

**United front on Coal Seam Gas Mining**



Col Brooks and Michael McNamara

Environmental and farming lobby groups have come together in a broad based campaign to stop coal seam gas mining in the Tweed.

The Northern Rivers Guardians (NRG) and the Tweed Combined Rural Industries Association (TCRIA) have announced that they will be working together to stop the imposition of this activity in the Tweed Shire.

Both organisations insist that the community should be entitled to have a say in the types of industry developed in the local region.

This collaboration should not come as a surprise to anyone, according to NRG spokesperson Michael McNamara.

“At the national level, The National Farmers Federation (NFF) and Friends of the Earth (FOE) are working together on this issue so it is only natural that we should collaborate” he said.

NRG has joined the *Lock the Gate Alliance* and both local groups will be collaborating on strategies to support our local community.

“It says a great deal about the importance of this issue in the Tweed that both groups have put aside any other differences to work together on this issue”, NRG spokesperson Michael McNamara said.

Mr Brooks said “We have to stand together as a community or we have no hope of developing as we should”.

Coal seam gas mining, or “fracking” as it is known, involves using chemicals or compressed air to fracture (hence fracking) the coal seam to release methane gas.

There are many concerns about the impact of this process on the rural and tourism industries and public health.

“Rural enterprises needed to be assured of good quality water or they are doomed” Mr Brooks said.

Recent initiatives in the agricultural and tourism industries were also under threat from coal seam gas mining, according to Mr McNamara.

“We have seen the recent introduction of a Farmers Market at Murwillumbah and the development of Northern Rivers Food Links. These are great initiatives to support emerging local enterprises”

“They will be put at risk by the development of coal seam gas mining” he said.

Mr Brooks and Mr McNamara called on Tweed Shire Councillors to support a moratorium on coal seam gas mining in the Tweed until all concerns had been addressed and the process had been proven safe.

“Tweed Shire Council has a special responsibility as the Water Supply Authority for the Tweed to ensure the quality of water supplied to residents and industry” they said.

Further Information:

- Michael McNamara, Northern Rivers Guardians, Tel 6679 3013
- Col Brooks, Tweed Combined Rural Industries Association, Tel 6672 3294