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Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee  
SG.62  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Friday, 2 December 2005

RE: SENATE RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT REFERENCES  
COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO WATER POLICY INITIATIVES.

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please find following a Submission to Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
References Committee Inquiry into Water Policy Initiatives.

This submission was constructed by a representative group of the Lower Lachlan community  
centred on the terminal basin of the Lachlan River (The Great Cumbung Swamp) also  
encompassing the riparian areas below the township of Booligal. The geographical location of  
the terminal basin is approximately 85 kilometres North West of Hay.

As custodians of the land mentioned above and by lodging this submission it is our desire to  
draw to the attention of your committee, a number of issues that are directly related to your  
points of reference, and have been brought about by the current Water Policy Initiatives. In  
doing so we wish to increase the priority of water entitlement allocated to the environment,  
especially in relation to nationally recognised wetlands such as The Great Cumbung Swamp  
and the riverine environment on the Lower Lachlan River for the benefit of the greater  
community and future generations.

In lodging this submission we would also like to draw to your attention an issue that overrides  
all of your points of reference and also has a direct influence on the Water Policy Initiative.  
That is, the issue of the ever increasing and complex bureaucratic structure that represents the  
multiple points of influence in the management of our national waterways. For future policy  
to materialise into physical results, the process associated with the management of these  
waterways needs to be dramatically simplified. We see your Inquiry as a good start to bring  
this issue to the attention of those who have the influence to bring about much needed change.

The priority ranking in this submission is based upon the urgency of the issue. We feel the  
related solutions suggested would be the most effective way to deliver results in the shortest  
possible time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob McFarland". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Bob McFarland

**Submission: Senate Rural And Regional Affairs And Transport References Committee Inquiry Into Water Policy Initiatives.**

Issue	Priority <sup>∞</sup>	Result / Problem	Relevance to terms of reference	History / Description	Possible Solution
Lack of Environmental allocation in Lachlan Valley Water Sharing Plan (Specifically in the Lower Lachlan Region)	1	Degradation of the Riverine environment, the Great Cumbung Swamp and wetlands, including rare phragmites and the encompassing bio-diversity within these areas.	(b) Methods of protection for rivers and aquifers.	Lack of understanding of natural water flow regime and appropriate incorporation into water sharing plan. Inadequate water allocation volume to the environment Poor communication between relevant parties	Greater emphasis placed on environmental needs in the water sharing plan. Inclusion of the lower Lachlan region (Below Booligal) in water sharing plan. Representation from Lower Lachlan region in Water Sharing Plan.
Water wastage – running water down Willandra creek to supply Ivanhoe with town water.	2	Lack of secure water supply for Ivanhoe (North Western NSW)	(a) Development of water property titles (b) Methods of protection for rivers and aquifers (d) monitoring drought and predicting farm water demand	Substantial quantities of water were wasted in a number of attempts to deliver water to Ivanhoe.	Pipe water from Lachlan river to Ivanhoe using the savings made in water wastage to fund the project and reallocate within Water Sharing Plan.
Willandra Creek weir structure and management	2	Artificial structure in Lachlan river bed resulting in a reduced trigger point (from 8,000 Mg to >3,000 Mg)	(a) Development of water property titles (b) Methods of protection for rivers and aquifers.	Regulation of an ephemeral creek which has resulted in a high / dependency of water that would not naturally flow down the creek on a regular basis	Raise sill height in structure to Willandra creek or lower level of existing artificial structure in main river bed.
Invasive plant species – (both native and introduced) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Bushy Groundsel</li> <li>✓ Lippia</li> <li>✓ Bathurst Burr</li> <li>✓ Golden Dodder</li> <li>✓ Noogoora Burr</li> </ul>	3	Explosion of plant population in both number and species	(b) Methods of protection for rivers and aquifers	Lack of appropriate knowledge & techniques to manage weeds across the entire catchment	Greater understanding of weed management and control methods across the entire catchment

<sup>∞</sup> Priority Ranking: Urgency of issue 1 = HIGH 5 = LOW

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Issue	Priority <sup>∞</sup>	Result / Problem	Relevance to terms of reference	History / Description	Possible Solution
Loss of existing native remanent vegetation eg river red gum, black box	1	Established native vegetation is dying due to lack of moisture	(b) Methods of protection for rivers and aquifers. (c) farming innovation	Low priority of water allocation to the environment and over allocation of river Lack of acknowledgement that this bio-region does not naturally support trees outside its riverine environment	Increased allocation for the environment to sustain naturally established vegetation. Higher priority be given to keeping existing trees alive rather than establishing new trees where they should not naturally occur
Red gum Saplings and cumbungi growing in river bed / existing trees falling in river	2	Flow pattern (wetting & drying) of river bed creates ideal environment for growth. Lack of flood events (due to both drought and water allocation)	(b) Methods of protection for rivers and aquifers	Lack of local infrastructure (eg drop board weirs) that can be managed to enhance and capitalise available flows.	Increase number of local structures at critical points in lower Lachlan river bed NB: fall of river in this area is 1 in 64,000.
Silting up of main river bed	2	River bed becomes wider and shallower	(b) Methods of protection for rivers and aquifers	Increasing population of European carp and subsequent increase in turbidity, sedimentation regulation and over-capitalisation of water has reduced ability to flush river	Reduce population of European carp Feasibility study into silt reduction in main river bed.

<sup>∞</sup> Priority Ranking: Urgency of issue 1 = HIGH 5 = LOW