



From: regionalwater.strategies@dpi.nsw.gov.au
Sent: [Redacted]
To: DPIE W Regional Water Strategies Mailbox
Subject: Your submission for Gwydir Regional Water Strategy

1. Information on confidentiality and privacy

I give my permission for my submission to be publicly available on the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment website.: Yes

I would like my personal details to be kept confidential.: Yes

2. Your details

Email address: [Redacted]

Name: [Redacted]

Address: [Redacted]

Contact phone number: [Redacted]

Do you identify as an Aboriginal person?: No

Are you an individual or representing an organisation?: Individual

3. Organisation or business details

Who do you represent?: Other

If you selected Government, please clarify.:

4. Draft Regional Water Strategy objectives and vision

Do you support this vision for the Gwydir Regional Water Strategy? : Yes

If no, please outline your vision for the long term management of water resources in this region?:

5. Information and modelling used to develop the Gwydir Regional Water Strategy

In regard to the Gwydir Regional Water Strategy, I feel there was a deliberate intent to bring it to fruition by stealth as it was worded in newspaper advertisement to make it appear only relevant to irrigators and other license holders, at a time when harvest and livestock activities were at peak times. There has been a significant lack of consultation with the local community and key stakeholders who are part of the farming community. There has been an alarming deficiency of consultation with local government. Too much emphasis has been placed on drier climate outlooks, the cycles of wet and dry since we personally have owned family property since 1878 have been ignored at peril. The highly above average wet cycles and massive floods must be incorporated into future planning. Families that have held family properties for extensive periods of time need to be contacted for their extensive knowledge. The submission time allowed was not well advertised and far too short.

Do you have any comments about the information used to develop this strategy?:

Please provide details if there is additional information you think we should consider?:

There needs to be consideration to new and improved farming practices and the changes that have occurred in farming practices over the centuries. Ground cover management and enforced regulations on riparian zones must be considered. Erosion control measures by ground cover management has reduced run off to Gwydir River system. Consideration must also be given to increased water use efficiency by irrigators in the Gwydir Valley. Automatic river gauges already in use (ie RIDER) and other gauges must allow readings of river flows to be obtained immediately (particularly to landholders along rivers), not at least three hours behind as in present case. In flood times this is crucial and particularly to give Moree time to take necessary actions. The Horton River is the fastest flowing river in NSW in flood.

6. Stochastic modelling method

Do you have any comments about the modelling method used to develop this strategy?:

Because of the inherent randomness of Stochastic modelling it would not be suitable to use when planning water infrastructure which should be based on an empirical fact based model. Any given scenario projected by the Stochastic model may not necessarily eventuate.

Is there any additional information that you believe could help us assess the benefits and disadvantages of draft options?:

Option 2 will only deliver minimal (if any) benefit to the system, as it is not feasible in terms of stakeholder acceptance, implementation time and cost-efficiency. It takes out valuable agricultural land (already in short supply). Evaporation would nullify any gain and it would only be a silty shallow mess. Not to mention it would disrupt any economic, social ties with a large area of the region as the Elcombe -Gravesend will cease to exist, not to mention disruptions to telecommunications and electricity infrastructure. It is a non-viable option.

7. Opportunities and challenges for water management in the Gwydir region

Do you have any comments on the opportunities, risks and challenges identified?:

The construction of a new dam will not necessarily mean more water and increased water security, especially with the increased frequency and length of droughts combined with the projected increase of Moree's population over the next 20 years.

Are there any additional opportunities, risks and challenges that we should consider and what options could address these?:

There is a risk that Option 2 (being the construction of a new dam) will be neither cost-effective or feasible over the next 20 years as per page 84 of the draft. The risk flows from a lack of stakeholder acceptance (and engagement), time to implement the option and low likelihood of a cost-effective outcome.

8. Draft Gwydir Regional Water Strategy options

Which five (5) options do you think are most important?:

1. Option No 9- removal of system constraints in Gwydir catchment to improve flows reaching the Gwydir Wetlands 2. Option No 3- reuse , recycling and stormwater projects 3. Option No 25 -review urban water restriction policy 4. Option No 5 - reliable access to groundwater by towns 5. Option No 15 - sustainable access to groundwater by all users

Please comment on why you think these options are most important?:

Copeton Dam is already over allocated. Run off into the catchment area will be less in a drier climate and better farming practices will reduce erosion. Options to reduce and recycle what we have must be considered if the climate is to get hotter, evaporation will also rise putting another stress on the Copeton Dam. There is an urgent need to remember rivers and groundwater run off and underground water are irretrievably linked and must be fully understood how they all interact with each other for the benefit of all stakeholders. It is well known fact that the Horton River goes underground in severe drought times and water can also be obtained if bed of river is dug into.

Which five (5) options do you think are least important? (If any):

1. Option 2 - new lower Gravesend on the Gwydir River downstream of Warialda Creek 2. Option 1 - enlargement of Tareelaro Weir

Please comment on why you think these options are least important?:

Option 2 will be at great expense and only have shallow water storage resulting in greater evaporation. It will destroy valuable farming land lost forever for no gain. It will also impede the flow of the Horton River which is needed for

environmental and everyday flows that enhance river health in all its forms. The Horton River needs to remain unregulated for the good of itself and the Gwydir river. The Gwydir River needs to continue to flow. We already have a very large dam in Copeton Dam. If we add or increase constraints within the system it will be detrimental to the cultural necessities of Aboriginal communities and also threaten the existence of our precious native environment.

Do you have any comments on the draft options?: One very obvious draft option has not be considered ie. the raising of the wall of Copeton Dam to increase storage or the enlargement of Copeton Dam. If this was to be managed and implemented correctly there would be no shortage of water for all stakeholders rural and urban.

9. Option combinations

Do you have any thoughts on how the options could be combined with other options?: Option 9 removal of system constraints in the Gwydir catchment to improve flows reaching the Gwydir Wetlands could be combined with Option 21 secure flows for water dependent cultural sites. Also Option3 , reuse, recycling and stormwater projects could be combined with Option 25 review urban water restriction policy. Options 25, Option 5, Option 15, Option14 could all be combined.

Are there additional options that we should consider?: Raising the height of Copeton Dam wall and enlarging of Copeton Dam.

10. Other comments

Do you have any other comments about the Gwydir Regional Water Strategy?: There needs to be maps , DP numbers and Lot Numbers put on public display, put online, and physically sent either by email, letter to all landholders affected by any new dam proposals Australia wide. Needs to be better consultation with agricultural stakeholders, communities , local government. Needs to be better assessment on feasibility and cost efficiency. Needs to be better advertised, for longer periods and have longer time for submissions.

11. Referral

How did you hear about the public exhibition of this strategy?: Newspaper, Other