

Water is a life necessity, gas and coal are not

A submission by: Steve Winfield, [REDACTED]

I will open my submission with a few words about why water is our most precious resource, whereas anything else the mining industry wants to rip Australia to pieces for, simply isn't. Despite the tactics of lies, deceit and corruption that have been used around the world, to deny the damage the mining industry is causing, the evidence against them just keeps on piling up and sooner or later, a major catastrophe is going to happen.

The key issues:

While considering very carefully, the material I would use for my submission, I came across an article published some 2 years ago in 'The Australian'. The writer of this article, made an aggressive attack on the opponents of the mining industry. This is what his article opened with;

article location:

www.theaustralian.com.au/news/world/just-tell-the-fracking-truth/story-fnb64oi6-1226698648192 (this is a subscriber restricted link). You will be able to access it by searching for 'just-tell-the-fracking-truth' in Google and access it from that link.
quote;

"Here are five things they keep saying that are simply false. First, that shale gas production has polluted aquifers in America. Second, that it releases more methane than other forms of gas production. Third, that it uses a worryingly large amount of water. Fourth, that it uses hundreds of toxic chemicals. Fifth, that it causes damaging earthquakes. None is true".

This statement formed the basis of my submission to the Victorian Inquiry on unconventional gas and I'm confident that I was able to rip it to pieces, it wasn't that difficult to do.

"Shale gas production has polluted aquifers in America"

This excerpt, is taken from 'The Scientific American'

article location:

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/groundwater-contamination-may-end-the-gas-fracking-boom/>

quote:

"Robert Jackson, a chemical engineer at Duke University, found methane in 115 of 141 shallow, residential drinking-water wells. The methane concentration in homes less than one mile from a fracking well was six times higher than the concentration in homes farther away. Isotopes and traces of ethane in the methane indicated that the gas was not created by microorganisms living in groundwater but by heat and pressure thousands of feet down in the Marcellus Shale, which is where companies fracture rock to release gas that rises up a well shaft."

Is it likely that Mr Jackson would have fabricated this research for his own ends and is he not adequately qualified to conduct such research ?

"that it uses a worryingly large amount of water"

article location;
www.exploreshale.org

quote;

"Each drill site requires between 3 and 5 million gallons of water per frack. Based on approximately 1,500 horizontal wells fracked in 2011, Pennsylvania used about 12-20 million gallons of water per day for Marcellus Shale drilling, which represents approximately .5-.8% of the 9.5 billion gallons of water the state uses daily."

The article in "The Australian" goes on to point out that agriculture is the biggest culprit for water usage, far worse than the mining industry and it's agriculture that is to blame for water shortages. Well, that may be so but then again, agriculture produces the luxury item we call food, so perhaps we should all go without that and ban agriculture instead ? What useful product that we can eat or drink, does the gas mining industry produce ? In a land like Australia, that has a very fragile ecosystem and where the impact of climate change could be dramatic, surely, water has to be one of our most precious resources.

This recent article, a report by NASA, gives worrying news about world water resources;

article location:
www.independent.co.uk/environment/nasa-data-shows-the-world-is-running-out-of-water-10325188.html

quote;

"Twenty-one of the world's 37 largest aquifers — in locations from India and China to the United States and France — have passed their sustainability tipping points, meaning more water was removed than replaced during the decade-long study period, researchers announced Tuesday."

Surely, an outfit like NASA should be taken seriously ?

The industry basically admitted its own guilt anyway

The former CEO of Halliburton, was none other than former US Vice President, Dick Cheney. Dick Cheney was the driving force behind introducing a clause into the US 2005 Energy Policy Act, excluding the oil and gas industry from prosecution for certain environmental violations covered by the Safe Drinking Water Act and Clean Water Act. This amendment, became known as the "Halliburton Loophole" and Senators in the US, are still trying to this day, to get this amendment repealed but as yet, to no avail. Now why would you want to exclude an industry from prosecution, if what they're doing is safe ? I would have thought that they have ,pretty much, admitted guilt by that act alone.

They will try and do the same here in Australia

They got away with it in the US and have basically, totally dismantled the very fabric of democracy in doing so. We must protect our water at all costs.

Remember, once done, the damage can never be repaired !

