GAS WATCH 245.
Does AGL have any idea what it’s doing to our precious water?

We asked AGL a number of questions about what they are going to do with the chemicals it brings to the surface in their proposed Gloucester fracking. They didn’t bother answering the questions, merely forwarded a copy of the Gloucester Gas Project – Extracted Water Management Strategy (EWMS) document.

It’s a complicated document, well above our pay grade, but here are some interesting excerpts, and some big numbers. How can this invasion of the environment have anything but a significant detrimental effect upon it and us all:

• It is proposed that there will be 110 wells inside 50 square kilometres – stage 1 only.
• 3 new storage ponds for contaminated water, treated water and for discharge water, each with a capacity of 25,000,000 litres, ie 75,000,000 litres in total. Inflow into the Receiving Water Pond will be > 2,000,000 litres per day.
• A heavy salty water (brine) storage tank of 2,000,000 litres.
• PER DAY drawing up from coal seams about 1,100,000 litres of contaminated water for 30 months, ie 990,000,000 litres in total, then diminishing gradually over the following 30 months.
• PER YEAR drawing up to 730,000,000 litres from fresh water aquifers or surface water for use in CSG activities.
• Need to dispose of salt from the contaminated water at the peak rate of 7,000 kilograms per day over 30 months (that’s 5,460 tonnes of salt over the 30 months), then reducing to 300 kilograms per day, “most likely” to be received in landfill, but no firm arrangements for this or detail of where the salt may be received. The EWMS even asks for “expressions of interest” in someone wanting this contaminated salt! No real plans there.
• Construction of a HIGH PRESSURE methane gas pipeline from Gloucester to Tomago, Newcastle.
• That it is hoped to desalinate water sufficiently to use for irrigation, but if this is at all successful it will only last for about 8 years, diminishing all the time. The boast that the desalinated water will save agriculture is a short term boast which will leave irrigators in a fix if they rely on it for a few years and then find they have nothing except diminished or contaminated bores and no more treated water they can rely upon. The EWMS claims there is opportunity for expansion of existing dairy and beef industries. This is a hollow claim. Even if the treated water is any good, it is gone after 8 years and any investment by the farmers will be wasted.
• AGL estimates that several hundreds of millions of litres of heavily salted water, brine, will be produced over the life of the project.
• 100,000,000 litres of water will be required just for the initial fraccing of the wells.
• PER DAY in a wet season up to 1,500,000 litres of treated water will be discharged into the Avon River, that’s 130,000,000 litres per annum according to the EWMS.
• No detail is available, only vague notes as to the difficulties which will exist (and AGL will have to try and cope with them), as to how, cumulatively or individually, a Water Treatment Plant (WTP) will deal with those chemicals which affect the operation of a WTP, including pH, Calcium, Magnesium, Silica, Manganese (which fouls the reverse osmosis membrane), Potassium, Iron, Strontium, and Boron, or what will be done with the suspended solids once they are no longer in suspension.

This is a huge disruption to the natural water system and there’s plenty more.

How can any approval be given for this assault upon our environment, this assault on ourselves, and this assault on our future.
Also, have a look at the photos below. This is how AGL has looked after its contaminated water in the past – leaky joints strapped together with duct tape – muddy ponds – contaminated water dumped onto pasture.

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