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Submission to Water & Industry

Draft Macquarie-Castlereagh Regional Water Strategy

New Drought Operational Rules (Macquarie River) The lower regulated Macquarie River/Buckiinguy Marshes / Southern Macquarie Marshes Nature Reserve would have once been (pre dam/diversions) the most reliable water sources for wildlife during droughts. In the last drought It appears as though this area beyond Oxley Gauge 421022 was given very low priority and water was only made available to Oxley Fish Pond at State 3 Water restrictions.

I propose that intermittent flows/pulses during the droughts be provided beyond Oxley Gauge (even monthly) in the Macquarie River to replenish water holes in the Buckiinguy Marshes and Southern Marsh Nature Reserve. This is the most efficient wetland area to get water to and this will then give wetland depend species such as fish, mussels and turtles an increased chance and it will only take a small additional water as Oxley Fish Pond in already identified as a stage 3 target. There is a abundance of turtles and swamp mussels plus other wildlife in the Buckiinguy Marshes it for a little extra water it didn't make sense that 1000s of turtles and river/swamp mussels were left to perish for what could be described as an unnaturally dry period caused by what human intervention.

New Mid System Re-Regulation Weir. It is concerning that the main reason for this weir appears to be to reduce transmission losses. As the main irrigation season is during the summer months, gauges at Carinda already indicate that there is not a surplus of water running through the system during the summer. Isn't it then a reasonable statement to say that that the Gin Gin weir will decrease water reliability and security during the hot summer months in the Lower Macquarie when the environment is most dependent on water! The weir does not make any sense and is in conflict with other options in the Water Strategy Plan plus it is in conflict with the Water Act.

In summary, the priority of the Water Strategy Plan seems to be to support the irrigation industry. At what point will it be considered that the system is over allocated? Isn't it now obvious that already too much water is getting taken out and not enough left in the system. Why can't the dam be managed better rather than putting ridicules expensive pipelines all over the place. Very disappointing.

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Grazier, ██████████

