



Ryde - Hunter's Hill Flora and Fauna Preservation Society

Member of Nature Conservation Council of N.S.W.

Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committees
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
legcon.sen@aph.gov.au
17th March, 2011.

Dear Sir/Madam,

We write to strenuously object to any changes to the Water Act 2007.

Prior to the adoption of this legislation, lengthy consultation occurred to ensure that it balanced the needs of both the ecological systems and local communities which are in the Murray Darling Basin. Any change at this point in time would be a knee jerk political response and not based on the scientific knowledge vital for future decision making in the stressed waterways and wetlands of the Basin.

For too long too much water has been extracted and over allocated within the Murray-Darling Basin and it is critical that sustainable practices in water management commence immediately and in particular guide the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

This will not be possible with a "watered-down" Water Act 2011 amendment which does not recognise this history of over use of water and the need to prioritise proper and adequate environmental flows. It is the fundamental fact that the "environment" which supports all human activity also includes water and it is this separation of water from natural water systems which has savaged red gum forests, waterbirds and fish numbers. Ultimately local communities also lose as is witnessed in any visit to many western NSW towns.

This situation should not be further exacerbated through a return to water management policies which ignore the cause of this social and environmental devastation and the continuation of water over allocation and extraction which has occurred for decades.

Our Society is a local conservation group which has been active in the Ryde Hunters Hill area of Sydney since 1966. We support sustainable water use practices which need to be guided by legislation based on firm knowledge as is properly reflected in the current provisions of the Water Act 2007.

Yours sincerely,

Frank Breen,
President.