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submission re Dunoon Dam proposal

To Whom it May Concern

I am opposed to the damming of this magnificent area with its magical gorge and lush rainforest.

International studies have shown that forests are the best form of reservoir and secure water supply. Not just any forests... old forests. As forests age they store water in the soil and gradually release it into the streams, particularly in dry times.

The forests of Whian Whian were specifically protected in order to provide increased flow over decades to the Rous Water system. Provided they are protected and treated as the valuable asset they are they will maximise the volume of water in the catchment. Of course logging in other parts of the catchment means that the full benefits of mature forest over an even more extensive area are forfeited.

There is no doubt NSW needs better catchment management, but successive governments have failed to ensure this. Total Catchment Management committees were disbanded as was the Healthy Rivers Commission. The Water Sharing plans developed almost 20 years ago have been largely ignored.

What has happened is that there has been major theft and rorting of water entitlements across NSW, facilitated in particular by the National Party parliamentarians with responsibility for the portfolio. ICAC has exposed this, but there seems to be no accountability for abuse of process or taxpayer dollars anymore.

While new dams might be the latest catchcry of those who want more logging and mining and irrigation, it will not solve the environmental crisis we are facing. What the planet needs is water saving measures, water efficiency, more trees for shade and habitat etc, repair of riparian areas. Horticulture and agriculture should be planned rather than allowed access to the water of the commons with little oversight.

The indigenous people of this land had plentiful clean water, alive with yabbies, mussels, fish and water birds. Those times could come again when we learn to respect that the earth is our mother, she will provide for us if she can... as long as we don't carve her to bits!

More dams will be massive destruction for more white elephants. Unlike forests it won't bring the rain.

Yours for the earth

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