

**Submission  
No 137**

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

**Name:** Ms Maria Riedl  
**Date Received:** 22 September 2020

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# Inquiry into the rationale for, and impacts of, new dams and other water infrastructure in NSW

## Submission for:

Maria I E Riedl B.S.Ed., M.Env.L., M.Env.Gov - 22 September 2020

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The empty Darling River at Pooncarie NSW on 28 February 2020 due to complete mismanagement by NSW -photo Maria IE Riedl



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## Introduction

Thank you for inviting us to submit to this Inquiry. My name is Maria IE Riedl and I have serious concerns about anything in terms of water that NSW proposes. NSW has demonstrated over and over again that it desperately wants to hold most water that flows into the NSW, in NSW. NSW through mismanagement and lack of adhering to rigorous accounting of every drop has drained the Darling River twice in three years. NSW allows certain people to sneak into their offices to demand alterations to NSW water rules as they have done in Bourke on more than one occasion. Dams do not create water and in fact make water shortages especially for people living downstream as well as degrading the environment. There is significant decreases in water availability through human intervention on rivers as this is clearly evidenced by the over extraction of the MDB both surface and groundwater:

1. dams blocks rivers (as shown in the first picture-a homemade dam across the Darling River 2020 just out of Pooncarie NSW)
2. dams slow rivers-stagnant reservoir pools disorientate fish increase algal blooms decreasing oxygen levels
3. dams alter habitat and the way rivers and wetlands and floodplains function-they change the way a river functions, altering sediment negatively impacting on complex habitat and downstream
4. dams impact water quality eg algal blooms and decreased oxygen levels







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The above photos are taken on the Hay Plains of massive kilometre long channels storing water during a drought with massive and numerous dams in the far distance, away from the road. These dams take water out of the Murrumbidgee River under various arrangements that are simply ridiculous due to the fact that these photos were taken slap bang in the middle of the last drought! One has to wonder where the meters for these extractions are located-eg at the dams or at the river as they must be required to be. One also wonders what the evaporation rate is for these mega dams as well as all those channels running around the properties on the Hay Plains as this area has immense temperatures in the summer. All these earthworks have been done since Websters took over Tandou and they are extensive to say the least. I have included two photos of the Murrumbidgee River at Hay and please note the degradation of the river! I have included many articles and reports that I have been gathering demonstrating that NSW has a shocking reputation with water accounting; it fails to have scientific knowledge of what exactly is in the rivers and aquifers as well as fails to measure every drop extracted. They fail to measure take such as flood plain harvesting. They fail to understand the importance of wetlands, overland flows, of groundwater, hydro-ecological functions of the MDB system. NSW fails to account for consumptive use and certainly ignore the importance of aquatic ecosystem integrity.

It is sealer to others and myself that NSW simply wants to build new dams and mass water storage projects as well as a new dam on the Macquarie River without any regards for the fact that they are part of Australia, part of the MDB and that holding back water no matter how you store has environmental, cultural, social and economic impacts along the entire system all the way to Victoria and all the way to the mouth of the Murray River and the cumulative impacts are totally unacceptable.

NSW does not incorporate climate change for example its impacts on inland water ways future projects, dams, and other mass water storage projects and they most certainly don't want to give any water to the environment. An unhealthy MDB due to over extraction as is still occurring will not benefit anyone. NSW must be stopped from claiming credits like the drawing of the Menindee Lakes, emptying the Darling River over and over again as well as degrading the Murrumbidgee River and all underground water systems, connected or not. This is why we have the Water Act 2007 and MDB Plan; it is to halt the degradation of these systems by selfish politicians and states with vested interests.

I have run out of time but I have included a lot of reference material that I would ask that you read and understand that NSW is on the road to destroying, degrading all the water that passes through that state to the mouth of the Murray River. This includes draining the Menindee Lakes, the Darling River and the Murrumbidgee and all other rivers and floodplains and wetlands within NSW. I find that totally abhorrent and totally unacceptable.

The amount of times that the present government (Barrarilo and Pavey) have threatened to pull out of the MDB Plan is documented. What a selfish couple of politicians. NSW

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Water must also be called to task as it ignores cultural water rights on rivers and wetlands; most obviously on the Darling River!

I ask that this Committee seriously considers what NSW is doing and look at the reasons behind their decisions so far eg altering low flow takes and first flush takes and flood plain harvesting, their lack of measurement of every drop and their total ignorance of exactly what is in the system at any given time. They ignore climate change they ignore evaporations from these proposed dams and ..... Shocking behavior.

**URGENT please read this document:** <https://wentworthgroup.org/2020/09/mdb-flows-2020/2020/>

Thank you

Maria IE Riedl B.S.Ed., M.Env.L., M.Env.Gov



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