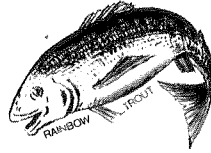


WALCHA COUNCIL

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30th November 2010.

The Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA NSW 2600

Submission No:	208
Date Received:	10/12/10
Secretary:	SC

Dear Sir/Madam

COMMENTS ON THE "GUIDE TO THE PROPOSED BASIN PLAN".

Council at its meeting held recently considered the potential impact of the proposed Basin Plan on the Walcha Council and residents of the Walcha Shire.

At this stage Council has identified two main areas of concern from the Guide. These being:

- The security of our town water supply. As you may be aware Council takes water from the Macdonald River (western flowing water) and discharges to the Apsley River (eastern flowing water).
- With the proposed reduction of Sustainability Diversion Limits in the Namoi Region from 508GL/y to between 437GL/y and 415GL/y and the statement that this reduction is to come from "watercourse diversions for town and community water supplies, irrigation and industry, floodplain harvesting and interception activities such as farm dams and forestry plantations," Council is concerned that this may also impact on our rural land owners specifically in relation to farm dams.

Council are not aware of any proposals to secure town water supplies or if existing or proposed farm dams will still be permitted to secure water as they currently do, or propose to do. If this security is not provided the effect of the Plan on Council and the community will be great.

Council is supportive of the position taken by the Local Government & Shires Association in their submission to the Authority's Issue Paper entitled "Development of Sustainable Diversion Limits for the Murray-Darling Basin" back in December 2009. The Associations believe that when making decisions on sharing between the environment and consumptive use, social, economic and environmental considerations should be placed on equal footings and called on the Authority to address the socio-economic impacts associated with any proposed changes to the diversion limits.

WHEN REPLYING PLEASE QUOTE WO/2010/01583
WHEN MAKING ENQUIRIES PLEASE ASK FOR GERRY MORAN

Council would expect that the socio-economic impacts associated with changing the diversion limits will be fully detailed in a future study. If there is to be less water for consumptive use the potential to directly affect Council's town water supply and hence impact on population and economic growth needs to be investigated.

Council would welcome changes to the Plan that existing town water supplies are secure and that existing and proposed farm dams are allowed to secure water as they currently do or propose to do.

Yours faithfully

JACK O'HARA
GENERAL MANAGER