

A Submission to the Merimbula STP upgrade and Ocean Outfall Environmental Impact Study

From:

Brian, Caroline and Josh Cochrane

201 South Wolumla Road

Wolumla 2550 NSW

0428 949 243 and brianjcochrane@bigpond.com.au

As Wolumla dairy farmers and rate payers are disappointed that the ocean outfall portion of this project appears to be going ahead. We are equally disappointed that the councils review has not seriously assessed the proposal that we put forward to construct a dam on our property to utilise the water. This flies in the face of modern business thinking on how to manage effluent as a resource rather than a liability. The dairy sector, of which our farm is a part, has been working in this space for some time not only with on farm effluent, but waste water from domestic and manufacturing origins. Our industry has the skills to manage and use this resource.

In the time since the initial report was done, power generation and carbon costs associated with Scheme 3B have seen dramatic reductions. This alone warrants a more timely review. In addition, in that report, 3rd party end users (farmers like us), were seen as a risk. I recognised the long term value of that resource and would be pleased make significant investments and contract agreements to ensure those concerns over 3rd party end users were addressed.

While the objectives of the proposed project are valid, with regard water treatment, we cannot continue to discharge wastewater from the beach outfall. The outfall model removes a valuable resource from the local farming sector which we know will be subject to more environmental challenges from droughts in the medium term.

It is clear that a better way to address the problem of increased waste water generation in the region is to reuse and recycle with systems similar to Scheme 3B in place in a number of regional centres. Please take the time to review and revise Scheme 3B from the original report and develop a plan that does not rely on ocean out fall. This will benefit the local farmers, the broader community and the environment.

Our contact details are as above. We are only too happy to discuss the possible options further.