



PCU038878

Department of Planning  
Received

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Scanning Room

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15/10/2012

Re: Macquarie River Pipeline - opposing

I hereby voice my opposition to the construction of the Macquarie River Pipeline to secure Orange's water security for various reasons:

By supplementing Suma Park Dam's storage levels from the river, keeping the dam near to full, much of the dam's free natural catchment runoff will spill over Suma Park Dam's spillway and down to the river. What saving is there made? The cost of buying water by pumping it from the river, maintaining the pumps and pipe line will be borne by the Orange ratepayers no doubt.

Due to recent water management and infrastructure changes already implemented by Council its supply levels have improved (referring to Spring Creek Reservoir, drop in consumption, leaking infrastructure, stormwater harvesting).

The pipeline is not justified being designed to supply an artificially high water demand and being based on unrestricted average daily water use of 404 litres/person/day being much higher than recent years usage in Orange (225 l/p/day) and in comparison to other towns/cities: Goulburn (337 l/p/day - Canberra (302 l/p/day) having 30% less rainfall than Orange.

The environmental assessment for the project establishes that the river water is of lower quality than that in Suma Park Dam. [source: Cardno (NSW/ACT) Pty Ltd.] Adding potential deterioration by the pipe if pumping should cease for some time. Pumping untreated water from the river into the dam certainly decreases the quality of Orange's water supply for drinking and hygiene. Council's stormwater harvesting scheme has a rigorous treatment process for high health quality standards. The discharge point for the pipeline will be located near the NW corner of the dam close to the dam wall and off-take point of Orange's drinking water treatment plant. There is a chance of algal blooms.

In addition Bathurst discharges all their treated sewerage effluent into the river, including untreated urban stormwater run off discharges.

Very limited river quality sampling has been done. Concern has been raised about Bromide - Bromate - Carcinogen.

Orange Council has yet to confirm the pipeline route with 4 different locations still being considered, each with a different impact on the environment and cost of dollars.

The pipeline will destroy good condition roadside vegetation, providing wildlife corridor and habitat.

It will cause disturbance to highly unstable soil structures in a very steep terrain, threatening landslides into the river.

The proposed extraction from the upper river at low flows will disrupt fish passage and degrade important habitat values. Trout Cod, Murray Cod, Silver Perch, Catfish could be badly affected as the aquatic ecology assessment only visually examined 500m of one waterhole. The study states 'The survey undertaken was not intended to serve as a baseline for impact (studies) assessment.'

The proposed pipeline route is through the highly cleared Central Tablelands where all remnant vegetation is significant, particularly for declining woodland bird and mammal species.

The final route will have to ascend very steep unstable terrain directly above the river. The threat of landslides and increased sedimentation in the river has not been adequately assessed. Orange Council has ignored the priority site advice of its Geo-technical consultant.

There are major cost implications with its location as it involves electricity supply costs, maintenance road construction and costs, size of pump and pipeline.

Orange Council has used out-of-date advice on protecting unregulated river environments from the NSW Office of Water to justify the project. It has not met the National Urban Water Management Principles adopted in 2008, particularly prin 3.

There are viable alternative water sources which can better provide for Orange's water security at a lower cost; far less environmentally damaging, eg high quality groundwater source just N/S of Orange, re-use of waste water for non-potable purposes for the next 50 years, innovative storm water usage and  
ENLARGING SUMA PARK DAM