

**Submission
No 10**

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

Name: Kazan and Taylor Brown

Date Received: 2 October 2018

My ancestors have walked this land for many thousands of years, my grandfather and great grandfather help build warragamba dam when the burragorang settlement was evacuated, and my immediate family have lived in warragamba since. In the 1950s the burragorang valley was home to many families of settlers and Gundungurra people. They were evacuated from the valley to make way for the construction of warragamba dam. They were told it was for progress..... They had no choice in this. The government reacquired land, gave little or no compensation, and displaced a generation of people. Neighbors, friends and family were scattered, ex residents of the valley now live across the country. Many gundungurra people have never and will never walk their land. Jim smith Author of "Aborigines of Burragorang valley and many more notable works remarked in an interview that when people in Sydney turn on their taps, run a bath or fill up their pools they should be aware of where their water comes from and the sacrifice of the community. When we talk about the valley of dispossession and of the gundungurra people, we are not just talking about an evacuation, a removal from an area. We are talking about an intangible network of dreaming trails, paintings, and carving sites, waterholes, gravesites scar trees and more, the location of have been lost to time; access to what we know of is still highly restricted if not completely forbidden, which is truly devastating. We are talking about real people who made their lives in the valley for tens of thousands of years. A living breathing history and culture hidden behind the dam wall and beneath the waters of Lake burragorang. In the past few years I have travelled to two of the scared waterholes, reedy creek and gungarlook. I've eaten oranges off my families fruit trees and jouriland properties. I have spent much time sitting in the grass or on a log letting the valley wash over me. Something I have realized in the quiet moments of compellation that despite the valley being what seems like an untouched wilderness it has really paid the ultimate price and is irrevocably touch by man. I have been told time and time again that I am the first gundungurra women to set eyes on many of our sites and to walk on such a large amount of country in decades, and it seems that I will be the last. During one of our trips into the valley, Jim smith an historian guided us through a number of caves depicting a number of animals, spirit people and handprints. Generations of my people left their personal mark on the wall of a cave, showing that this place was special, large and small and up so high on the wall it was just so amazing to me that they could reach. This experience for me seeing so many handprints just like mine and left behind by many generations of people who were probably members of my family was breathtaking. Very deeply humbling. It is finding a thread that ties me to my ancestors again. In the 1950s there was no consultation process. it was forced on the residents that they would need to find a new place to live in order to make way for the needs of a growing society. A lot of people argue that we all need to make way for progress and development regardless of the cost to our environment and history. From where I stand and where many of my brothers and sisters stand as contemporary Aboriginal people, we think we have lost enough. We have sacrificed enough and we will not lose the precious little we have left. Today we the gundungurra people are threated again we have already lost access to so much of our history much of which we can only read about in books. When there are viable alternatives that have not been explored in-depth I'm at a loss as to why this project must go ahead. NSW water and the state government want to raise warragamba dam another 14 meters they say this is for flood mitigation. This is an ineffective and enormously damaging solution to a problem. We are concerned if this amendment is made to the NPW act this will be the beginning of the end for our culture and history.