

Submission to Senate Inquiry into additional water supplies for
S.E.Q-Traveston Crossing Dam-Rocky Creek Option.

The terms of reference in the "desk-top survey" currently being conducted on this issue are not broad enough nor are stated clearly. The background detail is poor, the assumptions are not correct and is based on outdated data. Additionally there is no discussion on alternative water conservation techniques such as the provision of free rainwater tanks, dry composting toilets (see Stott's Island 21st century "cutting edge" example on the Lower Tweed river), stormwater harvesting stored in Shire- managed roadside collecting ponds and wetland areas, and other such ecologically sustainable methods of water conservation.

As the population grows in S.E. Qld there will be an increase in roofscapes which will increase water harvesting potential and the problem of urban water supply would solve itself in the short and long term.

Also establishing water collection tanks under new multi-story buildings and retro-fitting existing buildings with grey-water harvesting tanks for all non-potable water uses, would solve the problem of the wastage of megalitres of water in all cities of Australia.

Attempting to solve S.E. Qld's water supply problem by destroying the Oxley River Valley's World Heritage listed native flora and fauna components; as well as the way of life and livelihood of the population, is a narrow sighted and poorly researched option.

The residents of Rocky Cutting on the Oxley River Valley and the residents and farmers living on the fertile agricultural lands in the surrounding areas of Tyalgum, Bray's Creek and Pumpenbil (in effect the entire Western section of the Oxley river would be inundated)--a population of well over 2,000 families.

Resumption of land costs would be astronomical --far exceeding the \$10 million estimated in the reports to date. \$100 million is a more accurate cost.

If 2010 is currently projected to be the land resumption time frame, the costs would have escalated even more by then, to say nothing about the environmental "cost" of the carbon emissions contributed by pumping water across the border through the Caldera wall, combined with the global-warming scenario. This would be added to with the construction of the dam wall.

Where is the "precautionary principle" exhibited, regarding unfair dislocation of a community when discussions are not aired in the public arena, but rather behind "closed doors" with no community consultation or local awareness of this process until after the event.

The Lower Tweed river is a stressed river system according to the N.S.W River Commission with poor estuarine water quality. Erecting a concrete wall along

one of the two feeder rivers will exacerbate this already stressed system, as flows will be reduced further preventing the regular natural flushing for river health.

The World Heritage recognised Gondwanan floral and faunal heritage at the proposed site and along the length of the river would be drowned. The resultant rotting of the dense floral cover would cause anaerobic bacteria to pollute the water, thus causing blue-green algae blooms in the dam assisted by the high surface temperature.

The site chosen is right in the middle of the Central Eastern World Heritage Caldera National Parks which has the highest biodiversity value in N.S.W and almost all of the East coast of Australia.

The Gondwanan natural heritage is matched only by Kakadu throughout Australia. It would be an unconscionable loss of our rich Gondwanan heritage.

A wildlife corridor would be irrevocably cut from Mt. Warning to the Caldera valley as non-winged fauna would not be able to cross the expanse of water, thus further isolating fauna into unconnected islands and damaging their biodiversity.

Pollution from old dip sites, termite treatments, farm chemical dumps and the like are all in the proposed inundation area. Highly erodable steep slopes and high precipitation levels would cause siltation and turbidity in the water which would cause lack of clarity, low light levels and any water fauna would die due to the resultant anaerobic conditions.

The social and economic costs of farms and residences being submerged would be significant. The Dept. of Public Works N.S.W 1977 report was rejected on these grounds that the social impact and land resumption costs were counterproductive at the time, and it remains so to the present.

Our farm is on a plateau above the 60 meter mark of inundation in the Eungella Valley 5 minutes West of Rocky cutting, but would be cut off by road.

Avocado and Mango Farming is our future, but with the dam proposal looming stressfully over our heads, we have fears that we will not only be dislocated against our will, but that all our hard work for our future will come to nothing and our land value will be eroded, if the dam goes ahead.

Regards
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