



The Coastwatchers Association Inc.

# CHARCOALITION

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COMMUNITIES & BUSINESSES FOR A CHARCOAL-FREE SOUTH COAST

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### THE CHARCOAL FACTORY

(Updated 6 June 2002)

A charcoal factory is proposed for a 72 ha site just off the Princes Highway south of Mogo near Batemans Bay on the South Coast of New South Wales. The factory will have 5 retorts each with a stack 34 meters in height, a mill and silos for charcoal. It will be surrounded by stockpiles of billets, logs, and sawdust. The charcoal will be trucked to Lithgow and used as a reductant in a proposed silicon smelter.

Only 25 ha of the proposed charcoal factory site has been cleared and is enclosed by bush on three sides. It is adjacent to the headwaters of Candlagan Creek which has been proposed for significant protection by the Healthy Rivers Commission. The water table connects with that under Broulee and is used in times of drought. Materials stored and produced on site could affect the ground water. No data has been supplied on the impact of obtaining the factory's water supply or the amount used in dust suppression, or run off into the adjacent wetland. Gas emissions have not been disclosed and fail safe systems are documented to be ineffective in high wind environments. This could mean greater risks of dangerous emission fallout on coastal villages and neighbours.

The factory will significantly impact on threatened species. A critical habitat corridor of the Yellow-bellied Glider will be degraded. The Glossy Black Cockatoo and Powerful Owl will also be affected.

The site is adjacent to rural residences. Nearby are a large resort, and the world respected Mogo Zoo which breeds endangered species. The proposed site is surrounded by rural residences. From its eastern boundary, the site is 2.2 km from Carrol College, 2.6 km from Broulee Primary School, 2.6 km from Broulee Pre-school, 2.9 km from Broulee Retirement Village and 2.5 km from the proposed Anglican College. Emissions, odour and noise will affect many residents.

Every year trucks will move 200,000 tonnes of timber, 35,000 tonnes of charcoal, 20,000 to 50,000 tonnes of sawdust, 31,000 tonnes of flux wood, plus supplies and wastes. The large trucks will greatly worsen traffic problems in Mogo, a popular tourist town, and many other town centres. They will also make the already dangerous Princes Highway even more hazardous.

A charcoal factory will cause impacts on the forests, catchments, road traffic and the quality of air and water. It is incompatible with the Nature Coast, its tourist dependent economy and the wishes of the vast majority of the community to live and holiday in an unspoilt environment.

**The proposed charcoal factory will undermine initiatives designed to boost economic and ecologically sustainable regional development.**