

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Submission re NSW Border Rivers Draft Strategy

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the Draft Strategy. Although there is much that could be said regarding both the deficits and strengths of the draft strategy, I will confine my comments to my key points below.

1. The main objective of the Border Rivers Regional Water Strategy should be to use available water in a sustainable manner.
2. Although the NSW Government is saying that the Climate Change predictions for the Border Rivers region are a worst-case scenario, those predictions are more likely to be what the region will really experience. They indicate rainfall runoff in the region could reduce by up to 40%, winter and spring rainfall will decrease, and autumn and summer rainfall will increase, while evaporation, average temperatures and the number of hot days will increase. Managing water demand must be the main objective of the Border Rivers Regional Water Strategy.
3. The Draft Strategy identifies that river health is under threat but does not provide a description of the current condition of all water sources.
4. The Draft Strategy recognises that the sustainable diversion limits in the Border Rivers have not been met. Available water in the Border Rivers Region is still over-allocated and cannot stretch to existing commitments, let alone any projected growth in demand.
5. I strongly object to the Mole River Dam being presented as a government commitment rather than an option. This has caused a bias in the Draft Strategy. Public funding could be better invested in options that reduce the demand for water and increase the environmental health of rivers. The Mole River Dam will damage one of the high conservation value aquatic ecosystems in the Border Rivers. Threatened and vulnerable flora and fauna have been identified within both the proposed dam catchment and inundation area during recent environmental surveys. The proposed dam would capture natural flows that provide connectivity to wetlands and to the Barwon-Darling. I note on page 9 of the Draft Strategy "Councils in the region have requested that the dam is used to provide greater water security for towns and help support the development of the horticulture industry in the region." However, there is nothing in the publicly available documents concerning the proposed dam that suggests that there is any intention to use the dam to supplement town water supplies. Council support, particularly that of Tenterfield Shire Council, for the

proposed dam may well be less favourable if it were made clear that it will not fulfill their expectations. Overall, there should be much more effective involvement of the whole community in water planning processes.

6. I strongly support options 42-51 that improve Aboriginal capacity, engagement and employment in water management, and that recognise the significance of cultural knowledge and improve cultural outcomes, including recognition of cultural knowledge, water rights and interests, securing flows for cultural sites, and an Aboriginal River Ranger program.

I am happy for my submission to be posted with person details removed.

Your sincerely,

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Mole River 2372