



## Media Release

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### **Mining interests trump farmland, the environment and communities**

NSW Farmers today expressed serious concerns with a NSW Government attempt to rush through amendments to state environmental planning policy placing a higher value on resource projects than farmland, the environment and communities.

NSW Farmers President Fiona Simson said the proposed changes to its policy gives priority to the economic significance of a mineral resource and spells out that when determining an application, the significance of the resource was the “principle consideration.”

She said the amendments were quite extraordinary and that the association and its farming members were shocked at the approach the government had taken.

“These proposed amendments are a blatant way to loosen up the planning process for the sole benefit of opening up large parts of the state for mining, petroleum production and extractive industries,” Ms Simson said.

“The government is telling communities it is balancing decisions made in relation to mining developments and seeking to incorporate a triple bottom line approach.

“But what is actually happening is it is putting short term economic gains above everything else. It is little wonder that farmers and communities are losing trust in politicians, governments and the resources industry.

“We consistently hear that NSW has the toughest regulatory regime in the country when it comes to extractive industries approval.

“However, the government is dragging its feet on the implementation of the gateway process and we are yet to see the implementation of its recently announced buffer zones and exclusion areas for CSG operations. Why then, against this backdrop, is it so important to rush through these particular policy amendments?

“It is very unfortunate that communities have been sidelined on these amendments which are on exhibition for just two weeks, limiting consultation with those people who will be affected the most by large resources projects.

“We will be doing all we can to ensure the government knows how strongly we oppose these amendments. We are not against mining or CSG. But we are against an approach which blatantly ignores balance and refuses to take into consideration a triple bottom line consideration,” Ms Simson concluded.

Planning Minister Brad Hazzard released the proposed amendments to the State Environmental

Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) Amendment  
(Resource Significance) 2013 yesterday.

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