

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

250 Happy Jack Creek Road
Carters Ridge QLD 4563
2nd April, 2007

Dear Sir/ Madam,

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

Purpose: To Provide Information for Senate Inquiry

My wife and I feel we have been misled and systematically traumatized by the processes adopted in announcing and progressing the management of the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam.

Initially, with no prior community consultation, the Queensland Premier on 27th April 2006 announced his intention to build a dam on the Mary River. As this was contrary to previous Labor Party Government decisions and the advice of local government we were shocked and concerned and uncertain as to whether we were affected or not. Many phone calls seeking clarification and sleepless nights followed.

IN THE DAM

It was not until the 9th of May that the Director General of Natural Resources and Mines wrote to inform us that our property **could** be affected and the attached map clearly indicated that about half our property would be inundated. As the Giant Barred Frog, an endangered species, had recently been discovered in Happy Jack Creek [a tributary of the Mary River] on our property and we had entered into an agreement with Landcare to fence the creek to keep our cattle from damaging the riparian habitat we suddenly had a further dilemma.

Landcare through the Commonwealth Envirofund had provided a grant towards materials to fence the creek and provide off stream watering points to protect the frog's habitat. As we had bought materials and ordered others, we were concerned that to go ahead might be a waste of both our funds and Commonwealth Government funds. Also, in partnership with Landcare we had set aside, fenced and planted out two sections of land with over eight hundred trees to enhance the riparian areas of the creek. Our inquiries as to what we should do met with uncertainty from all quarters. At this stage we are going ahead as our agreement with Landcare is firm whereas the dam remains merely a proposal and it

would seem that the EIS has not addressed the matter of ongoing projects. When we embarked on these projects we committed time and money based on the best advice from government departments that we would be helping to secure the future of the Mary River and its catchments. Should this dam be approved, many millions of public and private funds not to mention hours of work and emotional commitment will have been wasted.

NOT IN THE DAM

Further confusion followed when the Premier announced that the dam would be built in two stages and another map was released . He wrote on the 5th of July saying that properties in stage two would not be required until 2030. The Kandanga drop in center set up by the government to help manage public issues verified that our property was in stage 2 and would not be affected until 20 or more years. On that basis we went ahead and purchased new cattle yards and vet crush valued at about \$15,000 and went ahead with our herd improvement program.

IN THE DAM

Having finally settled on some way forward for our future, you can imagine our horror when on 30th October 2006 the Deputy Premier wrote with another more clearly defined map of our particular property to say part of our property, in essence the best creek flat pastures including the new yards, was again required for stage 1. Furthermore, another accompanying map showed no road access to the remaining portion of the property.

NOT IN THE DAM

I commenced discussions with the CEO of Queensland Water Infrastructure Pty.Ltd. with regard to road access once stage1 went ahead and he subsequently visited the property to look into my belief that access would only be cut off in time of flood as stage 1 merely increased the water level within the confines of the creek banks . He agreed to have the creek crossings independently surveyed and wrote to me on 30th January 2007 to verify my ford was in fact above the 71 m. level of stage 1.and that flood modeling showed very

little difference with or without the dam .He verified that the property was not required for stage 1 as 'the property is not impacted directly.'

IN THE DAM ???

While this seemed to have brought to a close one aspect of immediate concern, the March project update from QWI shows graphs which seem to indicate that stage 1 would considerably increase the time that access would be cut off during a flood.

I believe that this total confusion demonstrates an on the run justification of a political decision made without appropriate prior investigation and with initial total disregard of the social impact. In my own case and that of my wife I know that the stresses at times have been almost unbearable to the point that we felt that the government was the 'unknown terrorist' in our lives.

I urge this Senate Inquiry to note with concern the impact of this poorly thought decision and its ad hoc management on individuals caught up in the process.

Donald John Ross

[Please acknowledge receipt]