

Submission – Warragamba Dam Raising Project – SSI-8441

I do not support this proposal, for the following reasons:

- This proposal is an attack on the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area listed by UNESCO in recognition of its Outstanding Universal Value for the whole of mankind. Periodic flooding of this area will damage the natural and cultural values of the area breaching Australia's obligations under the World Heritage Convention.
- The impacted area will adversely affect these matters of National Environmental Significance:
 - 1 World Heritage property
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 - 12 threatened ecological communities
 - 78 threatened species of flora and fauna
 - 16 species of migratory fauna
- This would include an estimated 65 kilometres of wilderness rivers, and 5,700 hectares of National Parks, 1,300 hectares of which is within the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area, all of which would be inundated by the Dam project.
- Experts were not engaged to undertake studies of the impact of raising the dam on the Outstanding Universal Values for which the Blue Mountains national parks were originally placed on the World Heritage list.
- Of particular concern are some of the most intact Grassy Box Woodlands, surviving in all south-eastern Australia. These areas will be lost if the dam is raised, due to periodic flooding. These include some of the best examples of original grasslands at "Joorilands". Many species could be lost if this area is flooded, including threatened species such as the Regent Honeyeater.
- Unique eucalyptus species diversity recognised as having Outstanding Universal Value under the area's World Heritage listing will also be threatened if flooding occurs after the dam is raised. This includes the Camden White Gum, found in the Burragorang River Flat Forests of the Kedumba, Nattai and Little Rivers.
- The threat to threatened species have only been considered for approximately a quarter of the area which will be inundated (~1,400 Ha of the total area of ~6,000 Ha). Species affected would include Booroolong Frog and Stuttering Frog, critically endangered Regent Honeyeater, threatened Brush-tailed Rock Wallaby, Koala, Squirrel Glider, Yellow-bellied Glider, Greater Glider, Eastern Pygmy Possum and Brush-tailed Phascogale and microbats. Sydney's last Emu population would also be affected.
- For example just three hours was spent surveying for koalas and one day spent surveying for platypus across 65 kilometres of watercourse which will be intermittently inundated by the raised dam wall.
- The extent of the inundation that will occur in the pristine Kowmung and Kedumba Rivers is seriously understated in the EIS. This means that the certain environmental and cultural damage that would be done in their catchments is not admitted. Many areas were not surveyed at all. The Kowmung is a declared Wild River and one of NSW's most pristine rivers.
- There were no post fire assessments undertaken following the disastrous 2019/20 fires which burnt 80% of the Blue Mountains World Heritage area. Therefore there is no knowledge of the present condition of threatened species.
- The NSW Government has refused to obtain the Free, Prior and Informed Consent of the Traditional Owners, the Gundungurra People, to the dam project, as required and provided in

advice from the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Commonwealth Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment.

- Just one quarter of the impact area has been surveyed for its Aboriginal cultural significance – and this alone found over 300 significant cultural sites. There are potentially thousands of important Aboriginal sites not assessed as well as the landscape as a whole, which is of great significance to Aboriginal people. These assessments have serious failings identified by the Commonwealth Department of Environment and the International Council on Monuments and Sites, concerning the impact on the cultural heritage of the Gundungurra traditional owners.
- In addition there is no modelling of the stated flood and economic benefits of the dam wall raising outlined in the EIS.

The areas contained in the Warragamba catchment area and the Blue Mountains World Heritage National Parks are precious and are comparable to many other landscapes in Australia and deserve to be fully protected as their current status demands. Would you similarly vandalise other World Heritage sites such as Kakadu NP or the Sydney Opera House?

I urge the Government not to proceed with this destructive project. Find other means to address flooding issues in the flood plains below the Warragamba Dam, much of which does not come from over-topping of Warragamba Dam.

Graham Lalchere
Oatley

I accept the Department's submissions disclaimer and declaration.
I have not made a reportable political donation in the past two years.