

**Submission
No 6**

INQUIRY INTO ADEQUACY OF WATER STORAGES IN NSW

Organisation: Rous Water

Date received: 12/07/2012



Rous Water
REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY

RECEIVED

12 JUL 2012

BALLINA
BYRON
LISMORE
RICHMOND VALLEY

Our Ref: RC/VG: 1356/09 (88692) (40772)

4 July 2012

The Director
Standing Committee on State Development
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Attention: The Hon. Rick Colless MLC, Committee Chairman

Dear Sir

INQUIRY SUBMISSION - ADEQUACY OF WATER STORAGES IN NSW

I am writing in response to the request for submissions to the NSW Legislative Council Standing Committee on State Development's inquiry into the adequacy of water storages in NSW.

Rous Water is a single purpose county council on the North Coast of NSW. Rous Water provides bulk water supply services to a population of approximately 100,000 people within the Lismore, Byron, Ballina and Richmond Valley local government areas. Rous Water's current water sources include:

- Rocky Creek Dam
- Emigrant Creek Dam
- The Wilsons River Source
- Bores in the Alstonville Plateau and Woodburn Coastal Sands

During the 1990's Rous Water commenced work on the *Rous Regional Water Supply Strategy* to develop a long term strategy to secure water supply sources to the year 2050 and beyond. At the conclusion of the planning study Rous Water resolved to:

1. Develop and implement a comprehensive water-use Demand Management program to reduce per capita water consumption,
2. Adopt a policy to monitor and implement emerging water reuse and alternative supply strategies,
3. Develop the Wilsons River Source as the next new supply source for the Rous Regional Water Supply,
4. Nominate the Dunoon Dam site as Rous Water's future water source in anticipation of demand exceeding the combined capacity of the Lismore Source plus existing sources.

To date Rous Water has successfully implemented the first three actions listed above. This has secured the Rous Water supply and deferred the need for further supply capacity increases for the short to mid-term.

ROUS WATER CENTRE
218-232 Molesworth Street
PO Box 230
Lismore NSW 2480
DX 7652

ROUS COUNTY COUNCIL
Phone (02) 6621 8055
Fax (02) 6622 1181
Email water@rouswater.nsw.gov.au
ABN 81 383 023 771



The Dunoon Dam proposal involves the construction of a new, 50,000 megalitre, across stream, water storage on Rocky Creek, downstream of the existing Rocky Creek Dam. The dam would be approximately two and a half kilometres west of the village of Dunoon, from which it takes its name. Rous Water has previously resolved to build the Dunoon Dam if, and when it is required in order to secure regional water supply needs.

In 2008, Rous Water commenced work to determine the technical viability and likely cost of the proposed Dunoon Dam and appointed the NSW Public Works to provide a detailed concept design and cost estimate for the proposal. This included undertaking detailed, site specific, investigations regarding:

- Terrestrial ecology
- Aquatic ecology
- Environmental flow requirement
- Cultural heritage
- Geotechnical investigations, and
- Site survey

In order to robustly assess the need for, and suitability of, the Dunoon Dam proposal as a long-term water supply strategy, Rous Water commenced work on its *Future Water Strategy* in late 2009. The *Future Water Strategy* will consider the Dunoon Dam proposal and a range of alternative water supply options, including Demand Management and water efficiency opportunities, with the objective of maintaining a secure and sustainable water supply until at least 2060. Key works undertaken to date include:

- Formation of a Project Reference Group (PRG) comprising community and stakeholder organisations
- Identification of potential new water source options
- Coarse screen analysis to establish the feasibility of new water source options
- Development of the long-term water supply (secure yield) of Rous Water's existing sources
- Development of the long-term water demand forecasts
- Development of an ongoing Demand Management Strategy

Rous Water has recently implemented its revised Demand Management Plan for implementation between 2012 and 2016, concurrent with the current Integrated Planning and Reporting period.

Potential new water sources for further consideration as part of the *Future Water Strategy* are:

- The proposed Dunoon Dam
- Desalination
- Groundwater
- Stormwater harvesting for potable and non-potable use
- Indirect potable reuse and non-potable reuse of wastewater
- Regional water access within the Richmond Regulated Water Source

At a regional level, NOROC member Councils (of which Rous Water is a member) and the NSW Office of Water have resolved to prepare a *Regional Bulk Water Supply Strategy* for the Northern Rivers region that will investigate future regional water supply options. The findings of this study shall also be incorporated into Rous Water's *Future Water Strategy*.

In conclusion, existing water storages within the Rous Water supply area are considered adequate to meet Rous Water's short to mid-term needs; however, strategic planning is currently underway to secure the long term supply. Future water sources being considered include a full range of supply and demand management options. Should the outcomes of this planning indicate that Rous Water requires additional water storage capacity to meet its future water needs, Rous Water would seek the support of the NSW Government in recommending its preferred supply source.

Yours faithfully,

Kyrle Lavelle
General Manager