

Senator Anne McEwan  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Environment, Communications and the Arts,  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA. 2600



Wednesday 14th. Januray 2009

Dear Senator,

As members of the Myrtleford community and representing that community in our endeavours to have the second stage of Lake Buffalo implemented, may we submit our thoughts on this matter.

No doubt you are aware, through the efforts of State members Mr Ken Jasper MP and Mr Bill Sykes MP, who are wholehearted in their support for the extension of Lake Buffalo through to the completion of the second stage.

Along with a representative of the Wangaratta community, we presented a petition, signed by some 8000 residents, to our local members who then forwarded the petition to the previous State Water Minister, Mr John Thwaites.

Mr Twaites graciously accepted a small delegation and promised to give the matter of the extension of Lake Buffalo, due consideration.

The continuing drought conditions are a major concern to us, as no doubt they are of concern to your committee. We visualize the completion of the second stage of Lake Buffalo would not only drought proof our area of the North East of Victoria but would provide a guaranteed supply of water to Wangaratta and other towns along the Ovens Catchment, including Bright and the upper reaches of the Ovens Valley.

Whilst the completion of the second stage of the project promised in the 1960s, would increase the holding capacity by 40 times, to one million megalitres, the catchment area would allow it to fill up extremely quickly. As an example, at its present capacity, the Lake went from about 5% to 60% in the space of two days of normal winter rain.

There is unequivocal community support for the project, the community can see enormous benefits, bearing in mind that the community has some serious kicks in the guts - with the demise of the tobacco industry, downturn in the wine grape industry, severe frosts and severe dry conditions preventing the use of irrigation.

In May of last year, an on-site inspection by four state members of the National Party, Mr Peter Walsh, Mr Damian Drum, Mr Ken Jasper and Mr Bill Sykes, saw first hand the merits of the proposal to extend Lake Buffalo and pledged their support.

A visit a few weeks ago by the Federal Shadow Minister for Water, Greg Hunt MP, together with our local member Sophie Mirabella extended our opportunity to put our case

We respectfully request that your committee, give serious consideration to our proposal during your deliberations.

Signed.

Tiff Rayner



Fred Neal



Kevin Dinneen

