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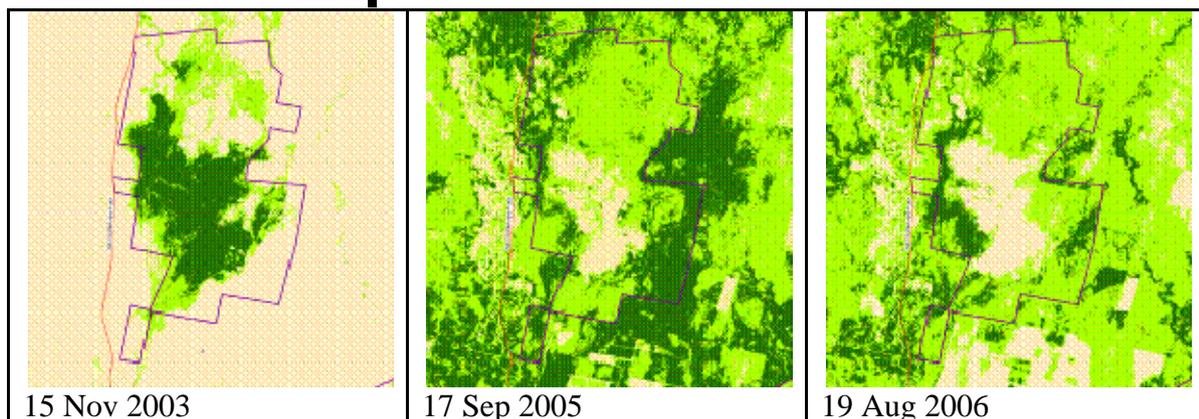
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia

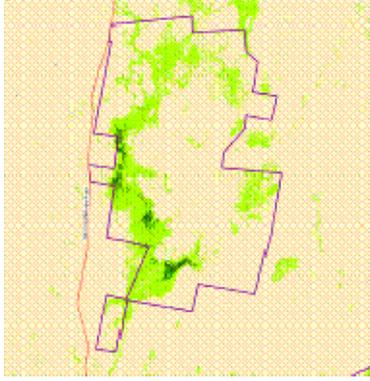
There is no valid evidence that more water is needed for the environment. The evidence used in the plan to show decline in the nominated 'key environmental assets' relies on audits that are selective in their timing and lack scientific analysis as to their relevance. Vegetation is the plans key indicator for system 'health' which is valid but comparing types and quantities of vegetation in a drought to vegetation in a wet season is nonsense. For example Vol 2 Part 11 page 598 compares 1991 which follows three wet years culminating in a major flood, with 2009 which followed eight drought years in the Macquarie Marshes. "Many areas show significant decline in a canopy condition with more than half the area mapped in 1991 now having more than 40% dead canopy (Bowen and Simpson 2009)". With the huge variation in Australia's climate, to be creditable comparisons must be made at time in the wet and dry cycles that have relativity to one another. Drought recovery is an essential part of our environmental system and the present floods provide the opportunity to test the water reforms of the past fifteen years for sustainability of the system. There must be an audit of the key 18 sites twelve months after the present floods to compare to the 1990 floods and provide numbers that have credibility in making decisions that affect the survival of basin communities.

We recommend to the Government amendments to the 2007 water act in order to clearly express the intention of the Government and the Opposition namely that the MURRAY DARLING BASIN PLAN will provide a balance between the social, economic and environmental needs of the basin and thus avoid the current confusion and future antisocial reallocations.

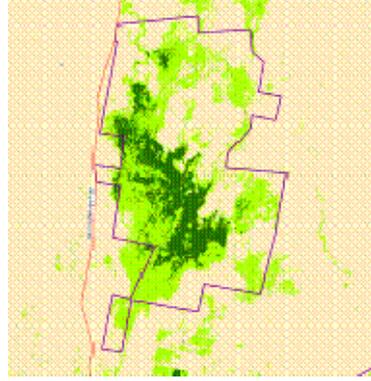
Yours sincerely
Anthony McAlary

Macquarie Marshes

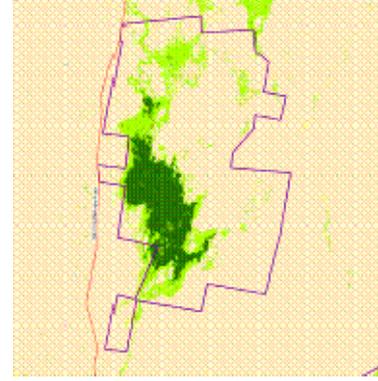




23 Sep 2007



27 Oct 2008



01 Dec 2009



17 Oct 2010

NDVI (vegetation vigour index)

- yellow: very low vegetation density (NDVI < 0.3)
- light green: medium vegetation density (0.3 < NDVI < 0.5)
- dark green: high vegetation density (0.5 < NDVI < 0.8)

NDVI calculated from Landsat 5 data. NDVI classes identified the same for each image.

Northern Macquarie Marshes – public land Zone 8A.