



The Greater Mary

A S S O C I A T I O N
Inc.

GeneralEnquiries:0405848375 Memberships:0429624600

Let the Mary flow free!

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Submission No. 93
11.1.12

18 December 2015

Research Director
Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000
ipnrc@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Submission to Water Legislation Amendment Bill

The Greater Mary Association Inc. is a community-based group that was formed in 2007 to raise awareness of the downstream effects of the proposed Traveston Crossing dam. Since the dam was rejected in 2009, we have continued to engage the lower Mary River community in practical on ground projects and in community education activities.

We wish to make a submission to the Water Legislation Amendment Bill 2015.

Firstly we commend the Government for reinstating the concept of ecologically sustainable development and purpose of sustainable management. These changes reflect intent with regard to water management which we wholly support.

We are concerned however about the pattern of granting statutory rights to take underground water to the resource industry. We request that Part 4 of the WROLA be revoked because it will enable mining operations to take underground water without license and without sufficient regulation and control. The consequences of this could be dire for agricultural water users and for any groundwater dependent ecosystems (including wetlands, creeks and rivers) in the vicinity of a mine. We believe it is crucial that neighbouring landholders retain the right to challenge the interference and use of underground water by mining and that the Land Court maintain oversight of the whole process and is able to rule on appeals.

We also take this opportunity to express our disappointment that the Petroleum and Gas industry has been granted a statutory right to take and interfere with underground water. This creates great inequity between water users and poses a terrible risk to ecosystems. If mining operations were to be granted the same right the issues would be exacerbated. To ensure fair treatment of both the petroleum and gas industry and mining industry it would be appropriate to revoke the statutory right already granted to petroleum and gas.



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In addition we would like to stress that protecting our riparian areas and riverbeds is important to the functioning of the whole water cycle. We applaud the revocation of the designated watercourse provisions and urge the Government to ensure that adequate regulation of interference with riparian areas is reinstated as part of the review of this legislation. The current self-assessment approach for riparian protection permits is not working to achieve the protection of waterways and harmonious relationships between neighbours.

Please contact the general enquiries number above if you wish to have further clarification of any of the points raised.

Yours sincerely

Dr Tanzi Smith
Secretary
The Greater Mary Association Inc.