

The secretary  
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

27<sup>th</sup> March 2007

Submission by John and Dianne Baker  
136 Barrage Road  
MUNGAR Q 4650

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

As resident landholders on the Lower Mary River I write to express our sincere concerns as we purchased our land just above the tidal barrage on the Mary River and built our home here confident that our investment would improve in value and ensure our security for a respectable and decent lifestyle in our years to come. Now we are living in fear of the desecration and devaluation of our home and property if the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam is approved. Due to the speculation of this proposal we believe we have already suffered a devaluation of our property.

We submit that Mary River communities are demanding extensive examination for alternative water provision and that this dam will not be the answer to the water crisis. We believe we have a right to expect our government to serve us with honest, transparent policy intent upon the best outcomes possible for all people of Queensland. So far landholders and communities currently invested in and dependent upon this river system have not been treated fairly and equally in this dam proposal that was initiated without correct due process. Mary Valley landholders have had their properties resumed prior to all of the necessary essential studies being completed and remaining properties have been devalued within this process. If this dam is approved there is no potential to counteract the devastating outcomes. Current evidence already shows that this will create further profound degradation and disadvantages along this entire river system that has already shown severe detrimental impacts since the installation of the tidal barrage.

Please consider this scenario. Had we chosen to sell our property prior to the announcement of the Traveston Dam our property description could have read somewhat as follows:

This property is situated just above the Mary River tidal barrage with an especially designed homestead positioned to take advantage of views overlooking the river and surrounding rural scenes. The property is currently set up and used for cattle fattening with improved pasture and established cell grazing and handling facilities. Stock water is maintained with stock and household water allowance and a current water allocation is held. A Department of Natural Resources study recommended this land suitable for cane production, lychee orchard, small crop and alternative farming. A unique lifestyle is offered here, with welcoming picnic areas, prolific bird life and a chance sighting of platypus and lungfish from easy walking riverbank trails through natural forest. How will our property description and the value of our property compare if Traveston Dam is installed? We believe our lifetime investment will be unjustifiably, irreversibly and immensely devalued.

Nature has provided us with a current example of the impacts of the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam.

There has been no recent rainfall in the Mary River catchments above the site of the proposed dam and thereby nature has provided us with an example of how the downstream river flow will be impacted upon, if the installation of the proposed dam goes ahead. As is a regular occurrence, Maryborough City Council pumped water to the Teddington storage facility on Tinana Creek for Maryborough's water supply in the last week of January 2007. The water level at the tidal barrage pond dropped by approximately 1.5 metres causing problems to access water with some landholder's pumps. In February we were very fortunate to have around 200mm of local rainfalls to top up our immediate area of the river, however there has been no flow over the tidal barrage as there has been no substantial rainfall further upstream. Currently, without recent rainfall and due to irrigation needs the water level is dropping quickly again.

*'Aquatic weed, pollution and degradation of the health and life of this river system'* is an ongoing topic of concern because regular flushing of the river is prevented due to the tidal barrage. If the proposed dam is added to this already suffering environment, then the impacts will certainly be further exacerbated with grave environmental, economic and social loss.

Yours sincerely,  
Dianne M Baker