

Gabrielle Tindall
Cattle Out of Water
P.O. Box 51
Bellingen 2454
NSW
ph/fax 0266551494
tindall@key.net.au

HOUSE OF REPS STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE :
INQUIRY INTO CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT.

Throughout many parts of Australia, livestock have unrestricted access to rivers and streams. This leads to streambank erosion through removal of native vegetation and trampling by stock, loss of bio-diversity through the destruction of riparian habitat, and fouling of the water by the addition of large amounts of manure and urine.

It is estimated that one cow produces the equivalent of eleven people in terms of nutrient and faecal coliform output. An average dairy of 150 cattle would produce sewage equivalent to that put out by a town of 1650 people.

There are many diseases that people can catch from sheep and cattle manure. The most widely known of these is *Cryptosporidiosis*, which caused such a furore in Sydney when large quantities of oocysts were found in the water supply. *Cryptosporidium* is particularly prevalent in lambs and calves, and can survive in river water for months.

Not only are humans at risk of illness from animal manure in their water, but also livestock can pick up diseases and parasites from foul water. Public health and animal health would benefit from the exclusion of stock from watercourses, and from the revegetation of the riparian zones.

Toxic blue green algae outbreaks are also directly attributable to the addition of manure to watercourses, and when this water is mixed with chlorine and piped to domestic users, there is evidence to show that various cancers are the result. It is very surprising to see that the NSW Dept of Land and Water Conservation agists large numbers of livestock on the foreshores of their water storages throughout NSW. This practice must be stopped.

A major obstacle to catchment protection and river health is the entrenched grazier culture, and the organised resistance to fencing of groups such as the NSW Farmers. They tend to portray attempts to clean up the waterways as an attack on their freehold rights. Notwithstanding this opposition any committee serious about halting environmental degradation must address this issue impartially, and be prepared to make funding and ongoing assistance available to the affected farmers.

An idea gaining credibility is the suggestion that timber plantations can be established along riparian zones. There is the potential to earn carbon credits for these plantations, and also to sell the timber as it matures. The Govt could fund Green Corps workers to plant and maintain these areas, and could encourage graziers to take advantage of these funds to make a real difference to the quality of Australian waterways.

I include a compilation of material to support my statements, and remain:

yours sincerely