

Submission  
No 227

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

**Name:** Ms Stephanie Knox

**Date Received:** 6 September 2019

---

## Submission to NSW Legislative Council Select Committee on the Proposal to Raise the Warragamba Dam Wall

I am making a submission to object to the proposed raising of the wall of Warragamba Dam.

Raising the dam wall will inundate part of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. This inundation will diminish Wilderness values, cause irrevocable damage to unique Blue Mountains ecosystems and destroy significant habitats of many threatened native species such as the beautiful and critically endangered Regent Honey Eater. Raising the dam will inundate the lower Kowmung River, a legendary wild river visited and loved by generations of bushwalkers and home to some unique vegetation communities.

The Traditional Owners have expressed concern that most of their remaining cultural sites will be destroyed by the intermittent flooding caused by the proposed raising of the dam wall. So much Indigenous heritage has already been lost through the original flooding of the Burratorang Valley when Warragamba Dam was first built. Therefore I strongly urge the NSW government to preserve the remaining Indigenous heritage and abandon any plans to raise the Warragamba Dam wall.

The NSW State Government argues for the need to raise the Warragamba Dam wall as a measure for reducing the risk of floods for residents in the Hawkesbury Nepean Floodplain. However, I am concerned that raising the dam will result in a push for rezoning of flood prone areas for residential development. More residential development in flood prone areas will in the long-term place more residents to the risk of flooding rather than mitigate the risks. Much of the land in the Hawkesbury-Nepean Floodplain is currently used for food production for Sydney. Sydney would lose a valuable source of fruit and vegetables if flood prone areas were rezoned residential as a result of raising the Warragamba Dam wall.

Land developers may well profit from any intensification of residential development in the Hawkesbury Nepean Floodplain, but residents will lose out in the long-term as they will ultimately bear the risks of living in a flood-prone area and lose access to locally produced fresh food.

The protection of the Blue Mountains as World Heritage is the result of tireless advocacy by individuals, walking clubs and community groups over several generations, so that future generations could enjoy this unique and iconic natural environment. The work and vision that went into protecting the magnificent natural values of the Blue Mountains should not be undone by raising the Warragamba Dam wall and inundating an irreplaceable part of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. I therefore strongly urge the Committee to reject the proposal.