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29.11.05

The Secretary
Senate Rural & Regional Affairs & Transport
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Submission - Inquiry into Water Policy Initiatives

Ie: The impact on rural water usage of recent water policy initiatives etc.

We are Western Lands Lease Holders situated on the Narran River in NSW. The Qld Dept of Natural Resources controls the water of the Narran River in NSW. While it was made to appear that NSW landholders were consulted in the development of a Water Resource Plan, we were given no more than a "token" hearing. After almost 20 years of negotiations, we are still reduced to begging for basic stock and domestic water. It is now 18 months since we have had a flow through the system to replenish our stock and domestic water supply. There has been two flow events earlier this year, that were large enough to run the whole system but waterharvesting extractions were allowed at the same time. Water consequently only just made it over the NSW border and stopped.

The above facts can be related to many other instances over the last 20 years. Despite the physical evidence there has been poor follow up on the overall environmental impact of the lack of flows in the system (let alone the degradation created by no recent overland flows).

All NSW landholders and many Qld landholders have refused to participate in the Ministerial Advisory Council for the Resource Operations Plan on the Lower Balonne as we believe the appointed chair is not financially or geographically independent of the system and that we will not get fair representation. This has not even halted the process. The current chair is still in place and the supposed "fairly" representative Advisory Council has commenced operating.

Our stock & domestic water supply has become less and less dependable, our once reliable floodplain country resembles black deserts

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and our viability is questionable. Meanwhile waterharvesting extractions continue undisturbed by our plight.

We implore you to pursue these issues as thoroughly as you can as the life of over 1.3 million hectares of our wonderful country is at stake as is the livelihood of hundreds of flood plain graziers and many towns.

Yours sincerely,



Robert H. Hall