



MACQUARIE MARSHES ENVIRONMENTAL LANDHOLDERS ASSOCIATION

21st November 2010

Mr Tony Windsor MP
Member for New England
P.O. Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Submission No:	514
Date Received:	13/12/10
Secretary:	SC

RECEIVED
13 DEC 2010

Dear Mr Windsor,

Re: Murray Darling Basin Plan **Guide to Proposed Plan**

The Macquarie Marshes Environmental Landholders Association (MMELA) would like to thank you for your support in the past (we met with you regarding the Macquarie Marshes some years ago when you were in the NSW Parliament) and seek your consideration again with your proposed inquiry into the impacts of the Murray Darling Basin Authority's Guide to the Proposed Basin Plan. Our members noted your letter to The Land last week and would like to make the following comments.

When looking at impacts of the plan please consider the other agricultural industries that will benefit from the proposals of the plan, such as floodplain graziers, tourism as well as the increased reliability extractive users will have if the number of such users is reduced. We all agree our rivers are grossly over allocated and restoring flows to these systems must surely benefit all sections of the community not to over look the environment itself and unique areas such as the Macquarie Marshes.

If the required amount of water is only coming from willing sellers then nobody else will be affected by the cut in the plan. Why do you think it will affect communities, population, job losses and loss of production? Please remember that the agricultural land currently being irrigated by proposed sellers will remain in some type of agricultural production, possibly dry land farming or grazing. These landholders will remain productive and will continue to contribute to their local communities.

The additional water will rebuild the river systems, environment and certainly restore the lost production that floodplain graziers have experienced from the over allocated river over the past 20 + years.

This will also increase the permanent jobs around our area as well as meat workers in abattoirs, feedlots etc.

Communities will also benefit from full rivers with tourism, fishing and better water quality.

MMELA feels that there is no possible way that these savings will ever be met by water use efficiencies and infrastructure plans, however supports the introduction of such works. The quickest and most cost effective way to restore water to rivers must be the buyback programs.

The environmental benefits and bird breeding are overwhelming with these photos taken in the Macquarie Marshes on private grazing country in November 2010 after just one year after the water buyback program commenced are testimony to its success.

The Macquarie River system is one system where water buyback has proven to be beneficial without impacting on extractive users and MMELA members would like to meet with you to discuss these issues further. If possible we would like to invite you to visit the marshes and see firsthand the benefits of additional water in the system, however if this is not convenient then a delegation of our members are happy to travel to Canberra to meet. As you are aware this is an enormously important and complex issue and one that we would like to discuss in more depth with you. We look forward to hearing from you in the near future.



Photo's taken by D Veech Macquarie Marshes November 2010

Kind Regards

Shannon McLellan
MMELA Secretary