



The Hon Chris Hartcher

Minister for Resources and Energy

Special Minister of State

Minister for the Central Coast

MEDIA RELEASE

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NAMOI CATCHMENT WATER STUDY SHOWS RESOURCE ACTIVITY AND AGRICULTURE CAN CO-EXIST

Resources Minister Chris Hartcher today welcomed the findings of the independent Namoi Catchment Water Study which demonstrates that mining and agriculture can co-exist in the catchment area.

The Study was commissioned in August 2010 to help identify any potential risks associated with coal mining and gas extraction on the water resources within the Namoi Catchment.

“Importantly, the Study shows that the collective impacts of coal mining and coal seam gas extraction can be effectively managed without negatively impacting agricultural water use across the region,” Mr Hartcher said.

The Study modelled a number of scenarios to determine any potential impacts on water resources, and includes a number of extreme hypothetical scenarios that far exceed resource activity planned in the region.

“Even under the Study’s hypothetical Scenario 3, which vastly overestimates the growth of the resource industries in the region, the estimated impact of coal and coal seam gas activity is not significant,” Mr Hartcher said.

“Further, the Study determines that even under extreme hypothetical scenarios of substantial industry expansion, the potential impacts of coal mining and gas extraction are low when compared to existing water drawdown from existing uses.

“The report will be of use to all stakeholders to gain an understanding of the region’s water resources, including areas where risks need to be carefully managed.

“However, each mining and extraction project will continue to be assessed on a case-by-case basis to help determine whether or not they should proceed.

“I would like to thank the Chair of the Ministerial Oversight Committee, Mal Peters and all members of the working group – including representatives of the NSW Farmers Association, NSW Irrigators Council, NSW Minerals Council, Australian Petroleum Producers and Exploration Association and Regional Development Australia - Northern Inland – who have worked hard in the interests of the people of NSW to deliver this final report.”