

GAS WATCH 234.

To George Souris – Upper Hunter MP and Minister for Tourism.

It's up to you to now stand up and protect the Broke Fordwich winegrowing region from the ravages of CSG!

The Hunter Valley Protection Alliance continues to do what it can, but George Souris made the promise, later supported by the Premier, and it is time it was delivered in full.

On 27th January, 2011 George Souris wrote, emphatically:

“As far as I am concerned we do not want gas exploration or gas development in these high profile high value tourism areas and I am an opponent of AGLs activities, a matter which I am committed to my constituents to pursue to finality when there is a change of Government.

“There are many environmental risks as well but I am sure you aware of all of these; I am far from happy with AGLs presence.”

“The best thing AGL can do is surrender the PEL and save a lot of time for everyone in the future”

The George Souris promise was confirmed by Deputy Premier Andrew Stoner, also prior to the last election, when he was asked a question by Bruce Tyrrell at a public function in Pokolbin: ***“Will you protect the winegrowing regions from Coal Seam Gas activity, yes or no?”*** Andrew Stoner's reply was a firm **“Yes”**.

As we know there was a change of Government in 2011, however we still don't have the promised protection for the Broke Fordwich winegrowing region by the declaration of a whole of area Critical Industry Cluster, merely a series of nine non-contiguous, internal Critical Industry Clusters which will result in the winegrowing region being peppered with gas fields in between cellar doors, restaurants and B & Bs. This could wipe out the industry.

This Government can't keep playing with people's lives, their health, their livelihoods, their investments and with the environment. Voters should be entitled to rely on the promises of politicians and go forward with their lives based on those promises. They should be able to rely on a Government to protect the environment.

It does appear from today's Fairfax-Nielsen poll that there may well be another change of Government next year. If the O'Farrell Government wants another term, then perhaps they had better start thinking about honouring their 2011 pre-election promises.

Come on George Souris. Do the right thing. You are the Tourism Minister. You are the local member. You must want to protect the wine tourism industry in the Hunter. Speak to Brad Hazzard and fix it! The community is opposed to turning the Hunter Valley vineyards into a gas field, the Singleton Council is opposed, and the State Government has said it is opposed. The only voice in support is that of AGL and APPEA who will make their profits and move on leaving the environment and the water in goodness knows what state for our future.



www.huntervalleyprotectionalliance.com

1st March, 2014. Contact: Graeme Gibson 0418 239359.