
BHPB facing opposition for Caroon coal field – Report

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It is reported in media that mining giant BHP Billiton is facing problems from farmers in the south of Gunnedah in northwest New South Wales over some of Australia's largest coal reserves estimated at 500 million tonnes of coal.

As per reports, while the lands are rich in coal, they are also among the most productive agricultural lands in Australia and feature significant underground water reserves and farmer worry that underground mining could disturb ancient aquifers, threatening their livelihoods.

The Caroon licence was awarded to BHP earlier this year after its tender, along with a \$100 million fee, was accepted by the NSW Government. The license area covers 350 square kilometers including pastoral and freehold farming on the Liverpool Plains, acknowledged as the richest farmland in NSW.

BHP wants to begin an 18 month drilling campaign involving 87 bore holes which would build on 46 bore holes drilled by the NSW Department of Mineral Resources. BHPB in a statement said "The exploration phase at Caroon is critical to collect data so BHP Billiton, the NSW Department of Mineral Resources and Department of Planning and the local community can work together to understand how a mine proposal could proceed without negative impact on agriculture."

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