

Submission
No 52

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

Name: Mr Alan McGufficke
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The Chair Water infrastructure committee

I would like to take this opportunity to contribute to the discussion on the increase of the wall for Wyangla Dam. The concerns of the outcomes of this action are as follows:

The construction of the extension of the wall at Wyangla Dam will result in more water being held higher in the catchment. This will further impact the flow of water down the river, to the wetlands and adjacent floodplains.

This will result in the catchment being further dried, reducing vegetation growth and associated potential production. Previously these productive wetlands and floodplains supported a major cattle and sheep fattening industry for New South Wales. These areas will be further reduced due to a lack of flooding waters. The change in the water regime will drastically impact the profitability and productivity of the Lachlan River floodplains and wetlands.

To gain advantage of a wall extension the water will need to be held for more than two years (three years accounting for carryover allocation). This will mean the amount of evaporation occurring will result in a net loss of water to the catchment (this could be as much as up to two meters per annum plus the impact of climate change).

The construction of the raising the wall height at Wyangla to hold back more water will only advantage the irrigation industry. The irrigation industry is economically questionable as demonstrated by their need for economic support required to maintain their business during times of drought. This is a considerable cost to all tax payers.

With modern agricultural technologies there has been a huge downturn in employment in the sector, more irrigation does not lead to more employment. The townships of Moree and Narrabri are examples of this phenomena.

It must be considered that historic water infrastructure of dams has not been able to secure the economic and social security of river townships. As with modern management principles doing the same results in the same outcomes.

Personally, flooding is an important factor in the management of my agricultural enterprise. Occasional flooding provides both stock and domestic water. Beneficial flooding produces high-quality pasture for grazing and supports regenerative agricultural practices. This results in greater profitability and associated productivity.

The reduction of flooding due to the raising of the dam wall will have a negative impact on my agricultural viability due to a much higher risk of failure and a cost associated with this.

Markets such as the cattle market in Forbes relies on a substantial contribution of livestock from all up and down the river this will be at risk due to the drier environment that we will be operating in.

The proposed extension to the Wyangla dam will basically be an economic and environment disaster for the Lachlan catchment area.

I am very willing to discuss my concerns in more detail if required.

Alan McGufficke

This is a extremely complex issue that I have struggled to express well.

Agriculture has been a ongoing issue for all involved over time, more of the same is not the answer-please get outside the existing box!!!!