

SUBMISSION TO THE SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RURAL AFFAIRS AND TRANSPORT

SUBMITTED BY WAL MITCHELL. PAST NSW SHIRES PRESIDENT AND MAYOR BOURKE .

THE FORMULATION OF A MURRAY DARLING PLAN IS INDEED A VERY COMPLEX TASK , AND HAVING LIVED ON THE DARLING FOR OVER SEVENTY YEARS , I BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE MANY IMPORTANT ISSUES THAT HAVE NOT BEEN PROMULGATED

THE WHOLE ISSUE OF DARLING RIVER ENVIRONMENT AND ECOLOGY EXIST AS A VARIABLE FLOW REGIME WHICH THROUGHOUT OUT SHORT HISTORY CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE THAT SEASONAL PATTERNS EXIST WHEREBY LONG PERIODS OF SEVERE DROUGHT ,AND NORMAL AVERAGE SEASONS -- ARE INDISPERSED BY PERIODIC HIGH FLOW FLOODING EVENTS THAT INUNDATE THIS MASSIVE FLOODPLAIN FOR WEEKS AT A TIME

THE TOTAL RIVERINE SYSTEM HAS BEEN EVOLVED OVER MILLENIA TO COPE.... I LIVE ON THE DARLING AND I HAVE SEEN THE RIVER STOP FLOWING HERE AT LOUTH EVERY 19 YEARS 1945 1964 1983 2002 IN THE DROUGHT OF THR 40'S THE DARLING CEASED TO FLOW FOR 308 CONTINUOUS DAYS

I THEREFORE FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THE LOW FLOW SEASONS ARE PART OF A PATTERN THAT HAS TO BE UNDERSTOOD AND THAT THE DARLING CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO DELIVER SUSTAINED FLOWS TO THE MURRAY SYSTEM EVERY YEAR .

I ALSO BELIEVE THAT THE ECOLOGY OF THE DARLING RIVER FLOOD PLAINS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATE BY THE VERY SPECIFIC VEGETATION AND TIMBER VARIETY DISPERSAL THAT THEY ARE A FULLY INTEGRATED SYSTEM ESTABLISHED AND CONTROLLED BY THESE HIGH VOLUME PERIODIC INUNDATIONS. AND LONG DRY PERIODS ..

TO SET LEVELS OF GAURANTEED DELIVERY OF DARLING RIVER WATER FLIES IN THE FACE OF ESTABLISHED FACTS..

WHEN THE C A P WAS IMPOSED IN N S W CATCHMENTS MANY VALLEYS HAD 20% TO 30% REDUCTIONS THE BARWON DARLING WAS SLAMMED WITH A 67 % CUT THE VAST SURFACE OF THE MENINDEE LAKES SYSTEM , 120,000 ACRES LOOSES 2 METRES PER YEAR EQUATING TO OVER 700 ,000 MEGALITRES ..THE APPLICATION OF THE PLANNED REDUCTION OF THE AREA WOULD CONTRIBUTE THE DESIRED AMOUNT OF DARLING RIVER WATER TO THE MURRAY WITHOUT FURTHER DESTROYING THE OPERATIONAL VIABILITY OF UP RIVER IRRIGATORS AND THEIR DEPENDANT TOWNS AND COMMUNITIES ..

BROKEN HILL WAS ADEQUETLY AND SECURELY WATERED DURING THIS RECENT DROUGHT BY HOLDING THE DARLING RIVER AT WEIR 32 AT MENINDEE WHICH BACKS THE DARLING UP TOWARDS WILCANNIA IN A CLAY BANKED TIMBER SHELTERED STORAGE WHICH PROVED TO BE THE LOGICAL ANSWER....

I ENCLOSE A PAGE OF DARLING RIVER FLOOD HIGHTS THAT DEMONSTRATE THAT HIGH FLOOD LEVELS DO NOT DELIVER HIGHER YEILDS TO THE MURRAY AS A LARGE PERCENTAGE IS SOAKED UP IN THIS MASSIVE DARLING FLOODPLAIN . WHICH DESERVES AND GETS ITS TIME HONOURED SHARE....AS A VAST ENVIRONMENTAL ALLOCATION TO THIS PRISTINE EPHEMERAL LANDSCAPE AS MUCH A 60 KM WIDE..

I RESPECTFULLY INVITE ALL MEMBERS TO COME AND VISIT THIS EVOLVING PHENOMINA ..

YOURS FAITHFULLY,
WALTER HENRY MITCHELL A M

DARLING RIVER FLOOD HEIGHTS 1971 - 1997

DAILY FLOWS.

Year	Date	Brewarrina	Date	Bourke	Flow	Date	Wilcannia	Flow
1971	28/02/1971	9.931	10/03/1971	13.575	221,415mgl	1/04/1971	11.001	46,484mgl
1974	23/01/1974	10.671	29/01/1974	14.088	469,785mgl	23/02/1974	11.073	51,371mgl
1976	2/03/1976	10.621	8/03/1976	14.172	529,589mgl	5/04/1976	11.585	68,487mgl
1977	23/03/1977	7.517	6/04/1977	11.412	56,541mgl	1/05/1977	9.692	31,122mgl
	11/06/1977	7.823	20/06/1977	11.704	64,546mgl	23/07/1977	9.938	32,944mgl
1983	13/06/1983	8.619	19/06/1983	13.265	168,391mgl	27/07/1983	10.635	41,545mgl
	23/07/1983	6.676	29/07/1983	12.386	93,778mgl	16/08/1983	10.635	41,647mgl
1984	29/02/1984	6.397	11/03/1984	10.789	47,433mgl	11/04/1984	9.735	32,966mgl
	30/08/1984	8.798	9/09/1984	12.557	103,843mgl	15/10/1984	10.291	37,912mgl
1988	5/05/1988	9.108	17/05/1988	12.551	104,067mgl	23/06/1988	10.191	37,264mgl
1989	6/06/1989	5.237	10/06/1989	10.395	42,979mgl			
	2/07/1989	5.871	8/07/1989	10.487	43,871mgl	28/07/1989	9.894	33,967mgl
1990	7/05/1990	6.811	11/05/1990	12.991	144,343mgl	23/06/1990	11.001	46,274mgl
	4/09/1990	7.421	13/09/1990	11.898	82,201mgl	19/10/1990	10.191	34,389mgl
1995	4/02/1995	5.189	3/02/1995	9.429	35,263mgl	22/02/1995	8.771	24,482mgl
1996	19/02/1996	8.652	25/02/1996	12.393	95,581mgl	24/03/1996	9.846	30,960mgl
	nil	reading	17/06/1996	9.541	36,262mgl	2/07/1996	9.019	25,716mgl
1997	18/03/1997	5.483	26/03/1997	9.795	38,560mgl	12/04/1997	8.986	25,533mgl
1998						1/10/1998	10.54	39,182mgl