

**Are you worried that our farmlands are becoming gaslands?  
Are you concerned about our underground water?  
Do you feel powerless?**

**THERE IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO.**



Dear Landholder,

October 2014

My name is Lyn Nicholson and I am a grazier north of Dalby. Almost every week, I hear another story from a landholder who is suffering from the stress of dealing with a CSG company, or is seriously worried they will not have water in the future to continue their business. That is why I know I have made the right decision to support the Basin Sustainability Alliance (BSA).

BSA was formed in 2010 to be a credible voice for landholders and communities who were concerned about the impact CSG was having on the future sustainability of our agricultural land. The fact is that serious adverse impacts from resource activity are surfacing and I am determined that those impacts will be fully investigated and the appropriate action taken.

The influence of the resource sector is loud and strong. They have big bucks and multi-national organisations behind them. However, they are not unassailable in the face of well-founded evidence of damage to our farms and the environment. BSA will stand up for the rights of everyday Queenslanders and to make sure that the Government doesn't let the lure of royalty payments blind them from the negative impact this industry is having on our farms, townships and underground water.

### **Who is on the BSA Committee?**

Our committee comprises landholders from Wandoan to Dalby. Our backgrounds and qualifications are varied and include a water driller, cattle farmers and feedlotters, sheep farmer, solicitor, organic beef producer, water engineer, agricultural economist and an accountant. We volunteer our time because we care about what is happening to our farms, our environment, our water supplies and our rural lifestyles.

Elected at our September 2014 election were Lynette Nicholson (President), Neil Cameron (Secretary), Veronica Laffy (Treasurer), Anne Bridle, Peter Shannon, Lee McNicholl, Ian Hansen, Max Winders, John Erbacher and Bruce Uebergang. If you would like to read more about us, please go to [www.notatanycost.com.au](http://www.notatanycost.com.au).

### **What BSA is currently doing?**

To date, BSA has engaged directly with Government and industry and as a result of our efforts, there have been some improvements in the way this industry is being rolled out. Whilst some landholders have received positive outcomes, many others have not. We will continue to engage constructively with Government and industry regarding our serious concerns about fracking risks, impacts on quality and quantity of groundwater, salt management, privacy issues, weed management, land and water contamination issues, fugitive emissions, gas pathways, aquifer interconnection, noise, dust, light and traffic problems, make-good limitations, and the lack of fairness in the land access process. There is much to be done.

Our concerns are not irrational or unfounded. The litany of poor regulation in this State is well documented and the likelihood of an expensive clean-up was even highlighted in the 2014 Queensland Auditor General's report "Environmental regulation of the resources and waste industries". There are also a number of credible independent research projects exploring genuine issues.

BSA will soon be presenting a submission to the Senate Select Committee which is investigating Certain Aspects of Queensland Government Administration, including the approval of coal seam gas projects in Queensland. We see this as an important opportunity for BSA to stand up for landholders and reveal the lack of environmental scrutiny that has been applied to CSG projects in this State.

We have also just completed a submission on the Queensland Government's proposed water reforms and have been invited to present our view point at the public hearing – another vitally important opportunity to change legislation that if left 'as is' will diminish protection of our water supplies.

### Why should you care?

You might be surprised to learn that I don't have gas wells on my property, nor have I ever been approached by a CSG company. But I do rely on water from the ground to supply to my cattle and I am genuinely worried that CSG activity is steam-rolling ahead without the right checks and balances. If you eat food, wear clothes, drink water, or supply bore water to your livestock or crops, then you too should have an interest in ensuring we have a sustainable future for agriculture.

### There is strength in numbers

Recently BSA supported a petition asking the Government to give farmers a fair go after they were given just 21 days to prove their agricultural land should not be removed from strategic cropping status. After seeing around 22,000 signatures, the Government did a last minute back-flip and gave farmers more time to submit their appeals. A small win, but proof that united we can make a difference. Another small win, was the prompt response from Minister Andrew Cripps after BSA voiced concerns about the Minerals and Energy (Common Provisions) Bill 2014. This bill takes away considerable rights of landholders to object to mining projects. We did appreciate the opportunity to speak to the Minister, but we did feel that while he was prepared to lend us his ear, he was not truly listening, nor was he willing to act on our concerns. However, we strongly believe that with the support of more landholders, BSA has the potential to influence change.

### Now is the time

It is time farmers and graziers stood together shoulder to shoulder. I know farmers sometimes feel like the little people. However, every little person represents a vote. And with a State election imminent, the opinions of the little people do really matter. Now is the time to be vocal about our dissatisfaction at our lack of power when dealing with resource companies, and set out how we want that remedied.

To help us get our message right, we need to hear from everyday landholders about your factual experience with CSG. The good, the bad and the ugly. We want the views of BSA to be representative of landholder experiences and to reflect the facts of what is actually happening on the ground. We encourage you to visit us at the BSA meet and greet on November 12th in Chinchilla to share your views. Thank you for your support.

Warm regards, Lyn Nicholson

## BSA Meet and Greet

Members, non-members, landholders, interested community members are all welcome to come along and tell us what issues you'd like BSA to be focussing on and how we can support landholders in the most effective way.

**Wednesday November 12th from 9.30am – 12pm**  
**Chinchilla Cultural Centre, Wattle Room.**  
**RSVP to [chelseaw@bmo.com.au](mailto:chelseaw@bmo.com.au) or 07 4662 3722.**

## Join BSA

Introductory member offer of \$100 for your first year.  
Membership forms are available at [www.notatanycost.com.au](http://www.notatanycost.com.au).



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