



# The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP

## Minister for Primary Industries

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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Wednesday 4 February 2015

#### **STUDY TO EXPLORE REHABILITATED LAND GRAZING POTENTIAL**

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, today welcomed Government and industry partnership efforts towards a research trial which investigates whether rehabilitated mining land can sustainably support productive and profitable livestock grazing.

During her visit to Pokolbin today the Minister announced a new Mine Grazing Study Project in the Upper Hunter Valley will explore future farming opportunities.

“Two mine study sites have been selected in the Upper Hunter and over the next four years beef cattle will graze on rehabilitated mine land and on unmined sites around the rehabilitated land.

“Researchers will continually compare factors including animal and soil health, pasture production and composition and economic outcomes between both sites, throughout the project.

“It’s crucial that we explore the potential value of rehabilitated mine land to the agricultural sector and the wider community post-mining, in a controlled and closely monitored environment.”

Led by NSW DPI, project is funded by the Australian Coal Industry's Research Program (ACARP) and the Department of Resources and Energy, and is run in consultation with the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue.

“This project is a great example of community, industry and government working together and delivers on Goal 4 of the NSW Agriculture Industry Action Plan launched last year – to improve capability and access to knowledge,” Minister Hodgkinson said.

This strategic roadmap was developed between industry and the NSW Government and ensures the continued growth of the State’s \$12 billion primary industries sector.

“Evidence based research will provide both Government and the community with one of the most reliable and cost effective mechanisms to address community concerns about the use of land which has been mined for coal,” Minister Hodgkinson said.

Minister Hodgkinson said new guidelines will require mines to establish targets for rehabilitation and to implement a monitoring program to measure performance.

“Outcomes from the Mine Grazing Study will assist the mining industry to identify targets for rehabilitation and perhaps lead to changes to rehabilitation practices for successful rehabilitation to grazing land for similar rehabilitation in the region,” she said.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is resolutely committed to striking the right balance between the development of two very important industries – agriculture and mining.

“The mineral and agricultural industries of NSW provide the energy and food security that are of paramount importance to NSW and Australia’s ongoing development.”