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6/5/07

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

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Inquiry into additional water supplies for South East Queensland –
Traveston Crossing Dam**

The purpose of this letter is to provide feedback on the Draft Terms of Reference for an environmental Impact Statement regarding the proposed Traveston Dam. (Please note – I have submitted another version of this submission to the South East Queensland Infrastructure (Water) Co-ordinator General on 8 Feb 2007)

There should be an assessment of power requirements on pumping 70000 plus megalitres of water over 120 kms to Brisbane, against the power requirements on pumping the same volume of a desalination plant built on a sensible site close to Brisbane. This would negate a massively long pipeline a la Tugun. Water should be treated on site and pumped directly into Brisbane's reticulation system. This could reduce the pipeline by three quarters (when compared to the Tugun pipeline).

Western Australia has implemented this system at a much lower price than the Queensland government's Tugun proposal and at a price per megalitre of less than \$1100 per megalitre. It has also harnessed green energy to reduce the energy produced from burning coal.

We must also factor in the energy and costs required to manufacture and construct the Traveston Crossing dam and pipeline to Brisbane and 22 km of bitumen road, as well as the Bruce Highway diversion around the dam (an extra 11.94 kms), plus minor roads and replacement of all infrastructure (power, phone etc), as well as the purchase of all farmland. There is also the greenhouse gas issue that such a shallow dam releases.

We cannot allow the government to cook the statistics, saying desalination is 5 times the price of dam water, when the Tugun plant is in absolutely the wrong place to supply Brisbane due to an unnecessarily long pipeline (80 km). This desalination plant must be run by the government, because when the existing dams have sufficient water the plant can be put on a maintenance program so we are not paying for water when it is unnecessary. This would also negate the energy requirements during these good periods.

The Beattie government also said the river flows would still be at 85% at Maryborough. I do not believe this will be the case. I would hope that evaporation and seepage rates had been included in the governments planned water harvesting. This water would normally not be lost, as the surface area on this dam is massive compared to the natural flows of the Mary. Remember, unlike a desalination plant a dam and all its destructive issues cannot be turned off. This destruction is forever.

We must also remember that the Mary Valley is still producing food for the nation and contributing to the economy. If a dam is constructed, the Mary Valley, all the way to the Great Sandy Straits is damaged forever, and produces nothing. Also if a desalination plant, dam, and recycling was built 20 years ago, the desalination would not have been used until the current crisis. Recycling would have significantly postponed the current crisis. Desalination damages little in comparison if the brine is diffused in the correct manner.

One last point that concerns me if this dam was built and filled quickly, I have concerns of a massive fish kill (Mary River Cod and gilled fish) due to the organic matter than consumes all oxygen in the water as it decays. This would be a large section of the cod's gene pool and also unacceptable.

Yours faithfully, 

Mark Case