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From: scott sledge [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 3 July 2020 3:18 PM
To: NRC
Subject: Tweed water security

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Dear **The Natural Resource Commission Staff**,

Re: **Water Sharing Plan: Tweed River Area Unregulated and Alluvial Water Sources 2010**

I am putting in a few ideas on behalf of myself and the many Northern Rivers Guardians, Inc who may not have heard about the current review.

CC: **Tweed Shire Council**

Clause 48(1) Byrrill Creek dam

The current prohibition of a Dam within Byrrill Creek Water Source has been a positive environmental outcome and I recommend this prohibition remains within the Water Sharing Plan.

It has helped preserve the Byrrill Creek catchment areas with its high riparian conservation status, numerous threatened species, Aboriginal cultural heritage sites, and the wildlife & climate change corridor linking Mt Warning & Mebbin National Parks.

It is to be noted that Tweed Council has already adopted raising Clarrie Hall Dam wall as the preferred option for water augmentation & also has a 20 year moratorium that bans any dam proposal at Byrrill Creek until 16 May 2032.

I support the Tweed Council statement at its meeting of 18 June 2020 that resolved:

* Council maintains its long standing and scientific based opposition to the building of a dam at Byrrill Creek.

Environmental Water Flows

Tweed shire's river systems flow through and support an internationally significant highly biodiverse environment. I do not support reducing environmental flows on any stream or river, during low flows & drought: Environmental flows are a critical and positive outcome of the current water sharing plan.

1. Demand Management

The long-term security of fresh water for the Tweed region will depend largely upon the ability of the community to appreciate that it is a finite resource and behave accordingly: tertiary -treated drinking water should never be used to hose down paved areas around buildings. It is better to

adopt penalties than to destroy environments. All new dwellings need be required to install rainwater tanks and other water saving techniques.

Governments need to recognise that publicly-funded water augmentation is often intended to bolster the profits of property developers intent on raising population figures at the expenses of the existing residents/ratepayers. This short-sighted appetite can never be satisfied and is leading the entire world into danger of environmental damage and habitat loss to both humans and wildlife. Greater regulation and monitoring is essential.

2. Unique environment:

The area around Mt. Warning is home to many species and has a vast allure to visitors and residents. Should a dam be constructed at Byrill Creek the existing road will be drowned (along with many houses and important natural habitat. The cost of building another road high up the mountain slope would be prohibitive and thus the nation would lose a valuable circuit around this spectacular mountain feature. I doubt the local [population would allow that to happen.

3. From Clarrie Hall Dam

Environmental Water flow releases from Clarrie Hall Dam to feed Doon Doon Creek & the Tweed River should remain. It proved to be an important aquatic refuge during the recent drought, when the majority of all creeks & the upper reaches of the South arm of the Tweed River ran dry. .

4.. Fish Ladder Flows at Bray Park Weir

The Environmental flow releases for the Fish Ladder at Bray Park Weir should also remain to allow migration of native fish upstream.

5.. Clause 43. Access rules for the taking of surface water

As the Tweed Council relies on flow releases from the Clarrie Hall Dam for the urban Tweed Water Supply, that during drought times there should be a reduced access\ and statutes to cease pumping water from the Tweed River to properties with self regulated water licences drawing from the river . These irrigators need to be utilising best practise water efficiency measures, and accountable & monitored metered use of water extracted, and a cease pump restriction, during drought times and extremely low flows.

6. Environmental Flows, Drought and Water Extraction Facilities

These restrictions should also apply to all five water extraction & water bottling plants within Tweed Shire who are taking water from aquifers, when there are low flows in nearby creeks & rivers or during droughts.

7. Water Licences

There is a lack of scientific data of both above ground & groundwater sources in the Tweed which means the current Water Sharing Plan, is ineffective for future decisions on water licensing. This needs to be remedied (& funded) as soon as possible, and Climate change uncertainty needs to be taken into account.

Lack of compliance by many of water users in the Tweed is inadequate to effectively manage and put the Water Sharing Plan into operation. The self regulating of water licenses is open to abuse and has proved not accountable within the Water Sharing Plan or regulatory bodies.

8. Climate Change

A future Water Sharing Plan has to address Climate Change more effectively. The Tweed experienced its worst flooding event during Cyclone Debbie, March 2017, and its worst drought in 2019, and also the increasingly frequent overtopping of the Bray Park Weir with salt water inundation. These occurrences are predicted to become more extreme.

Clause 14 of the existing WSP has provisions to manage the sharing of water based on long-term averages, however it needs to reflect these changes, particularly low flows.

Yours Sincerely,

Name Scott Sledge, President , Northern Rivers Guardians, Inc ,....and President , Nimbin
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