

# WORONORA DAM THREATENED

Public opposition is mounting against new coal-mining which threatens the Woronora Dam and its drinking water -- including Sutherland Shire Council, the local Environment Centre and a petition which hopes to trigger a debate in NSW Parliament.

"Our water supply is simply too important to compromise," said Catherine Reynolds, from the Sutherland Shire Environment Centre.

"Whatever your political leanings or position on coal, we believe this is a matter that goes beyond politics."

Cracking of bedrock above previous coal-mining is known to cause

surface cracking of bedrock as the void beneath subsides, leading to draining of rainwater into the mine which then percolates back to the surface, with new contaminants.

Ms Reynolds spoke at the August meeting of the Woronora Valley Residents Association Inc, with disturbing photos from the dam's catchment (above). She urged locals to sign the petition in shops around the Shire including two at Woronora -- at the Boatshed Café (PEP Rd) and Riverside Café (Prices Circuit).

Other petitions are around the Shire, and can be downloaded from <https://ssec.org.au/stop-woronora-mining-petition/> , and returned to SSEC at its local office (Suite 4, Level 1, 2-4 Merton Street, Sutherland; ph 9545 3077).

Ten thousand signatures are needed to trigger a debate in NSW Parliament.

The Shire's four NSW MPs have been asked for their support to stop their NSW Government approving the plans by ministerial order: **Lee Evans** (Heathcote), **Melanie Gibbons** (Holsworthy), **Eleni Petinos** (Miranda), and **Mark Speakman** (Cronulla). Local Federal MP **Craig Kelly** (for Hughes) has also been asked for his stand on the issue in his electorate.

## MPs ASKED TO TAKE A STAND

A query to Shire MPs advised of "growing public concerns in the Shire against longwall undermining of the Woronora Dam. It appears that the quality of drinking water to the Shire may be threatened by orange muck rising from cracks in bedrock near previous mining," said WVRA Inc (*photo above*). The Shire's MPs were asked to respond:

"Do you share Council's bipartisan concern that this is 'a matter of urgency'? Photos of orange contamination of a tributary have been in The Sydney Morning Herald (29 Aug 2019), from the catchment area," the query said.

"The decision will be ultimately for the NSW Minister for the Environment, Rob Stokes; have you contacted him to oppose or support those public concerns? You must be aware that Sutherland Shire Council recently opposed the new coal mining proposals..."

<https://www.theleader.com.au/story/6355870/updated-woronora-dam-mining-proposal-under-fire/>

Dams, roads, rivers or suburbs near old mines can be threatened by deep mining, according to the WaterNSW website:

"Fracturing of the rocks overlying the mined voids can potentially damage infrastructure, and cause losses from water storages and streams. (It) may also impact on ecological integrity of overlying swamps and catchments."

<https://www.waternsw.com.au/water-quality/catchment/mining/catchment>

<https://www.smh.com.au/national/nsw/mining-damage-in-sydneys-catchment-20190726-h1gl34.html>

