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To: DPIE W Regional Water Strategies Mailbox
Cc: office@pavey.minister.nsw.gov.au
Subject: SUBMISSION - Far North Coast Water Strategy

To Whom It May Concern,

Submission: Far North Coast Water Strategy

My name is [REDACTED]. My family and I live in Lennox Head, NSW. I am concerned about increased climate variability resulting from climate change, and increasing periods of drought and water scarcity.

It is pleasing to see the Far North Coast Regional Water Strategy seeking to address reliable water supply into the future. I am glad to see that the Strategy acknowledges the importance of protecting and enhancing natural systems, and improving the recognition of Aboriginal people's water rights. In the Strategy's "Long List of Options", I support the options of (10) Decentralised desalination, (11) Regional desalination, (16) Provide purified recycled wastewater for industry and rural users, (23) Improve stormwater management. I would also love to see the options that protect and improve the environment to be progressed, such as (24) Bringing back riverine and estuarine habitat and threatened species, (25) Fish-friendly water extraction, (26) Improve fish passage in the Far North Coast region, (27) Addressing cold water pollution, (29) Protecting ecosystems that depend on coastal groundwater resources (31) River Recovery Program for the Far North Coast.

However, I am strongly opposed to option (14) New Dunoon Dam on Rocky Creek. The Strategy must not rely on Rous Council's Future Water 2060 project, which hinges on the contentious Dunoon Dam. The Dunoon Dam should not be an option, for the following reasons:

The proposed Dunoon Dam will have significant negative impacts on threatened and endangered terrestrial ecology, including the Big Scrub Rainforest and its threatened species.

Koala corridors would be severed. Habitat fragmentation contributes to koala population decline, which is particularly under pressure due to the 2019 summer fires.

Construction of the dam will reduce platypus habitat downstream due to sediment load smothering.

The dam will result in extinction pressure on native fish, including the endangered Eastern Freshwater Cod's Rocky Creek habitat due to cold water pollution downstream.

The dam will destroy Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.

Rous County Council has not given enough attention to system-wide water efficiency measures.

I would like to share the great difficulty I have had in securing additional rainwater storage volume on our property. I am extremely disappointed with the costs and barriers still in place for harvesting roof water. Four years ago our family benefitted from the rainwater tank rebate from Rous County Council by installing a 10,000 litre tank (exempt development under NSW state legislation). This year we decided to add another 30,000 litre tank, which requires a complying development application to Ballina Shire Council under NSW state legislation. There is no rebate available, and it cost almost \$1,000 just for the application. Ballina Council took four months to approve it, despite it being a straightforward complying development, and adding onto an already established rainwater tank system. One of the assessing council officers believes that rainwater should not be used for drinking, and this is what held up the approval. It is my understanding Ballina Council, as a general rule, does not allow rainwater to be used for drinking water purposes where mains water supply is available.

Roof runoff can easily provide clean water if the rainwater tank system is correctly designed and maintained (ours has multiple filters and UV disinfection). The harvesting and use of rainwater reduces pressure on mains water supply, so that the water in existing centralised water storage facilities will last longer. I believe rainwater tanks are an important part of future water security. A more streamlined, affordable process for rainwater tank installation is needed.

Kind Regards,

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