

## **Senate Rural & Regional Affairs & Transport Committee**

### **Enquiry into Water Policy Initiatives**

#### **Terms of Reference**

##### **B. Methods of Protection for Rivers & Aquifers**

To Senators Murray, Heffernan, McEwen, Nash, O'Brien & Sterle and Participating Members.

Bundeera Station is 50 kms northwest of Brewarrina, the western boundary is 15 kms frontage to the Culgoa River. The Culgoa River is the western river of the 1.7 million acre flood plain. The Narran is the eastern river the Bokhara and the Birrie form the balance of the flood plain Rivers.

Bundeera Station is a Western Lands Lease. Return soldiers took up these properties on the flood plain in the mid 1940's they were divided into living areas. Bundeera is 19000 acres and is still 19000 acres today. I am the second owner of Bundeera **I have no water**. My right to live has been slowly eroded away by the Queensland Government and irrigators that have over allocated licences by the Queensland Government for the last two decades.

For millions of years these rivers have been the blood flow and lifeline of the flood plain, which is a massive collection area of water for the Murray Darling Basin. The Culgoa River runs into the Darling approximately 25 kms downstream of Bundeera. The Narran Lake, which lies east of Bundeera, is filled by the Narran River and is the biggest fresh water inland waterway in New South Wales. The road sign at Brewarrina says the Narran Lake is the largest Ibis Hatchery in the World as well as supporting thousands of other water bird species.

**The Narran Lake is dead, the Culgoa, Birrie, Bokhara and the Narran Rivers are dead. The Flood plain is dead.** There are no ducks or other water bird life. There are no fish. The Red River Gums, Wattles, Tea Tree, Lignum, Coolabah and lots of other flood plain flora is dying or dead.

**THIS IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER.**

The flood plain graziers, the environment and the Murray Darling have a right to live.

In March 2005 we sold what remained of our cattle herd and lost \$60000. These cattle were sold because we had no water. Imagine yourselves and wives pulling and lifting and dragging a heavy pump up the river bed by hand and pulling 200mts of 2" Poly Pipe behind it to pump water from one hole to the next so that we could use our toilet and keep the few trees that remain around the house alive.

Bundeera is no longer a living area because of the greed of Queensland Irrigators that were fed these licences by the Queensland Government. The Queensland Government was warned many many years ago by New South Wales and Victorian Governments no to over allocate licences on their river systems. There is also Bunding Works that divert rainwater off vast tracks of open country into their collection and storage areas none of this water is allowed to flow into creeks or rivers. This is a National disgrace that State Government in Australia could be allowed to do such a terrible thing.

Senators your attention must be drawn to what is happened to this magnificent flood plain because of over allocation of licences in Queensland.

Eg. Cubby Station at Dirranbandi Queensland has a water entitlement of 460000mgs, I do not know how one property could be issued with this incomprehensible amount of water, of course they are only one of the players in this disaster.

Senators these are the facts.

**COULD SOMEONE PLEASE HELP US?**

Yours sincerely

David Hanlon & Amanda Friend