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Subject: SUBMISSION - FNC Water Strategy

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Hello Far North Coast Water Strategy panel,

I have in the past, lived in the area of The Channon for seven years and have knowledge of how rare, beautiful and important this area is.

I am **strongly opposed to The Dunoon Dam proposal** for the following reasons.

1. We must be much smarter and diverse in managing our survival, instead of forging ahead with the flawed old world order of marching over our planet's evolved lifeforms, upon which we need and should and could be a part of.

2. There are known and utilised alternatives to another dam site which include..

a). Purified recycled water systems.

b). Rainwater tanks

3. Offering incentives to minimise water use, instead of what has recently been applied to my water billing system in Byron Shire, which now offers incentive to WASTE water, by removing completely, the sewerage water use cost per kilolitre, and billing a flat annual rate of \$400 regardless of any water use at all. This is utter craziness, as now water use is so much cheaper, in fact I now would need to use an extra 260 litres per day on average, just to "get my money's worth". Water wasters are rewarded. Water misers are penalised.

4. Flooding that beautiful section of Rocky Creek valley would be a highly regrettable error in management.

5. Water Services Association of Australia describes new dams as high-risk investments because they depend on rain.

6. New housing developments can build in innovative water systems from the ground up, the cost of which can be borne by developers.

7. In 2013 a Technical Report noted that the dam was constrained by significant environmental and social impacts, high capital cost.

8. An Integrated Water Planning report in 2014 noted that although the dam was 'technically viable', it had 'significant environmental and social constraints associated with threatened and endangered terrestrial ecology and culturally significant Aboriginal heritage'.

9. The destruction of Aboriginal Heritage by Dunoon Dam is unacceptable.

The 2011 Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment states "Aboriginal stakeholders are of the opinion that the sites should remain undisturbed and that no level of disturbance is considered acceptable to them". This heritage would be destroyed by any dam.

10. Destruction of Big Scrub Rainforest and its threatened species.

There are 62 ha of Lowland Rainforest Endangered Ecological Community (EEC) on the site. Only 1% of the Big Scrub Rainforest remains. This rainforest is of global significance.

11. The Channon Gorge contains warm-temperate rainforest on sandstone, a rare occurrence. The dam wall construction would destroy 92% of it.

12. Nine threatened flora species would be severely impacted by Dunoon Dam. (2013 Terrestrial Ecology Impact Assessment Report). The destruction of these plants and an increase in the threats against them is a very serious matter with international scientific consequences.

13. 17 fauna species have been identified that are listed as threatened under the TSC Act NSW (the koala, one fruit bat, six microbats and eight birds and one frog).

14. Extinction pressure on koalas.

North Coast koalas were under extinction pressure even before 70% of our regional koala population was killed in the 2019 summer fires.

The 2011 Terrestrial Ecology Impact Assessment (TEIA), identified 72 ha of Tallowood and Flooded Gum koala habitat.

Koala corridors would be severed by the Dunoon Dam (TEIA 2011). Habitat fragmentation contributes to the decline in koala populations, will worsen the stress-disease problem and lead to more deaths.

Koalas are commonly seen and heard in the area of the proposed dam wall and The Channon.

Whian Whian Landcare has planted almost 3000 koala food trees to rebuild corridors in the proposed dam area - linking to tracts of forest to the north. This southern corridor would be destroyed.

15. Extinction pressure on platypus

a.) Platypus is facing extinction because of habitat destruction, dams and weirs (Bino et al, A stitch in time – Synergistic impacts to platypus metapopulation extinction risk , Biological Conservation, Feb 2020)

There are breeding platypus on Rocky Creek. The Dunoon Dam would hasten the decline of this species.

b.) Construction of the dam will reduce platypus habitat downstream, due to sediment load smothering (The 2012 Aquatic Ecology Assessment p.61).

16. Extinction Pressure on Native Fish

a.) A Dunoon dam would extinguish nearly all of the endangered Eastern Freshwater Cod's Rocky Creek habitat due to cold water pollution downstream (NSW Fisheries, Eastern (Freshwater) Cod(Maccullochella ikei)Recovery Plan , 2004). The existing NSW DPI Eastern Freshwater Cod Recovery Plan aims to restore this species to the Rocky Creek and Richmond River systems. It depends on quality habitat and natural flows.

b.) Another 16 native fish species are also threatened by a significant and permanent loss of this 17.5 kms of habitat, including Oxleyan Pygmy Perch and Purple Spotted Gudgeon (2011 Rous Aquatic Survey).

Yours faithfully,

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