



## Media Release

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### Farmers surprised that community concerns about mining ignored

NSW Farmers said today it is surprised that the NSW Government had ignored thousands of submissions made by members of the community on the future of regional land and water in NSW.

Association President Fiona Simson said key parts of the government's Strategic Regional Land Use Policy (SLRUP) appeared to be the same as the original draft and had failed to give both the agriculture and mining industries the certainty they needed.

"Despite huge amounts of effort spent in developing and drafting submissions and large amounts of time spent in meeting after meeting by ourselves and many others, this government has chosen to ignore all feedback and deliver effectively the same Gateway Process that was offered up initially for public comment.

"We welcome the appointment of the Gateway Panel and the inclusion of independent science. NSW Farmers had input into who the individuals were on the panel and we feel that there is a good mix of skills. However, the panel has no power to prevent inappropriate projects. In essence, there is no "gate" in the Gateway and no ability for projects to be denied a Gateway certificate. If the panel is not empowered to recommend that a particular project should not proceed, their expertise and experience are not being fully utilised.

"The finalisation of the exclusion and buffer zones announced today is welcome. There is also no doubt that over recent times we have made some significant inroads in the development of a framework that protects certain areas. There have been developments such as the requirement for Agricultural Impact Statements, the appointment of a Land and Water Commissioner and the announcement that landholders will now have a right to have legal representation at land access arbitrations.

"There are however, still overarching and important problems that this government has persistently failed to address. We have continually communicated our concerns with the Gateway Process and the Aquifer Interference Policy amongst other issues.

"The coalition government claims that they have one of the strongest regulatory processes in the country in relation to coal seam gas and mining. This Government cannot continue to blame the past and is now 100% responsible for the protection of agricultural land and water where projects are allowed to go ahead. We and the residents of NSW will hold this government accountable." Fiona Simson concluded.

ENDS

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