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MEDIA RELEASE**

NSW MINING INDUSTRY CALLS FOR GREATER CO-OPERATION ON WATER CONSERVATION

The NSW Minerals Council today called for less political grandstanding and more genuine co-operation between industry, conservation groups and the Government to deliver positive outcomes in subsidence management and water conservation.

NSWMC Chief Executive, Dr Nikki Williams, said the concerns of some community members about potential subsidence impacts caused by mining on water systems were being hi-jacked by anti-mining groups intent on raising fears through scaremongering campaigns.

Dr Williams was responding to the launch today of a video documentary by the coalition group, Rivers SOS.

“Rivers SOS inaccurately portray underground mining near rivers as high risk and unmanageable. In fact this environmental impact is very stringently regulated by the NSW Government through the Subsidence Management Plan (SMP) process,” Dr Williams said.

“Rivers SOS wrongly imply that negative subsidence impacts near rivers occur frequently. The reality is that such impacts are rare and depend on complex factors specific to each mining situation.”

“While impacts can occur from mine subsidence, rehabilitation techniques have been developed and advanced scientific methods are used to predict, measure, mitigate and remediate impacts on rivers,” she said.

“The reality is that mining operations occur under and near many water bodies throughout NSW every day without incident. The successful longwall mining operation under Lake Macquarie is an example.”

Dr Williams said mining companies have taken responsibility for subsidence impacts in the past and will continue to do so in the future, but huge efforts go into minimising any impacts in the first place.

“The NSW mining industry takes its responsibilities in water conservation and sustainable water practices very seriously – companies are adopting many innovative conservation measures including using recycled town effluent or sharing water resources between sites,” Dr Williams said.

“The mining industry is committed to work co-operatively with Government, local communities and conservationists to achieve genuine progress in protecting our precious water resources, particularly in light of the current drought.”

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