MALABAR RESOURCES CHAIRMAN WAYNE SEABROOK.

MAXWELL MINE OFFICIALLY OPENS, DIVERSIFYING THE HUNTER

MALABAR RESOURCES MAXWELL UNDERGROUND MINE HAS OFFICIALLY MOVED INTO LONG-TERM PRODUCTION WITH THE MILLIONTH TONNE OF COAL RECENTLY RAILED OUT AND THE MINE OFFICIALLY OPENED.

Malabar Resources Executive Chair Wayne Seabrook said this is what a diversified Upper Hunter looks like - mining, renewables, agriculture, horse-breeding, rehabilitation and local jobs supporting one another.

"We were here in November 2022 with shiny shovels turning the first sod for the project. We produced our first bord and pillar coal the following year. In April of this year, less than four years from turning that first sod, we brought a longwall operation online.

"We've created 430 permanent long-term jobs, and thousands of indirect jobs. Hundreds of thousands of shifts have already been worked, kilometres of roadways have been built and more than nine kilometres of new conveyor belts constructed above ground," Wayne said.

"The majority of coal we will produce is capable of making steel for building cities, rail lines, bridges, pipelines and renewables like solar farms and transmission towers. You can't build renewables without steel, and you can't make steel without metallurgical coal. We also produce high quality thermal coal that is suited to high efficiency low emission power stations that continue to be constructed throughout Asia.

"Here in the Upper Hunter there is plenty of work for those who want to roll up their sleeves and do it," he said.

"Recently we announced the Maxwell North project which is an expansion of our operations replicating the Maxwell Underground Mine creating hundreds more local jobs and support even more suppliers and contractors.

"We're also supporting the energy transition. We have the approved Maxwell Solar Farm. Our 350-megawatt Edderton Solar Farm and battery project is in the planning system, and we have partnered with Akaysha Energy on the Mayfield Mega Battery and datacentre.

"We own substantial rural land and have planted over 350,000 trees on our land.

"So, when people talk about a diversified Hunter this is what it looks like in practice. It's not a slogan, it's real investment.

"The Upper Hunter is a mining region, an agricultural region, a wine region, and a horse region. Maxwell has been designed to operate alongside those industries and to support the long-term strength of the region."

THE OFFICIAL UNVEILING OF THE SANDSTONE PLAQUE OVERLOOKING THE STOCKPILES OF COAL IN JULY ATTRACTED THE ATTENTION OF PLENTY OF POLITICIANS.

Federal Hunter MP Dan Repacholi said the official ceremony was a chance to let the public know coal mining is here and will be for a long time to come.

"For as long as people want to buy our coal, we will supply it. There isn't a single doubt there, so we need to make sure we continue to support businesses who are producing it.

"We have the best, cleanest and greenest coal in the world here, that will get the Greenies going, but if they're not burning our coal, they will burn low quality coal from elsewhere which you need to burn four to five times as much to get the same amount of energy output," Dan said.

The Hon. Yasmin Catley, Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism, Minister for the Hunter and Swansea MP was also in attendance showing her support and the State Government's support for the project and in the industry in the Hunter.

"Malabar has made a significant investment in the region and made it conscientiously. They have gone through our robust planning and environmental assessments and met our standard.

"They are a great example of how renewables and coal can coexist, they're not in conflict with one another – we can walk and chew gum at the same time – of course we're moving towards renewables but the reality is coal is part of our economic future and let me tell you if you want to make things, and I certainly do, you need metallurgical coal to make steel," Yasmin said.

Wayne said the official opening was about thanking everyone who contributed to the project.

"We now have a fully functioning longwall mine. It's a great achievement by thousands of people. I have been humbled by the speeches, as I am here representing the 430 full-time Malabar staff plus thousands of people behind the scenes.

"To every employee, contractor, supplier, neighbouring landholder and local business that has been part of this journey, we thank you.

"Maxwell has moved from planning, to construction, to production. Today is about recognising that achievement and looking ahead to the next chapter for Malabar and the Upper Hunter."

Planning is well and truly underway for the next chapter at Malabar and all that is to follow.

"We will be out here until at least 2047 and hopefully well beyond that given the resources and support we have provides the platform to replicate the Maxwell Underground Mine.

"It's not about one extreme position or the other, there's no reason why all industries can't coexist and why we can't be the platform to make that happen.

"THIS IS WHAT A DIVERSIFIED HUNTER CAN ACTUALLY LOOK LIKE - MINING, RENEWABLES, AGRICULTURE, HORSE BREEDING, REHABILITATION AND LOCAL JOBS SUPPORTING ONE ANOTHER."

NOVEMBER 2022.

JUNE 2026.