

Cougar Energy UCG Project Timeline

June 2008 - Cougar enters into a Memo of Understanding with Direct Invest to raise \$280 million for the development of a 400MW UCG power project at Kingaroy

November 2008 - Cockatoo Coal sells its stake in the project

March 2009 - Queensland Government grants Cougar a Mineral Development Licence

March 2009 - Lady Bjelke-Petersen publicly opposes the development and vows to fight Cougar's exploration permit

April 2009 - Cougar announces it will raise \$4.2 million

August 2009 - Cougar says it is confident it will gain State Government approval after announcing that air linkage testing at the site has been successful

September 2009 - Cougar says it will raise \$8.29 million

September 2009 - Cougar and Cockatoo Coal enter into an agreement to investigate coal / gas prospects on each other's tenements

September 2009 - Local residents call for the project to be stopped because of environmental concerns. Residents near the site say they have not been consulted and Cougar has not completed an Environmental Impact Statement. They are worried about how the UCG plant will affect water and air quality especially as "quite a lot of people (are) getting water supplies from less than 600m away from this project". Cougar says the company is not required to complete an EIS for a trial project.

November 2009 - Local residents complain the Environmental Protection Agency has approved the pilot project "without visiting the site". They say the EPA "didn't even know about the springs down the road that are used as drinking water". They form a protest group, Kingaroy Concerned Citizens Group.

November 2009 - The Kingaroy Community Consultative Committee (KCCC) is formed, chaired by South Burnett Mayor David Carter, with membership including nearby landholders, town residents, State MP Dorothy Pratt and representatives from Cougar

December 2009 - The residents action group demands the State Government immediately halt the project until a full EIS and hydro-geological survey are completed

December 2009 - Cougar announces the project is on schedule for ignition in late February 2010

January 2010 - Trading in Cougar Energy shares is halted briefly to allow the company to prepare a response to an ASX query over a sudden rise in its share price

February 2010 - Cougar announces it has begun commissioning the UCG plant and has hired local staff

March 2010 - Cougar says it has successfully produced the first syngas on site from the Kunioon coal seam, igniting the main flare at 11.37pm on March 15

March 2010 - The Queensland Conservation Council says UCG technology has "minimal environmental benefits" and "poses a serious threat to water supplies and air quality in the local area"

April 2010 - Cougar appoints a new Executive team to develop the Kingaroy project

April 2010 - The KCCC states that the desired outcomes and objectives of the consultation group include having in place "an effective consultation process involving both the community and Cougar" and "a forum for timely exchange of information on issues related to the UCG pilot project"

April 2010 - Cougar announces gas production will resume in four to six weeks after a blockage caused by "thermal expansion" had temporarily forced it to halt gas production. The inner casings of two wells would be assessed for their potential for "recovery and future use"

April 2010 - Cougar says it has been given approval to develop the pilot plant up to 30MW generating capacity

May 2010 - A second UCG project near Kingaroy looks possible after a \$2m agreement is signed between Red River Resources and Black Gold Resources

June 30, 2010

- During a meeting with Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) officers, Cougar reports benzene has been detected in groundwater samples from Bore 37: 2ppb (May 11), 2ppb (May 27), 1ppb (June 2), 0ppb (June 9), 1ppb (June 16) (Australian standard in 1ppb). The DERM officers are also told that toluene was recorded at Bore 38 at a level of 45ppb (April 28), 4ppb (4 May) and 0ppb (June 16). (Australian standard 800ppb). **This information is not made public.**

July 2010 - Environmental campaigner Drew Hutton speaks out against the Kingaroy projects

July 2010 - Local residents query whether syngas has been produced at the plant. Cougar produces a photograph showing a lit flare

July 13, 2010

- Cougar advises DERM that water quality tests taken on June 29 at Bore 38 detected **84ppb benzene**. No benzene was detected at Bore 37 on June 23 and 29. DERM claims later that these results were finalised by the laboratory on July 8 but were not reported to DERM until July 13. **This information is not made public.**

July 14, 2010

- Cougar announces that gas production will resume in the last week of July

- Cougar also advises ASX that its recent share placement raised \$1.23 million

- Cougar advises DERM that benzene was measured at zero in Bores 37 & 38 on July 7. Toluene was measured at 4ppb on June 23 and 6ppb on June 29 in Bore 38. [This information is not made public.](#)
- Minister Stephen Robertson is told about the water contamination. [This information is not made public.](#)

July 15, 2010

- Dorothy Pratt MP questions Minister Stephen Robertson about water contamination at the Cougar site during an Estimates Hearing

July 16, 2010

- News breaks that DERM has ordered Cougar to keep the UCG plant closed until the State Government is satisfied that groundwater resources are protected
- Rural property owners within a 2km radius of the UCG plant and 2km of Plantation bore are advised not to use water from their bores for human consumption or stock watering
- DERM begins an investigation into whether Cougar has breached its Environmental Authority licence conditions
- DERM Director-General John Bradley says Cougar took too long to report the water test results
- A DERM departmental official is stood aside for not acting sooner
- Trading in Cougar Energy shares is halted on the Australian Stock Exchange
- The Queensland Conservation Council and The Greens call on the State Government to ban UCG
- AgForce, the Queensland Farmers' Federation and the Basin Sustainability Alliance express anger at the news of the water contamination
- South Burnett Mayor David Carter meets with DERM officials and local landholders
- Cougar blames a lab error for incorrect results from water bore tests and says it will give DERM a written admission from the independent laboratory regarding the results

July 17, 2010

- DERM testing of five bores detects toluene and benzene in two monitoring bores adjacent to the Cougar plant but below the Australian Drinking Water Guideline standards. Three neighbouring bores within 1km of the plant indicated results at or below the limit of detection

July 18, 2010

- DERM testing of three more bores finds neither toluene nor benzene

- DERM rejects “lab error” claim and says it has acted after nine positive detections by Cougar and says it “remains concerned” that the company’s detection of exceedances in test results were reported after “a significant delay”

- Cougar welcomes the results of the new tests by DERM and says the Queensland Government had advised no adverse health results would be expected

July 19, 2010

- Cougar Managing Director Len Walker tells the ABC there is no guarantee that the UCG process is to blame for chemicals leaching into water supplies

- DERM Director-General John Bradley says Cougar will provide landholders with water through alternative sources such as water carting

- Dorothy Pratt MP says she fears the leakage would have been greatest back in March when Cougar was conducting the burn

- Minister Stephen Robertson meets with UCG industry representatives to discuss the implications of the Cougar contamination incidents. "The government will only consider a proposal from Cougar Energy to resume its operations after the results of the Environmental Evaluation and the review by DERM and the independent scientific expert panel can be considered. The preliminary test results are not enough in themselves to allow operations to recommence at the Cougar site. The incident has demonstrated the need for a thorough assessment of the source of the contamination and risk management by Cougar Energy."

- The Queensland Resources Council says Cougar’s problems will not necessarily affect two other UCG trials in Queensland

- Cougar says it is “committed to resumption of progress at Kingaroy UCG power project”

- South Burnett Mayor David Carter says any quantity of toxic chemicals in the groundwater is unacceptable and expresses anger at the lack of consultation by Cougar

- The Kingaroy Concerned Citizens Group says "a permanent ban on the project is the only acceptable option"