

**Submission
No 1**

**INQUIRY INTO WATER NSW AMENDMENT
(WARRAGAMBA DAM) BILL 2018**

Name: Mrs Doreen Lyon
Date Received: 29 September 2018

I am a local resident of Wollondilly Shire and currently work as a volunteer with The Wollondilly Heritage Centre and Museum at 43 Edward Street, The Oaks. My work there involves exhibition design and research. Our Museum holds a quantity of records of Aboriginal culture and history in the Burratorang valley and Blue Mountains. Our current exhibition is titled "Valley of Dispossession" and documents the first dispossession of the Gundungorra and Dharug people by British settlement. The second dispossession was when the Warragamba Dam was built and the Lake Burratorang replaced 18,000 acres of land on the Wollondilly, Cox, Nattai river systems. This happened in the 1950s in order to create a safe source of water for the increasing city of Sydney. When Country was inundated very little archaeological investigation was carried out so we have little knowledge of the culture of the First people of this Valley. There was some interest by Anthropologists such as Mary Everett and R.H. Mathews and the Australian Museum recorded some cave sights and dendroglyphs. Some artifacts were collected by local families and deposited in local collections such as our own. However there has been no systematic archaeological work carried out along the remaining valley and I am very concerned that there will not be enough consideration given to that in the current investigations for the EIS into increasing the height of the Warragamba Dam. Our understanding of the breadth of culture of the First nation in Australia is only just beginning to be addressed and there are still some areas of immense cultural significance along the valleys of the rivers which are destined to flood. One of these is an Creation story of how the river was created during an epic battle between two ancestors, Gurangatch the serpent and Mirrgan the Fisherman. This story is now told at Jenolan Caves. Two of the sites mentioned in the story can still be accessed in the river but the rest were inundated in the first flood. The story has deep significance to descendants of the Gundungorra people and they are deeply concerned at a second dispossession. I urge your government to revise this plan to raise the Warragamba Dam wall and instead take an opportunity to promote the understanding of Australian First People in our Blue Mountains World heritage area and also to promote water conservation. With wise management of water resources there would be no need to raise the dam wall. There is a strong need to conserve our water resources in the face of climate change, demand from coal mining and gas extraction not to mention inappropriate development. These issues should be considered before any more Country is subjected to more flooding.