

GAS WATCH 191.

AGL to risk 200 years of sustainable industry, and its future, for less than 5 years methane extraction.

AGL would produce coal seam methane in the Hunter for a mere 4.73 years.

That's the big prize for risking the fragile environment of the Hunter forever.

And the Government has washed its hands of all responsibility.

During those 4.73 years the Hunter Valley Wine Industry could be devastated, wiped out, through fresh water contamination and the salt contamination of the highly productive soil from disposal of contaminated coal seam water.

The Hunter Valley Wine Industry is a sustainable industry with nearly 200 years of history, with another 200 years or more left in it, and attracts a burgeoning tourism industry.

AGL today boasts that there are probable reserves of 669 petajoules of methane at Gloucester and "just" 142Pj in the Hunter Valley, and that it would produce about 30Pj per year.

Well, let's do the sums. If, and that's a big if, there is 142Pj in the Hunter, then the coal seam methane in the Hunter will be finished in 4.73 years.

The head of methane mining for AGL, Mike Moraza, in arguing with Minister Burke that the Gloucester approval is a "Clayton's" approval, claims on the one hand that the Gloucester project poses a "negligible if not nil risk to the environment and the water resources" and in the same breath says he doesn't really know as "a numerical hydrogeological model of the project would require a lot more data than the **desktop** model already completed."

It's just more nonsense from the AGL spin machine. Of course, they don't know. And they want to rely on **desktop** modelling for their fracking of exploration holes in the Hunter Valley this year.

The whole CSG mess begs some questions:

- Q. Why does BARRY O'FARRELL care more about Western Sydney than the Hunter Valley?**
A. Because his Federal colleagues have told him to look after Western Sydney to shore up electoral victory in the September 14th election.
- Q. Why does the South Australian Government and the Western Australian Government care about the wine industries of the Barossa Valley, MacLaren Vale, Margaret River and Swan River, enough to legislate to protect them?**
A. Because those iconic winegrowing areas support sustainable industries including winegrowing, winemaking, cellar doors and an extensive wine tourism market. The Governments worked with the agricultural industry in those States, rather than against them as in NSW.
- Q. What has happened between prior to the last State Election and now that has convinced Ministers O'Farrell, Stoner, Hartcher, Hazzard and Souris that they can renege on their promises and fail to protect the winegrowing areas of the Hunter Valley from coal seam gas fields?**
A. Nothing, other than pressure from the CSG industry. There is still no scientific basis to assure the community that it is not a short-term, toxic fossil fuel industry which has the ability to sterilize prime agricultural land.

Q. Why has the O'Farrell Government, including Minister Hartcher and our own Upper Hunter Member George Souris, forsaken the Hunter Valley, legislating to protect the short term CSG industry over the sustainable wine and wine tourism industries, failing to follow the other States and incurring the ire of the Federal Government?

A. Fill in your own answer. There really isn't any plausible answer to this. It is impossible to fathom why the O'Farrell Government hasn't protected the Hunter Valley in accordance with its pre-election promises.

Q. Why has AGL Energy elected to pursue such a small amount of methane in the Hunter to the detriment of the Hunter Valley' sustainable industries?

A. Just to up its share price. It has no care for the environment, as can be seen from its serial breaching of its Licence Conditions in all its Exploration Licences at Camden, and in the Hunter. AGL has shown it can't be trusted to comply with normal conditions, let alone stringent conditions.



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