

Submission  
No 242

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

**Name:** Ms Megan Hyatt  
**Date Received:** 6 September 2019

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To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Megan Hyatt and I first moved to Windsor in 1983, later moving to Ebenezer in 1988. The Hawkesbury region is an extremely beautiful part of Australia and I have enjoyed living there immensely, I have many friends and relatives in the area and I am extremely worried about the plans to raise the wall of Warragamba Dam. During the three decades I lived in the area I was affected by floods. I have been surprised about the new areas opened up for housing development given the propensity for floods in the area. I feel that the raising of the Warragamba Dam wall may well encourage more development which could prove to be disastrous for residents. Many of the flooding events that I experienced did not originate from Warragamba, so raising the wall will not seriously mitigate the risk of flooding.

I am also very concerned about the 'urban sprawl' in the Hawkesbury Nepean floodplain. I have seen many of the areas that were prime agricultural land repurposed for housing development and I wonder about the sustainability of this development. Australia as a whole has little arable land and the Hawkesbury has long been the 'food bowl' for Sydney. We need to preserve prime farmland for food production especially if the government is going ahead with expanded population. People need food and once arable land is turned over to housing, it is unrecoverable. I would also like to point out that large expanses of paving and housing prevent the absorption of rain and in turn this adds to flooding problems. I fear the rate of development is at odds with the interests of residents.

There is also the question of Australia's flora and fauna which faces decimation caused by this plan to raise the Warragamba Dam wall. Not only will threatened flora and fauna be at risk but also the rights of the first Australians. Contained in the World Heritage Area of the Blue Mountains are sacred and archeological sites. We also risk losing the World Heritage listing of the Blue Mountains. It is time to think with cool heads about all the repercussions of the proposal to raise the dam wall. We need to think about the lives of people down stream of the dam, the livelihoods of people working in agriculture in the Hawkesbury Nepean floodplain, at risk fauna and also at risk flora. The fight to protect the last remnant of Cumberland Plain Woodland at the ADI site in Penrith was a long battle and sadly a lot of that last remnant of woodland was lost forever. We need to keep that in mind as we plan ahead. It is worth remembering this project threatens 48 threatened species found in the 4,700 hectares to be inundated, including the critically endangered Regent honeyeater, our most rare bird, and the Camden White Gum. It will destroy Sydney's only remaining wild river and wilderness streams, including the iconic Kowmung river. As noted by the World Heritage Committee this year, the project will also undermine the 'Outstanding Universal Values' which led to the park being inscribed as a World Heritage Site. This threatening its status as a World Heritage site, and could be put on the 'at risk' list. Tourists come to see the Blue Mountains, my cousin who visited me from Portsmouth in the United Kingdom, cried at the view over Jamison Valley, her breath was taken away by the beauty of the area, it brought new appreciation to me of how wonderful this area is and that it is of the highest significance to all Australians, new Australians and our indigenous people and also to the people of the world who come here to see our unique and beautiful country. It is worth supporting and saving, for once it is damaged it is lost forever.

In the twenty first century we need to think more about the environment and what lasting effects our actions will have on future generations. The eyes of the world are on us, we need to treat our indigenous people with respect and respect their significant cultural sites, sadly it is not apparent that we are showing proper respect.

Thank you for the opportunity to lodge this submission.

Yours faithfully,

Megan Hyatt