



WILL WARATAH COAL BE ALLOWED TO DESTROY “BIMBLEBOX” NATURE REFUGE ?

Bimblebox Nature Refuge will be devastated if Clive Palmer’s Waratah Coal has it way. Fifty-two percent or 4,000 hectares of Bimblebox will be cleared to make way for a massive open cut mine. The remainder of the Nature Refuge will be at risk of subsidence due to underground mining.

The 8,000 ha **Bimblebox** property was recognised 10 years ago by both the Federal and State governments as an excellent example of uncleared woodland in the Desert Uplands Bio-region. The Federal Government contributed over \$300,000 towards the purchase of the property on the condition that it was preserved in perpetuity. The State government declared the Bimblebox Nature Refuge to protect this intact natural ecosystem.

Bimblebox Nature Refuge has become a well recognised site for research into sustainable grazing practices, fire management, and woodland bird surveys - an important indicator of ecological health. CCC Coordinator, Michael McCabe said, “In May 2011 Birds Australia confirmed the sighting of a flock of endangered Black Throated Finch (*Poephila cincta cincta*) on Bimblebox.”

“If the Federal Government thought that “Bimblebox” was a fine example of natural woodland worth investing tax payer dollars to save it from being cleared, what are they doing to protect it from coal mining?” “Furthermore, it was a requirement of the Federal Government that Bimblebox be declared a Nature Refuge to ensure it was protected in perpetuity,” said previous co-owner Ian Herbert.

“Now we have the ridiculous situation where Waratahs’ China First EIS states that they can supposedly ‘offset’ the destruction of Bimblebox Nature Refuge by declaring - guess what - another Nature Refuge!!”

“The justification for ceasing broad scale tree clearing was to help the Federal government meet greenhouse gas emissions targets. Saving the trees, but then mining coal, will cause far greater emissions. Waratah’s proposal is but one of six in the Galilee Basin. It is estimated that over the life of five of the mines 9,600 million tonnes of coal will be mined, emitting almost 23 billion tonnes of greenhouse gas. This will cause devastating consequences to food production and natural systems including rising ocean acidification putting Great Barrier Reef at grave risk.”

“Capricorn Coast residents who breathed a sigh of relief when Waratahs’ Byfield coal port was canned can send Clive Palmer a message when visits Yeppoon on Wednesday, 30th”, Mr McCabe said.