

**Submission
No 68**

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSAL TO RAISE THE
WARRAGAMBA DAM WALL**

Name: Mr Patrick Thompson

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Mr Justin Field, MLC
Chair
Select Committee on the Proposal to Raise the Warragamba Dam Wall
Legislative Council
NSW Parliament House
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Inquiry into the proposal to raise the Warragamba Dam wall

30th August 2019

My experience of the areas that will be affected by this proposal stretch back over more than fifty years bringing to account both my years as a geography teacher, my first hand knowledge of the Kowmung & Cox River as a bushwalker, who has visited these valleys and their tributaries on countless occasions.

Accordingly, I wish to address principally the term of reference 1d(iii), highlighting concerns over the ecological impacts this project will have on the Greater Blue Mountains National Park and its World Heritage values.

Australia is a signatory to the World Heritage Convention and as such it has a responsibility to ensure the intrinsic values be upheld to the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. Clearly, those values will be affected by future inundations should this proposal be allowed to go forward.

I bring to the attention of the Committee that the valleys of the Kowmung and Cox, together with their tributaries have been the focal point of reservation and protection for more than a century. No where in the State of NSW have campaigns by conservation societies been more sustained.

Public reserves in the affected area date back to the 1890's. R67062 for the preservation of fauna and flora was created on 15.10.1937. In the late 1960's and early 1970's a sustained campaign resulted in the creation of Kanangra-Boyd National Park. Conservationist further pressed for and initiated then a successful campaign to have the area inscribed as World Heritage.

As a citizen vitally concerned with our future, I now ask how it is that we have reached a stage that we are prepared to further risk species extinction and desecrate the 'outstanding natural values' of an area that is inscribed as World Heritage?

I note that I was shocked by the actions of the NSW Government in previously passing legislation, so as to permit inundation of Kanangra-Boyd & the Blue Mountains National Park.

* As a geographer familiar with urban planning matters, I also bring to the attention of the Committee, other matters covered by your terms of reference.

Much foolish development has been allowed to proceed on the Sydney Flood Plain over many years. I am deeply suspicious that this proposal to raise the wall of Warragamba Dam will lead to further expansion of settlement in flood-prone areas.

Yet raising the dam wall will not eliminate the threat of flooding to existing areas, let alone new ones. I have read reports in the Sydney Morning Herald and the Committee will be aware of

other scientific data that support this view that a raised dam will not provide any guarantees of preventing catastrophic flooding in the future. What responsible government would allow this approach to planning?

Accordingly, I urge the Committee to bring down a report that will condemn this proposal in the strongest possible terms.

Yours faithfully,

Patrick Thompson