

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

Name: Name suppressed
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Partially
Confidential

Objection to the proposed raising of Wyangala Dam

I strongly oppose the proposed extension of Wyangala Dam. The raising of the dam will have a massive impact on reducing the opportunities and positive benefits derived from flows and dam spills which currently service important natural, cultural and social benefit. These spill events are currently a form of planned environmental water and by reducing the return interval of these events, there will be irretrievable loss to dependant assets such as Bundaburrah Creek. This creek will only receive flow when the Lachlan River downstream of the Wyangala Dam is flowing at volumes greater than 16,000 megalitres/day. By raising the dam wall, these events that would normally top up and spill over the wall and run the Bundaburrah creek will be reduced in frequency, volume and duration, effectively starving this beautiful area of flow, potentially permanently.

The impacts on downstream areas such as Booberoi Creek, the mid Lachlan anabranches of Wallamunday and Wallaroi Creeks and the Great Cumbung Swamp and other wetlands that thrive on beneficial flooding will be negatively and permanently damaged by being effectively starved of flow. The intervals between flow events will increase. The dependant vegetation and fauna will slowly decline and eventually disappear. Systems such as Lake Cowal, the Lake Cargelligo complex and Lake Ballyrogan (Brewster) will all have impacted flow regimes. The losses will be irreversable and permanent and the cultural connections and opportunities for flooding on country will be severely impacted. No trade-off can replace the magnitude and importance of the floods that will be captured by the raised dam wall. There is no such thing as 'wasted water' - every drop in every valley has a purpose and contributes to an outcome. The haste in which this project has been pushed through is a major cause for concern. The capture of flows effectively undermines the current water sharing arrangements and the Basin Plan. It will be impossible to maintain the integrity of certain ecological assests, including native fish populations and colonial water bird nesting if this proposal is to proceed.