

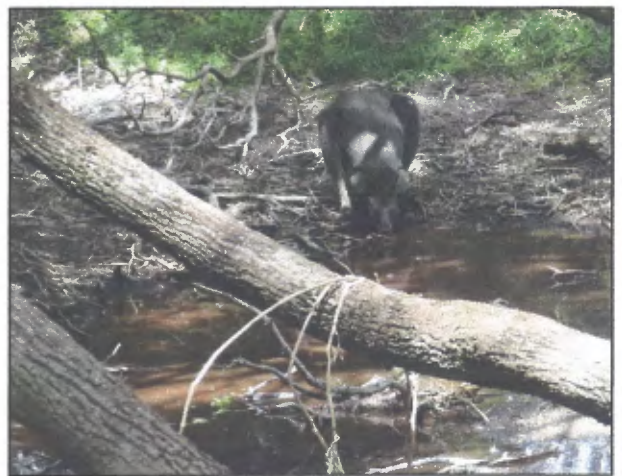


Executive Officer,  
Natural Resource Committee  
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To Natural Resources Committee,

Re; Inquiry into Unconventional Gas and Fracking  
inquiry in SE of SA

**Submission From Mount Gambier Friends of Parks**



We oppose unconventional gas and fracking in the South East of South Australia. These reasons include potential for water contamination, potential for well integrity failure, potential for air pollution and industrialization of landscape, and fragmentation of Native Reserves and pine forests, potential for light pollution, and many other potential risks.

We endorse the use of the precautionary principle and recognize that currently many studies are underway worldwide into the impacts of unconventional gas drilling and fracking and that safety of the industry remains to be demonstrated.

As a volunteer group working in several Nature Reserves in the SE SA, the Mount Gambier Friends of Parks members value our natural environment, our flora and fauna and in particular our native forest reserves, the Naracoorte Caves World Heritage area, our sinkholes, the Glenelg River, radiata and blue gum forests and pristine coastline.

We recognize the importance of our lakes, ephemeral wetlands, and value the richness of diversity that these areas bring to our natural landscape, such as the wetland birds, frogs, native fish, and invertebrates. We are passionate about our Karst Rising Springs that bring many snorkelers and divers to our area. We have been participants in the monitoring programme of our endangered Spiny Freshwater Crayfish and local

populations of Native Fish that inhabit the Karst Rising Spring areas.

When it is considered that only around 13% of the pre-European vegetation remains in this region with only 40% of this under formal protection (eg National Park, Heritage Agreement) we have reason to be concerned.



Over 75 per cent of the vegetation communities are considered rare or threatened, with many vegetation types being unique to the region.

We understand that all available ground water has already been allocated for domestic, and agricultural use in the South East. The recent Glencoe fires must alert us to the potential for bush fires to further diminish habitat and place added pressure on our groundwater supply. The potential is there for unsustainable competition for finite water resources for our native flora and fauna.

Unsustainable water use

UG activities use very large quantities of water, which compete with human and agricultural needs for water, raising important water equity issues. Depending on the depth and permeability of the formation, shale gas requires between 7.7 - 38 mega litres / ML (2-10 million gallons) of water each time the well is hydraulically fractured.<sup>75</sup> UNEP reports a single fracking operation on a shale gas well may use between 11 and 34 million litres of water.<sup>76</sup> As wells may be fracked up to 10 times <sup>77</sup> and large amounts of water are also used in drilling processes (approx 1 million litres per well),<sup>78</sup> the combined impacts of the shale gas industry may lead to significant pressure on water resources particularly in areas already experiencing drought or drier than normal condition.

Bradley Trevor Grieve in his book "Priceless" says:-

*'These wonderful creatures will not argue their case.*

*They will not put up a fight.*

*They will not beg for reprieve.*

*They will not say goodbye.*

*They will just vanish.'*

We do not wish to see unconventional gas fields being developed in the Limestone Coast as we see that these natural places that we love, and the creatures living there, will be put at risk. We think our beautiful planet must challenge our leaders to think beyond the exploitation of our most valuable resource...water.







*"The world is as delicate and complicated as a spider's web. If you touch one thread you send shudders running through all the other threads. We are not just touching the web, we are tearing great holes in it. Gerald Durrell from Catch Me a Colobus.*

Please accept this as our submission and please note that we endorse the submission by Limestone Coast Protection Alliance Inc in principle

Yours sincerely,

Helen Bawden,

Secretary,

Mount Gambier Friends of Parks



75 Kargbo D, William R & Campbell D, (2010) Natural Gas Plays in the Marcellus Shale: Challenges and Potential

Opportunities, *Environmental Science & Technology*, Vol. 44, No. 15

76 UNEP Global Environmental Alert Service: *Gas Fracking: Can we safely squeeze the rocks?*

77 European Parliament, Economic & Scientific Policy Dept, *Impacts of shale gas and shale oil extraction on the environment and on human health.*

78 WA Government: *Natural gas from shale & gas fact sheet: water use & management.*

#### Photos:

1. Ephemeral swampy area at Kangaroo Flat, December 2014
2. Swamp Wallaby drinking at local waterhole on a hot day in 2013
- 3 Native Blue banded Bee on Scabosia Wandilo pine break in 2012  
Will they be able to drink safely at the evaporation pond?
- 4 Spiny Crayfish at sinkhole near Tantanoola In 2011
- 5 Common Brown butterfly drinking from dog's waterbowl on a 40 degree day in Kojunup, WA. in 2015  
Will they be able to drink safely at the evaporation pond?
6. A small flock of Brolgas sharing pastures at Mingbool 2014, on a hazy autumn day.  
Where will they go if the water dries up
7. A Great Egret and a White Faced Heron share a space at Bool Lagoon

