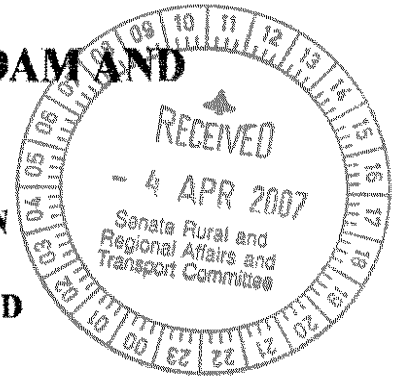


**SUBMISSION TO
SENATE RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS
AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT - INQUIRY INTO
THE PROPOSED TRAVESTON CROSSING DAM AND
THE MARY RIVER**

**SUBMITTED BY JOHN AND JENNY CAMERON
"WOOP WOOP"
261 LAGOON POCKET ROAD
GYMPIE 4570**



WHO, WHERE, WHAT:

We live on a 47 hectare property on the Mary River at Lagoon Pocket, between Traverston Crossing and Gympie. We are engaged in dairying, milking approximately 130 Jersey cows and supplying milk to a local processor, Cooloola Milk P/L.

Our milk is marketed as Cooloola Milk, which supplies a niche market at a premium price. This milk is unique in Queensland.

We have 250 megalitres of water allocation and irrigation is essential to the success of our enterprise.

WHY:

The reason for writing this submission is because we believe that our access to water from Borumba Dam is under threat.

We base this assertion on information contained in government legislation and statements.

For instance, the Water Resource Plan for the Mary River Basin only includes non-mandatory flow targets for downstream locations. The legislation allows flows of less than 1ML / day for 20 years out of the next 100 years. This level of flow is totally insufficient to allow irrigation. As well, the loss of the low level floods and freshes will leave our river a weed choked drain.

LOSS OF WATER

L FARM.

Inability to dairy.

This farm is too small to survive as a dryland farm, especially if climate change is a

reality. So far this water year (from 1st July 2006) we have used 180 ML.

More allocation than that required for normal use is needed to allow for water restrictions. eg. 2002/3 - allocation was cut to 25%, our allocation was not enough.

We pay an allocation charge (currently \$10.44 per ML) regardless of whether the water is used or not, and regardless of whether Sun Water can supply the water or not, plus the usage charge (currently \$6.53 per ML) for water actually used.

While our allocation may be safe from the clutches of the Queensland Government, there is no certainty that our allocation water will be supplied.

When we purchased this farm in 2001 we were told by Sun Water that allocation would soon be tradeable. This has not happened to date, so we face the prospect of being left with an unworkable farm with a useless allocation that is worthless because it cannot be sold to someone who has access to water, and we will be sent to the wall still having to pay our allocation charges.

The uncertainty of this dam is stopping our medium and long term farm planning, for instance, we were intending to install 20 acres of solid set irrigation (a very economic use of irrigation water).

2 PROCESSOR

Our processor is supplied by dairy farms which are almost all reliant on the Mary River, either in the projected storage area or below the dam wall. If the farms below the dam cease milk production then a thriving local business employing approximately 20 people and supplying the only pure Jersey milk to Queensland will be out of business.

3.INDUSTRY

Over half Queensland's milk is produced in the Mary Valley. Dairying is under pressure Australia wide from drought, urban sprawl, land prices, lack of water and shrinking water entitlements, as well as labour shortages and other factors. As we see it, construction of the dam will immediately put out those dairies below full storage level, starve the dairies downstream of the dam of water and eventually cause the shutdown of dairies upstream, if the dam really is to be a city water supply dam.

Even irrigators on tributaries of the Mary River are at risk as their water will probably be intended for downstream communities; Gympie, Tiaro, Maryborough, etc.

4.OUR RIVER

Swallows build their amazing communal mud nests, Sea Eagles take refuge from gales at sea and snack on mullet from the river.

To think that the Government of Queensland would put all this at risk for the sake of an ill conceived, unplanned dam which appears to be the worst water supply option, destroys our faith in the ability of this government to make decisions for the good of our state.

5. UNSUITABILITY OF THE MARY VALLEY FOR A LARGE DAM

Better qualified people than ourselves will no doubt talk at length about the pros and cons of the dam site.

Living near the river, we have a vital concern with the safety of the dam. Our investigations lead us to believe that the material below the axis is mostly mudstone, sand and gravel, not bedrock, and that the eastern side of the valley is mostly fractured rock. After 12 years in drafting and design with Queensland Water Resources, we know that these factors plus the porous nature of the valley floor makes for a very bad dam site.

No one who has not stood and watched the Mary in flood can appreciate the speed and volume of water, and this includes desk bound engineers in Brisbane.

If the dam were to fail during a major flood event, thousands of people will be put at risk. We do not wish to be plucked out of Hervey Bay. The effects in Gympie will be magnified by the narrowing of the valley at Fisherman's Pocket.

A safe wall with a large storage area for good quality water could be built below Borumba Dam and we hope the Senate will take a good look at Mr Ron McMaha's proposal.

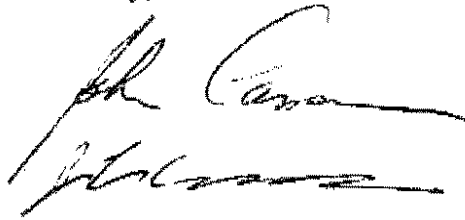
6. SOCIAL IMPACT

The announcement of the dam came as a very unwelcome shock which soon impacted on our health and our ability to cope with farm chores, paperwork and decision making. It occupies our minds constantly which destroys our ability to concentrate on other matters.

This situation is worsened by seeing the utter devastation that other people who are directly affected by the dam are feeling. If anyone wants a social impact study, they could examine the outpouring of anger, disbelief and grief at the public meetings with Mr Beattie and Ms Bligh.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Cameron". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**SUBMISSION TO
SENATE RURAL AND REGIONAL AFFAIRS
AND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

**SUBJECT - INQUIRY INTO
THE PROPOSED TRAVESTON CROSSING DAM AND
THE MARY RIVER**

**SUBMITTED BY JOHN AND JENNY CAMERON
"WOOP WOOP"
261 LAGOON POCKET ROAD
GYMPIE 4570**

WHO, WHERE, WHAT:

We live on a 47 hectare property on the Mary River at Lagoon Pocket, between Traverston Crossing and Gympie. We are engaged in dairying, milking approximately 130 Jersey cows and supplying milk to a local processor, Cooloola Milk P/L.

Our milk is marketed as Cooloola Milk, which supplies a niche market at a premium price. This milk is unique in Queensland.

We have 250 megalitres of water allocation and irrigation is essential to the success of our enterprise.

WHY:

The reason for writing this submission is because we believe that our access to water from Borumba Dam is under threat.

We base this assertion on information contained in government legislation and statements.

For instance, the Water Resource Plan for the Mary River Basin only includes non-mandatory flow targets for downstream locations. The legislation allows flows of less than 1ML / day for 20 years out of the next 100 years. This level of flow is totally insufficient to allow irrigation. As well, the loss of the low level floods and freshes will leave our river a weed choked drain.

LOSS OF WATER

1. FARM.

Inability to dairy.

This farm is too small to survive as a dryland farm, especially if climate change is a reality. So far this water year (from 1st July 2006) we have used 180 ML.

More allocation than that required for normal use is needed to allow for water restrictions. eg. 2002/3 - allocation was cut to 25%, our allocation was not enough.

We pay an allocation charge (currently \$10.44 per ML) regardless of whether the water is used or not, and regardless of whether Sun Water can supply the water or not, plus the usage charge (currently \$6.53 per ML) for water actually used.

While our allocation may be safe from the clutches of the Queensland Government, there is no certainty that our allocation water will be supplied.

When we purchased this farm in 2001 we were told by Sun Water that allocation would soon be tradeable. This has not happened to date, so we face the prospect of being left with an unworkable farm with a useless allocation that is worthless because it cannot be sold to someone who has access to water, and we will be sent to the wall still having to pay our allocation charges.

The uncertainty of this dam is stopping our medium and long term farm planning, for instance, we were intending to install 20 acres of solid set irrigation (a very economic use of irrigation water).

2. PROCESSOR

Our processor is supplied by dairy farms which are almost all reliant on the Mary River, either in the projected storage area or below the dam wall. If the farms below the dam cease milk production then a thriving local business employing approximately 20 people and supplying the only pure Jersey milk to Queensland will be out of business.

3. INDUSTRY

Over half Queensland's milk is produced in the Mary Valley. Dairying is under pressure Australia wide from drought, urban sprawl, land prices, lack of water and shrinking water entitlements, as well as labour shortages and other factors. As we see it, construction of the dam will immediately put out those dairies below full storage level, starve the dairies downstream of the dam of water and eventually cause the shutdown of dairies upstream, if the dam really is to be a city water supply dam.

Even irrigators on tributaries of the Mary River are at risk as their water will probably be intended for downstream communities; Gympie, Tiaro, Maryborough, etc.

4. OUR RIVER

In the spring of 2006 we were privileged to see the Lung Fish spawning in our river. It was a reminder that decades of farming have not caused the demise of the endangered species of the Mary River.

Every day we see our river and observe the plentiful fish stocks and the varied bird life. Rainbow Bee-eaters migrate here from New Guinea to nest in the banks,

Swallows build their amazing communal mud nests, Sea Eagles take refuge from gales at sca and snack on mullet from the river.

To think that the Government of Queensland would put all this at risk for the sake of an ill conceived, unplanned dam which appears to be the worst water supply option, destroys our faith in the ability of this government to make decisions for the good of our state.

5. UNSUITABILITY OF THE MARY VALLEY FOR A LARGE DAM

Better qualified people than ourselves will no doubt talk at length about the pros and cons of the dam site.

Living near the river, we have a vital concern with the safety of the dam. Our investigations lead us to believe that the material below the axis is mostly mudstone, sand and gravel, not bedrock, and that the eastern side of the valley is mostly fractured rock. After 12 years in drafting and design with Queensland Water Resources, we know that these factors plus the porous nature of the valley floor makes for a very bad dam site.

No one who has not stood and watched the Mary in flood can appreciate the speed and volume of water, and this includes desk bound engineers in Brisbane.

If the dam were to fail during a major flood event, thousands of people will be put at risk. We do not wish to be plucked out of Hervey Bay. The effects in Gympie will be magnified by the narrowing of the valley at Fisherman's Pocket.

A safe wall with a large storage area for good quality water could be built below Borumba Dam and we hope the Senate will take a good look at Mr Ron McMaha's proposal.

6. SOCIAL IMPACT

The announcement of the dam came as a very unwelcome shock which soon impacted on our health and our ability to cope with farm chores, paperwork and decision making. It occupies our minds constantly which destroys our ability to concentrate on other matters.

This situation is worsened by seeing the utter devastation that other people who are directly affected by the dam are feeling. If anyone wants a social impact study, they could examine the outpouring of anger, disbelief and grief at the public meetings with Mr Beattie and Ms Bligh.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely,

