

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Dunoon Dam submission

I am a 20 year resident of Lismore Council area and a co editor of one of our local newspapers and thus feel I am in touch with local community thinking on this matter.

I am writing to reject the Rous County Council proposal for the construction of a 50GL dam flooding 267 hectares of rainforest, eucalypt forest and farmland between The Channon and Dunoon.

Firstly, There is no social license for this project. There is widespread opposition among local residents. It would be very disappointing if Rous was to turn its back on community consultation making it a sham process.

Secondly local Aboriginal custodians are opposed to this. I have personally spoken with them. This has been an important area for them for millenia. Many burial sites are involved. Consultation with them is imperative and cannot be ignored.

The area is an important environmental habitat which should be protected given the catastrophic loss of both endangered native animals like the koala, platypus and plants that would result.

Subtropical rainforest would also be affected by the dam. The two types of rainforest in this area total 62 ha of Lowland Rainforest Endangered Ecological Community. These rainforests represent 6.6% of the remaining Big Scrub, which has been reduced by 99% since white settlement.

Two trees in particular stand out. They are the immense Water Gums (*Tristaniopsis laurina*) that have been discovered in The Channon Gorge, in an area that would be destroyed by the proposed Dunoon Dam.

Growing on the banks of Rocky Creek in regionally rare warm-temperate rainforest on sandstone, they measure up to 155 cm in diameter at breast height (dbh).

The largest Water Gums recorded by Alex Floyd, the renowned rainforest botanist, are 145cm in diameter at Dingo State Forest near Taree. One of the trees in The Channon Gorge has multiple trunks that have regrown after flood damage, and its dbh of the base measures 178cm.

Another rainforest species in the Gorge, Grey Myrtle (*Backhousia myrtifolia*) has been measured at 53cm dbh. The largest of this species previously recorded is 40cm dbh, according to Alex Floyd.

These trees obviously pre-date European settlement.

What monetary value should you put on the loss of Indigenous heritage sites, or irreplaceable rainforest, or the habitat of endangered species? There are many other options to a dam.

I urge you to adopt the many well-recognised methods for securing water for the region without constructing a large, financially risky and highly destructive dam.

In an authoritative new report called *All Options On The Table*, the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) warns that dams are "often high-risk investments as they are reliant on rainfall and less resilient to climate change than other options".

The WSAA concludes that the best strategy is "a diverse portfolio of water supply sources" rather than one large, rain-dependent source. In other words, use multiple supply sources, and ensure that some of them are not rain-dependent.

The *All options* report examined 330 water projects around Australia and found that commonly overlooked supply sources include "purified recycled water for drinking, stormwater harvesting and water sharing (particularly rural and urban trade)". The report provides an estimated cost per kilolitre for each of the options it examined.

So a dam would be poor protection against drought – and it is also one of the most expensive options.

Please do not turn your back on the views of the local community. The loss of Indigenous heritage sites, irreplaceable rainforest, and endangered species would be too much to bear.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]