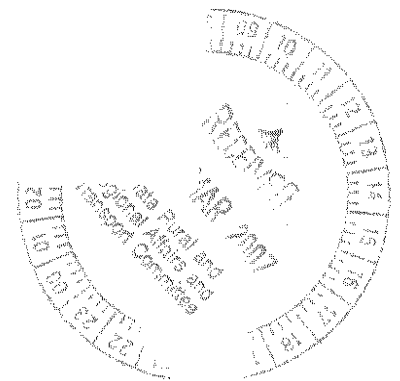


The Secretary  
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Inquiry into Additional Water Supplies for South East Queensland – Traveston Crossing Dam Information**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this letter is to provide information for the Senate Inquiry.

In opening, I direct your attention to the information at [www.savethemaryriver.com](http://www.savethemaryriver.com) and [www.ourgreatsandy.com](http://www.ourgreatsandy.com). As this information is so comprehensive, I will not attempt to duplicate it in my submission.

Both my husband and I were born and raised in Maryborough and my family goes back more than three generations in this district. My husband's family were raised on a riverfront property at Owanyilla and grew up with a deep understanding of and respect for the unique ecosystem of the Mary River.

When the barrage was constructed in the 80's, the river was changed irrevocably with increased erosion both above and below. The increased salinity below resulted in mangroves growing in the Maryborough reaches.

My parents, who have fished the Great Sandy Strait for over 60 years reported that mangroves which had flourished in their natural environment of mud were now dying off as sand replaced the mud. This was a direct result of reduced flow from the Mary River. The ecosystem that has struggled to cope with these changes will surely be decimated if the Traveston Dam is allowed to proceed with the resultant further loss of flow.

An old saying that holds true is, "A drought on the land results in a drought in the sea." The Dam will artificially produce a constant drought for the Great Sandy Strait resulting in a huge loss of fish spawning and native sea grass beds. The impact on the flora and fauna of the area will be devastating, directly contravening the NPSWQ agreement.

With other dam levels being so low due to the drought, it makes no sense to create another dam that relies on rainfall. Basically, if we return to regular rainfall levels then the dam will be unnecessary, and if rainfall remains low, this dam will also be useless.

I respectfully offer some solutions for consideration:

- The possibility of digging out existing dams while the levels are low to create a larger capacity in the event of better rainfall could be considered.
- An increase in the incentives for water saving is definitely the way of the future. Mandatory tanks on new homes and rebates for installation on existing structures would go a long way to relieving the problem. Rainfall over the Brisbane area has been more than adequate even during the drought.
- Recycled water could be used for industry with power stations being the most obvious candidates for this.
- Encouraging the decentralization of businesses. The unprecedented increase in population has put Brisbane's transport system and housing market under pressure. Nurturing the move to regional areas for businesses that don't need to be in Brisbane would be a good start. With technology making it possible to work from other areas it would be a win-win situation for Brisbane and regional areas.
- Invest in future technology, not outdated dams. Investigate the possibility of a desalination plant utilising solar technology. This may take a while to reach fulfilment but is a step towards the "smart state" that we are always boasting.

In short, we need to redefine our usage of what has become a scarce resource. We need to stop believing it is our right to use as much as we please. Water needs to be budgeted just like household income and people need to be re-educated on its conservation. Just as we need incentives for people to conserve water, we also need penalties for those who wantonly waste it.

The report commissioned by the local councils has clearly demonstrated that there are other options that are superior in both cost and sustainability without the environmental and social devastation that comes with the Traveston Dam proposal.

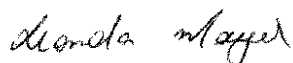
Why weren't these options considered by the state government?

Why did they opt for a high cost, high risk proposal?

Their lack of transparency about this decision is in direct opposition to the democratic process. People are disillusioned that they have not been consulted on this issue and feel that they will never be heard.

On the contrary, I believe that this inquiry will quickly highlight that this proposal is the worst choice and that the other options put forward by many, highly educated people will be considered on their merits.

I thank you for the opportunity to participate in this inquiry.



Leanda Mayer