

Basin Alliance laments lack of change in issues

OUTGOING Basin Sustainability Alliance chair Lynette Nicholson has said the issues that confront the organisation have not changed over the years since the coal seam gas industry ramped up in 2010.

She was speaking at the BSA annual general meeting in Dalby where she retired as chair, replaced by Dulacca grazier Lee

McNichol. Ms Nicholson said the main issue remained the resource **industry impact on underground water reserves, including the declining water levels in aquifers and the gassing up of water bores.**

“Underground and surface water is being polluted by the contaminants being

mobilised as the industry de-waters the aquifers to extract gas or coal,” Ms Nicholson said.

“There is also no independent baseline assessments and monitoring of underground and surface water, though CSG Watch will be conducting scientific testing in the future.”

Ms Nicholson said there

was an issue with the lack of regulation and oversight of the industry in general.

“It is all too easy for companies to obtain departmental approval for matters which would otherwise breach their environmental authority (EA),” she said.

“If that huge volume of methane released into the

atmosphere at Wandoan had happened on the coast, it would have caused an uproar.”

Ms Nicholson said changes to the EAs had relaxed conditions originally placed on resource companies.

“We have seen conditions such as the need for drill mud to be disposed of in waste disposal sites now

being allowed to be spread on properties,” she said.

Incoming chair Lee McNichol said the BSA would be getting more political this year.

“Ecological sustainability is what we are about,” Mr McNichol said.

“We are going to focus on ‘water for water’ in the make-good provisions and pursue that, relentlessly.”

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