

The Bridge

THE KOONDROOK AND BARHAM BRIDGE NEWSPAPER

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Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the Inquiry into the status of water trading in NSW last week.

While water trade started originally in the 1980's to assist growers within a region to best utilise our most precious resource, I now feel the outcomes and community implications are negatively impacting our land, waterways, ecology, and people.

Despite the challenges faced there is a real opportunity to provide solutions that can help restore some equilibrium.

The movement of water through the system can have both positive and negative outcomes. The 2007 Water Act identified this and while Schedule 3 permits water trade if water resources are physically shared or hydrologically connected, it also states restriction on extractions, diversions or water use resulting from trade can be used to manage,

- (a) environmental impacts, including impacts on ecosystems that depend on underground water; or
- (b) hydrological, water quality and hydro-geological impacts; or
- (c) delivery constraints; or
- (d) impacts on geographical features (such as river and aquifer integrity); or
- (e) features of major indigenous, cultural heritage or spiritual significance.

I fear if we continue to operate the river system in our current manner, we will be left with a ditch not a life-giving artery of this great land. The other real challenge is salinity, the evidence of new developments impacting saline water tables is undeniable.

Recent constraints meetings with the Murray Darling Basin Authority demonstrate little intent to address this growing problem. If anything they seek to increase flows through our region.

I implore you to give our regions the protections the legislation provides. I have attached some photos for reference.

All the best,

Lloyd Polkinghorne

Owner/editor The Bridge Newspaper

























