

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: [REDACTED]  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: "Come to the Heart... of Ecological Destruction" Please do not Support the Rous Dam

I feel a little like the Lorax here.

"I speak for the trees!"

But I do, and I must, because once again for some mind-boggling reason the leaders of the area that I grew up in are trying to tear up our precious natural environment. For profit. Or maybe... Just because they want to.

It doesn't look good. In fact, it actually looks really, really bad.

The ABC just released an article that shows koala populations are down 71% in the Northern Rivers. I guess that'll happen when your whole state is on fire for half the year, eh! And so naturally, the Rous council would like to plop and monstrosity of a worksite down into one of the most ecologically diverse gorges in the area for 10 (at the minimum) years to construct a monument to water inefficiency.

And there just so happens to be a thriving population of koala's in that gorge. Along with Indigenous heritage sites, and old dip sites which stored chemicals in the ground (that you can technically process out of the water - but why risk it?)

The current science points to a future for my generation that is quite unlike anything we've ever seen. Blistering fires, scorching summers, and winters drier than you could imagine. I can see the greenery that lit my childhood memories alight with wonder slowly shriveling and dying right before me. Yes, we will need water. But I doubt in 50 years time, slightly ahead of the 30 estimates of efficiency of this mega-dam, we will get enough rain to collect the runoff water needed to even fill the thing.

And I hope I'm wrong, believe me, but we can't afford to do things based on hope.

Here is what I know:

1. The full facts have not been explored surrounding this dam. Professor Stuart White has created a very enlightening document into how a Water Efficiency System could meet our needs, at practically no extra cost to the councils in the area (when compared to the mammoth money pit of the dam). The water is already there, leaching out of loose pipes and leaky faucets, going right down the drain.

I believe that a Water Efficiency option should be fully investigated before we can make a complete, educated, no-regrets decision about building a destructive colossal dam right in my own family's backyard. Quite literally. This dam will be [REDACTED] as the crow flies from my multi-generational family home in the Channon. How's that for never getting a good night's sleep again?

2. I know the people in my area. I know the passion for which they believe in our land, our rights as citizens to have our say, and in their

resistance to trying to 'bigify' the Northern rivers. Everything that is special about our wonderful pocket of the world comes from it being just that - a pocket.

I know that this dam presents opportunities for massive economic growth. And I spit on that. With venom. I spent the better part of this year trapped in lockdown in Melbourne. Do you know what I thought of to keep myself together? The gorge.

I spent my childhood walking that gorge with my father. He would tell me stories about how when he was a boy he'd come to the Gorge to pretend he was Steve Irwin. He'd pack sandwiches, a few bottles of water, and fall asleep under the open sky listening to the liar birds whip the sun goodbye.

When I think of that land being flooded, I am underwater. I drown if it drowns.

So yes, I'm a little like the Lorax. I speak for the trees that sheltered me as I grew. I speak for my community, I speak for the child in me and the man I became inside that little strip of nature. And I speak to say that this dam is on the wrong side of history.

The Rous Council have omitted community protest about this dam to you in their reports. A recent survey found that 91% of over 1200 submissions about the dam were against it, which is the vast majority of the engaged community. How is it right to allow construction of this wasteful and destructive facility when the people simply do not want it.

I don't believe Rous is concerned for the community. I don't believe they are concerned about long term water security. I believe there are ulterior motives for building this dam, and my community is prepared to fight it. We urge you not to force us to do so. Please, do not adopt the Rous plan for Dunoon Dam.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]