

ABN: 68 809 476 697

IN REPLY
PLEASE REFER TO:

Contact:
Mr M Mallyon

Our Ref:

Your Ref:

ALL COMMUNICATIONS
ADDRESSED TO:

The Chief Executive Officer
Woocoo Shire Council
PO Box 772
Maryborough 4650

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Proposal.doc



31 March 2007

Ms Jeanette Radcliffe
Committee Secretary
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee
Department of the Senate
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms Radcliffe,

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

Please accept this as the formal submission from Woocoo Shire Council.

Council has grave concerns about the proposed dam and outlined hereunder in dot point form are listed some of those concerns with explanation.

- Water restriction to downstream users – the cane farmers drawing water in the downstream areas of the proposed dam rely heavily on existing surface water for irrigation. Construction of a dam that may not fill for several years will rob those farms of the ability to increase production and possibility even not be able to maintain present farm output. The Maryborough Sugar Mill has estimated an annual cane crush of 1 million tonnes (which was close to being achieved in 2006). Our sugar primary production is worth around 20% of the region's primary production and is responsible for some 1200-1500 jobs (direct & indirect). The available water could be reduced by up to 50%.
- Environmental issues above the dam – with the dam expected to take several years to fill and with the immense continued draw of water from the impounded area, it is most likely that the dam will overtop on very rare occasions. Councils and Government Departments are already fighting huge problems of Hyacinth in our waterways and the lack of flow increases the weed problems. A ponded area of water will quickly become another prime area for weed growth. This has been proven at other dams in the Burnett / Kolan systems. "Water weeds" will simply multiply because of low or no flow.
- Environmental issues below the dam – the same affect will be witnessed downstream of the dam and existing water weed problems will increase dramatically because of severely reduced flows.
- Other issues related to water weeds – it is a fact that evaporation rates where large area of water weed is present are up to six (6) times greater than areas without weeds. Evaporation rates in average depth waterways in this area currently run at about one (1) metre per year.



The word "WOOCOO" was initially used to name Mt Woocoo (located in the Shire), then the Parish of Woocoo (on which the shire became centred), and eventually used in naming the Shire upon its formation in 1915. Mt Woocoo was named in association with an Aboriginal word "WOOCOON" meaning Echidna.



- Loss of water on this site – in addition to the abovementioned loss of water, evaporation in such a shallow body of water as would be experienced here is probably 3-4 times more than deep water impoundments (refer to evaporation rates in the Upper Ross Dam at Townsville).
- Reduced water quality – will be witnessed from the lack of adequate flow and thus lead to other problems including higher treatment costs of water intended for human consumption.
- Siltation downstream of dam – this problem already exists below the barrage which was constructed for water supply and a much larger dam will simply exacerbate and compound the problems. Every watercourse that has a dam thereon has experienced these problems and particularly at the river mouth.
- Loss of agricultural land in the water impoundment area and catchments thereof – apart from the obvious loss of agricultural land to make way for the area of water that may eventuate above the dam, grazing and other agricultural pursuits in the catchments for the dam will be prohibited for fear of contamination / nutrients from cattle / crops / pesticides etc.
- Affects on marine life and the Sandy Straits – the Mary river is home to the protected lung fish and the Mary River Cod and turtle which species already are struggling to maintain sufficient habitat for their ongoing and long-term survival. Additionally the enormous reduction in flows to the mouth of the Mary River and the Sandy Straits between the mainland and Fraser Island is set to further impact on the ecology of that area. Nature's scales have been overweighted enough already to the detriment of the fishing fraternity (both recreational and commercial) and further tipping of the scales will create an imbalance that even mother nature can not sustain nor recover from.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mallyon', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends upwards and to the right.

M A Mallyon
Acting Chief Executive Officer