maulescreek.org

[Twitter.com/FLACCoal](https://twitter.com/FLACCoal)

facebook.com/frontlineactiononcoal
frontlineaction.org

Come and support the work of the FLAC Camp in Maules Creek N.S.W.

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DEFENDING Leard State Forest

Leard State Forest is the largest remnant of bushland left on the Liverpool Plains. It is home to over 396 native species, sacred indigenous sites and surrounded by fertile farmland. Whitehaven Coal and Idemitsu seek to expand their existing coal operations leading to further environmental and social destruction.

Leard State Forest is on Gomerioi Country, Sovereignty never ceded.