OUT21/18167

Department of Planning, Industry and Environment

Warragamba Dam Assessment Team

[nick.hearfield@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nick.hearfield@dpie.nsw.gov.au)

cc. WarragambaDam.EIS@dpie.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Hearfield,

**Raising of Warragamba Dam EIS**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the above EIS as per your request of 16th November 2021. The NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) Agriculture is committed to the protection and growth of agricultural industries, and the land and resources upon which these industries depend. Due to our interest we have considered the proposal and its potential impact on agricultural land.

NSW DPI understands that the development proposal is to raise the wall of Warragamba dam (the Project) with the aim of reducing the extent of flooding in the Hawkesbury Nepean Valley presently experienced. In particular, it is understood that the Project will delay the peak flood event, keep evacuation routes open and reduce the flood height. It is also understood that there will be impacts from the construction phase at the dam wall as well as both upstream and downstream of the dam. NSW DPI has reviewed the EIS, prepared by SMEC Pty Ltd, September 2021 and provides the following comments.

The reduction in the height and extent of flood events on rural zoned land within the catchment will have a positive benefit for the agricultural community. In particular, it will reduce the risk of loss/ damage to livestock, crops, agricultural businesses, fencing, rural infrastructure and rural housing. The greater predictability in rising flood waters will also provide additional time for farmers to move stock and equipment in flood prone areas and prepare their properties and livestock for flood events, which would further reduce flood-related economic losses.

It is noted that there will be negative impacts from the Project including elevated sediment deposition during flooding and the inundation of low-lying areas for more prolonged periods during flood events that could potentially impact some agricultural businesses. The economic loss from prolonged inundation is rated in the EIS as high compared to the rating of extreme for the risk associated with flood events with the current wall height of the project. Consequently, there is greater benefit to be gained for agricultural businesses from a reduced level and extent of flooding than from minor impacts associated with the extended retention of floodwaters. The deposition of sediment during flood mitigation is also low risk and discharges appear to be short lived and cover a limited spatial extent.

Other minor impacts are associated with the quality of the water during the construction phase from the concrete batching plant, materials storage and vegetation clearing (22ha) at the dam site may impact stock and domestic water supply as well as irrigation for agriculture. The management measures in the EIS to avoid, minimise or manage potential risks to be included in an Erosion and Sedimentation plan is fully supported.

In summary, DPI Agriculture supports the Project.

Should you require clarification on any of the information contained in this response, please contact Wendy Goodburn, Agricultural Land Use Planning Officer, on 0402 069 605 or by email at [landuse.ag@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:landuse.ag@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

Yours sincerely

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**Tamara Prentice**

**Manager, Agricultural Land Use Planning**