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Water Licence No: 80SL45376

The Secretary, Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport,

Willoh has been in the Schneider family since April 1962. It is 12,534ha with 20km of frontage to the Bokhara River, running sheep, cattle and cropping. This is family property running into the third generation. Originally we had two weir licences that were converted to an irrigation weir licence in May 1978 to irrigate 162ha.

In 2000 the licence was converted to 7 mega litres for stock, 972 megalitres for irrigation and 2 mega litres for domestic use. Since May 1978 we have had three significant changes of conditions. The 1st significant condition change was there had to be a visual flow in the Bokhara River at the Collerina/Engonia rd bridge, the bottom end of the Bokhara before it enters the Barwon River below Brewarrina, before we could pump.

Added to the above condition on the 24th July 1993 was the condition that Bokhara river at Goodooga must be flowing at a rate greater than 100 mega litres per day (such discharge corresponds to a reading on the said gauge of 1.38metres).

The next change was on the 3rd of April 1996. A pipe with a diameter not less than 300mm had to be placed through the dam with a stop valve to the satisfaction of the land and water conservation. As part of this condition when a flow is entering the bottom of the dam the pipe shall be opened to maintain a flow in the water course

equivalent to that entering the dam for the time being or the capacity of the set pipe whichever is the lesser.

Originally we had a flat licence fee of \$558 for 5 years. On the 3rd of April 1996 the licence was renewed for \$878 for 5 years.

On the 14th September 2000 another condition was added that the licence that the holder may divert up to twice the licence in any one year provided diversions don't exceed 3 times the licence volume in any three year period. As part of the extra condition the department responsible for water was changed from department of lands and water to state water and now the bill for one year is \$1900 and there is no water.

Don't get us wrong we are not anti-development but after being here for forty three years we have noticed the dramatic reduction in river flows, taking into account the ten years of dry times in the catchment areas. The main rain events around the Roma areas have been noted, of which significant flows should have occurred in the Bokhara. In each of these events the flows seem to have reduced until this last event which has capped it all off leaving us with no flow whatsoever. To add to this there has been an absence of summer rain this year which has left us short of stock and domestic water and no potential to grow a fodder crop for stock which would have been possible in previous years.

The dramatic changes in river flow have voided chances of ever reaching the requirements of our licence, for which we are now paying 10 times as much as we did before the year 2000.

The point to our argument is that we object to having to pay NSW government authorities when they clearly do not have any control over the amount of water we receive here. It is very clear that Qld irrigators have received a large slice, nearly all the water, from the recent rain events and we believe having a licence as long as we

have we should be entitled to the same privileges as the Qld irrigators. By this we mean we should have had irrigation water allocated to us by Qld authorities and as a result of this graziers would then receive a flow above and below us as this would have to occur for our licence requirements to be met.

Note: As far as we know we are the only developed irrigators of significant size on the 4 rivers below the Qld border before the Barwon River (and previously have grown cereals (including organic wheat for Uncle Toby's), winter oilseeds and hay fodder crops not cotton). Until this last rain event, which was significant, we have been patient and understanding. But now we have decided that enough is enough.

Added to our own statements is the fact that many have noticed the dieback of many large trees along the water course due to prolonged periods of zero flow and lack of quick peaking rivers which service the riparian zone. Not to mention the depletion of crayfish populations, which would normally be able to survive in dry times in the mud beneath the river bed.