

SUBMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE WATER STRATEGY NORTHERN REGION

I would like to make it clear at the outset ,that I, and many others in the Upper Goulburn Catchment, feel that our right to have a fair and just hearing through our submissions on the vital water issues of the Sugarloaf Pipeline and the Sustainable Water Strategy have been severely compromised, due to the extremely short time frame allowed and the fact that both are due at the same time.

The behaviour and haste of the State Government, associated departments and water authorities is inexcusable , in that they are jeopardising our futures, by not allowing adequate time for people to study and analyse a 1,000 page plus report and a 130 page discussion paper . This is our lives ,businesses, communities and future growth at stake. One seriously wonders how genuine the Government is at wanting input from submissions! Or is this really , as we all know, just a matter of going through the motions, so the boxes can be ticked!!

Consequently this submission will be very short

The major problem with expanding the Water Grid (P.86) , is that the Upper Goulburn Catchment , including Eildon Weir and the Goulburn River is being viewed as the major Donor Basin, and is expected to provide water for an ever increasing area of Victoria. Current expectations are for it to supply Bendigo, Ballarat (38GL),with potential take-offs to Castlemaine and Daylesford, Broadford (0.5GL), Bridgewater/Inglewood(to be supplied from Bendigo, therefore, I assume also from the Goulburn), AND OF COURSE MELBOURNE AND GEELONG (75-100GL). On top of this, it is of course the supply basin for a huge irrigation area .

In view of the fact, that the Upper Goulburn Catchment has become increasingly dry in the last 10 years ,and in worst case scenario for climate change, inflows may reduce by 55%, where does our security of supply come from?

The Government's Our Water, Our Future policy states this water plan will secure Victoria's water supplies, but all I can foresee, is our catchment providing greater amounts of urban water.

Sleeper Licences: Should remain in the stream/river as environmental flow. Water Authorities should purchase these licences for a set period of time-5-10 years at market value. This must be a voluntary agreement with the owner and not a forced sale. And under no circumstances should it be sold into another system.

I see no reason why individuals should be asked to donate water to the environment, when government and water authorities are selling it as a highly marketable commodity.

Mrs Jan Beer
Plug The Pipe Yea Group

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