

**INQUIRY INTO RATIONALE FOR, AND IMPACTS OF,
NEW DAMS AND OTHER WATER INFRASTRUCTURE IN
NSW**

Organisation: Lake Keepit Family Fishing Club

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To The Committee Chair

Please take this email as a submission to the rational for, impacts of, new dams and other water infrastructure in NSW.

I absolutely support the construction of new dams in northern and western NSW provided the dams are used for purpose of additional storage to meet the drastic shortage during dry periods and not to provide additional allocation for irrigation.

The recent drought from 2017 to early 2020 has left northern rivers and storage dams drained dry with there fish and wildlife habitat devastated. We have seen Lake Keepit drained to a level of 0.3% (empty) and Split Rock Dam to 1% resulting in massive fish kills which have yet to show any signs of recovery. Water NSW and DPIE-Water claimed water was released to meet critical town water shortages at Walgett and no one is denying that community of a adequate water supply, however this appears to be grossly mismanaged. Keepit Dam was drained to a level of 5% to meet irrigation prepaid orders before attempting get a critical supply to Walgett.

The local communities including Tamworth, Gunnedah, Manilla and surrounding communities have been deprived a vital community facility providing significant social and recreational benefits and most of all mental health benefits.

The construction of additional storage above Chaffey Dam with the new Dungowen Dam will assist Tamworth, a major regional city, with an improved town water supply provided the additional water is allocated for town water usage and not for irrigation or environmental flows. The proposed new dam appears to be very small and given the huge cost of construction, value for money must come into question.

I understand the communities in lower streams of the Murray Darling river system are heavily affected by what happens up stream however increased storage capacity upstream must result in additional capacity to deliver vital flows when required downstream. A review of environmental flows is a must for protection of the whole system with upstream storage dams considered as part of the environment which also need protection.

Kind Regards

Kevin Sheridan
President
Lake Keepit Family Fishing Club