

From: [REDACTED]
To: [DPIE W Regional Water Strategies Mailbox](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd[3]: Submission in relation to Namoi regional water strategy "NRWS"
Date: [REDACTED]

Dear readers of this submission,

It is dispiriting, at best, to need to write comments about such a document as above which is so at odds with the principles of the Water Management Act, 2000, as amended, of the New South Wales Parliament.

What do I mean?

A fair reading of section 3 makes it clear that there is a primacy to be placed on the health of river systems, including flows and quality of water, or to use other terminology used in the section, the sustainable use of water resources, and their equitable distribution.

The NRWS does not reflect this.

For example, It does not recognise that the Namoi tributary is already hopelessly over allocated in terms of water extraction.

It does not pay enough regard to connectivity with the greater Darling/Barka Murray system.

It does not sufficiently address the legitimate water needs of First Nations people.

It does not sufficiently address end of flow targets, first flush rules, or what is euphemistically called "flood plain harvesting", which is really just the theft of a public resource for private purposes.

It does not mention the 9-10 or so megalitres which need to be clawed back from Namoi extractions to the river under the MDWA rules.

Likewise profligate groundwater extraction is not adequately addressed.

Climate change will make these issues even more poignant.

Certainly, some options cited are more river-system friendly than others, and the former, of course, should be adopted.

Those options which treat the Namoi as an end in itself, or a mere irrigation channel, should be forcefully rejected.

My outlook on the Darling/Barka is shaped by my family's history on its banks from 1861 at Wentworth, through to Wilcannia and Tankarooka later that decade, Weelong on the 1870s, Louth in the 1880s, 1890s, and 1900s, North Bourke and Bourke in the 1910s and 1920s, and between Louth and Tilpa from 1923 to the present, with the exception of only 7 years.

This history is, of course miniscule, when compared to the occupation of the river by indigenous people. I cannot speak for them, but I can only imagine what they must think about the palpable and gross mal-administration of the Darling/Barka Murray river system since the late 1960s at least.

The river belongs to all of us - not least the wildlife, trees and fish which depend on healthy rivers and flood plains.

The river system's wholesale appropriation by particular private interests is an egregious offence to human society as well as to the river system, and its fauna and flora.

Regional water strategies for the tributaries and the main channels, including the flood plains, should clearly and forcefully reflect the primacy of the interests of the river system itself.

The language of the draft NRWS is wooly at best. Everyone can find something in it which suits them, but there is no consistent overarching framework which puts the river first.

At best, it needs substantial redrafting. At worst, abandonment and starting from scratch.

Yours Sincerely,

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Sent from App for Gmail