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THE SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE
ON THE MURRAY DARLING BASIN PLAN.
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Dear Committee members,

**Re: SUBMISSION TO THE SENATE INQUIRY ON MURRAY DARLING BASIN PLAN & CONSTRAINTS
MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Thank you to the Senators who have brought on this inquiry into the Murray Darling Basin Plan (MDBP). Recently, I heard a Victorian State Parliamentarian describe this inquiry as "scare mongering". As an affected land holder, this could not be further from the truth and I am truly appreciative of being able to place this brief submission before you.

In my community around Molesworth on the Goulburn River, just below Lake Eildon, there is real concern about the Constraints Management Strategy and the proposal to flood private property. The MDBA is placing the perceived environmental benefit of the Plan over the economic and social wellbeing of the basin community. This is wrong on so many grounds; but the idea that flooding beautiful, productive farming land is wise is quite simply crazy.

This submission will restrict itself to the impact of the proposed Constraints Management Strategy (Goulburn River Reach Report) and its impact on our Goulburn river property.

Mindful of the adage, that "a picture speaks a thousand words", I have attached overleaf two photos of our farm "Glen Doone". The first photo is in late spring, showing rolls of pasture hay cut and bailed, while the second photo shows the same river flats during the 2010 floods with the river at about 15 000 ML per day (which is the mid-point of the flows being investigated by the MDBA in the Constraints Management Strategy).

At an information meeting held by _____ and _____ at the Molesworth Hall, I asked the following question.

"Considering that the river bank height of the river at Molesworth can hold a flow of 9500mg/l a day, and the proposal is to double this amount in six years out of ten; if this amount is not able to be released, does the whole MDBA plan fall over"

s answer "Yes"

This is our biggest concern especially when you view the following photos of inundation on our property.



The fertile river flats of “Glen Doone” in late spring (some rolls have been removed already).



“Glen Doone” 2010 flood at estimated 15,000 mg/l a day

Our property is upstream of Molesworth and is in one of the narrowest river flats along the river bound by steep banks on both sides. It really can be termed a choke in the river system. Upstream and downstream of Molesworth the topography is different, having a wider area for the overbank flows to spread out.

The old river course is approximately 500m from the current river bank and is at a lower level than the river. This means that even before the river breaks its banks, the old river course acts as a channel that is about 3km long traversing four properties.

The river capacity is 9500mg/l per day and at 10,000 water backs up through the old river course. At 11,000 the overbank flow reaches the old river course and inundates 90% of our property. No amount of mitigation or easements can make my property useable in this situation. At 15,000mg/day and at 20,000 only the depth of water increases, not the area, as it is contained by the bank below Whanregarwen Road.

With an overbank flow my entire stock would have to move to my neighbouring hillside property, but there are others who only have river flats without access to higher ground. In this case they would have to agist the livestock at considerable cost in transport and agistment cost per head.

In some cases a short overbank flow can be beneficial to pasture growth, but duration of over seven days can cause damage with the result being expensive resowing of pasture species and loss of production while the pasture regenerates for at least six months.

The river flats are our main source of hay and silage that feed our livestock through the next winter. If the overbank flow occurred during the main growing period of August to December then we would lose this facility causing detrimental problems in the next productive year.

We all want to care for the environment, but consideration must be given to the people who have lived and cared for the environment in the course of their business undertaking over several generations.

Yours faithfully
Les and Marg Ridd