

We The People
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We the People 329 Middle Earth Water Mining



Good Day to you. Famous British writer JR Tolkien created the highly successful **Lord of the Rings** chronicle set in a place called Middle Earth. It's an exotic land with heroes and villains and obscure agendas and action aplenty. I mention this because last week I found Middle Earth just across the border in NSW near Bilambil. My journey began when I travelled to the pretty and unique town of Uki set in rain forest and right out of Tolkien's imagination. Over 200 disparate souls united in their anguish over water mining. This is where precious ground water is carelessly pumped up then removed by tankers to be dishonestly sold as spring water in plastic bottles as the ultimate environmental stupidity. The Uki village meeting was an eye opener with good caring ordinary folk coming together under the umbrella of democracy to express their view and I applaud them. This led to my discovering Middle Earth in a magnificent valley centred with the picturesque idyllic Bilambil stream and bounded by massive rock palisades. I felt humbled and mused that these mighty ramparts should keep villains at bay but I was soon to learn otherwise. The Middle Earth hills are cloaked in lush green forest and the song of the birds was everywhere along with an orchestra of voices and all manner of creatures great and small. By any measure this appeared to be Shangrila in all its glory and I could live there in a heartbeat.

So this beautiful Bilambil valley is being assaulted by water mining with a number of selfish short sighted villains lining their pockets and promoting the unsustainable use of hundreds of millions of plastic bottles without a thought for their valley neighbours or the environment. Let's call one of these villains **Wally Whirlpool** for want of a name. So Wally runs big tankers up and down Urilup road which by any measure is sensationally beautiful but a very narrow sometimes single lane bitumen and dirt carriage way. The water is trucked half way to Brisbania where a team of underpaid hobbits transfer the water to storage to be sold as spring water instead of bore water. The cycle runs over and over, 7 days a week with up to 90 dangerous trips each week. So **Wally** is pumping daily to meet demand and residents fear the water table will fall or streams and springs may cease to flow. People, animals and live stock rely on the water as there is no town supply available. You can't take 60 million litres of water a year from Middle Earth without something going wrong and this is just one of many so called water miners. Governments don't care about our future and subscribe to the ignoble idea of '**more is better**' in all things, when clearly it's not. Water mining to fill plastic bottles produces an inferior product to town water and is vastly more expensive, so what's the point. Money and greed is the point, leaving a nasty legacy for future generations in our country which is getting hotter and dryer.

For the good folk in Middle Earth near Bilambil they also lose their valleys general amenity and peace and so their standard of living including road safety is falling and all because of greed. Water mining is an industry based on lies and deceit. Lies about the environmental impact and lies about sustainability. Lies and the misuse of science and lies about water quality. No good can come of this miserable industry and the water is often transported on roads way too narrow for the tankers used. Water mining is a huge problem and there are plenty of **Wally's** around to seize natures ground water with no concern for the future. I suggest you take a trip to the picturesque valley of Middle Earth near Bilambil as I did and see all this for yourself and be immersed in a fantasy and a catastrophe at the same time.

Until next time this Kent Bayley

(Pictures follow)

