

Jill Williams



6 October 2012

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Ref No: 10_0235

Ms Belinda Scott
Department of Planning & Infrastructure
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001



Dear Ms Scott

LETTER OF OBJECTION - Macquarie River to Orange pipeline project

The proposal plans to pump from a small waterhole in the upper Macquarie River. The final site has not yet been determined. This reach of the river provides good condition habitat for a number of threatened fish species and other water dependent species such as platypus.

This section of the Macquarie River just upstream of Burrendong Dam is very environmentally sensitive and deserves high levels of protection because the deep waterholes from Cockatoo Hole upstream to Dixons Long Point are the last remnant waterholes before the backwaters of Burrendong Dam 13kms downstream.

Native fish populations are abundant and diverse and the section is known as an important native fish breeding nursery site for the upper Macquarie River system. This section of river is home to large numbers of Murray Cod (Vulnerable species), Trout Cod (Endangered species), River Blackfish (Endangered population), Eel-tailed Catfish (Endangered population), Silver Perch (Vulnerable) and is a site for re-introduction of Macquarie Perch (Endangered). Golden Perch are also common in this section of River. The proposal to extract water at low to very low flows will disrupt fish migrations for breeding and feeding purposes.

The upper Macquarie River is one of three areas left in Australia where Trout Cod populations are surviving and is a significant site for the success of the national Trout Cod recovery plan. **Most importantly this stretch of the Upper Macquarie River is a Trout Cod recovery area with the year 2011 being the third of a five-year program to stock these waterholes under the National Endangered Trout Cod Recovery Plan and the NSW Trout Cod Recovery Plan. Orange City Council fail to acknowledge the Trout Cod Recovery Plan in the Environment Assessment.**

The Federal Dept of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities has declared the proposal to construct this 36 km pipeline to be a controlled action under section 75 of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 as it is likely to have a significant impact on listed threatened species and communities including the Trout Cod.

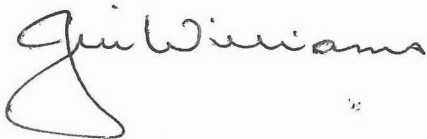
I can't see how the NSW Department of Planning has released the Environmental Assessment for public comment when the Federal Government Controlled Actions requirements (December 2011) specifically state that the precise location for any works must be identified.

Orange City Council has yet to confirm the pipeline route and is investigating other options with respect to the off-take. Refer OCC letter dated 8.8.2012 D12/18101. The off-take outlined in the Environmental Assessment is the Boshes Creek/Gardiners Hole confluence. Four other off-take options that Orange City Council is now considering are (1) Dixons Long Point, (2) Switchback route (3) Fishing Hut route, (4) Cobbs Hut Hole.

I would consider this invalidates a significant part of the Environmental Assessment and most importantly is contrary to the Controlled Actions requirements Section 75 of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.

Please do not approve this pipeline. The Macquarie River and its aquatic life cannot sustain this amount of water being removed. To do so would be environmental vandalism and the Macquarie River and the fish would never recover.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Jill Williams'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

JILL WILLIAMS