

Is opposing Traveston Dam a 'NIMBY' issue?

No way! The proposed damming of the Mary River raises significant national and international issues, and as such has drawn the criticism of many global environmental agencies.

A quick summary of some of the potential damages this dam would cause include:

- Habitat destruction and possible extinction of seven currently endangered species (Mary River Turtle, Mary River Cod, Queensland Lungfish, Southern Snapping Turtle, Cascade Tree Frog, Giant Barred Frog, Tusked Frog);
- Inundation of thousands of hectares of prime agricultural land – in a time of uncertain climate change and nationally reduced food production capacity, this is a significant loss;
- Greenhouse gas emissions of unacceptable levels, including significant amounts of Methane - a much more serious emission than carbon dioxide;
- Inundation of around 500ha of endangered riparian rainforest – again, not wise in a time of uncertain climate change;
- Severely reduced downstream flows all the way to the Great Sandy Straits, which will impact downstream river ecology, and water-reliant industry;
- Impacts fishing and tourism industries from Gympie to Hervey Bay (this includes the iconic and World Heritage listed Fraser Island);
- Permanent damage to the ecosystem of wetlands at the mouth of the Mary River that play host to many migratory bird species which are supposedly protected by the Ramsar Treaty (Ramsar is an international wetland preservation treaty to which the Australian Federal Government is a signatory).

"If Traveston Dam is the answer... it must've been a pretty silly question!"

We must stop Traveston Dam... what can I do to help?

To get informed:

- Visit www.savethemaryriver.com
- follow links to other sites on downstream impacts, the current water crisis, discussion forums & more.
- Visit the Kandanga No Dam Info Centre

To get involved:

- Write letters to your State and Federal MP's to express your concerns
- Use every public opportunity to denounce the plan (talkback radio, letters to the editor, online forums etc)
- Visit our online shop & invest in No Dam merchandise to financially support the campaign and display your opposition
- Make a donation
- Keep an ear out for public events or rallies planned near where you live, and attend
- Volunteer some time at the No Dam Info Centre
- Arrange a public display, info night or fundraising event in your hometown
- Use the proposed dam as a topic for school or Uni assignments (there's plenty of scope... from social impacts to environmental devastation)
- Lend your skills (from filmmakers to frontline campaigners... lawyers to leaflet distributors...there's room for you all!)

"The tide of change is simply a lot of drips moving in the same direction!"

The Kandanga No Dam Info Centre is situated at the historic Kandanga Railway Station
Open 7 days a week from 10am to 4pm
Ph. 07 5488 4800

www.savethemaryriver.com

STOPPING TRAVESTON DAM YOUR QUICK GUIDE



WE WILL BUILD THIS DAM... WHETHER IT'S FEASIBLE OR NOT!



Top 10 questions...
& answers that prove the proposed Traveston Dam is a dumb idea for the 'Smart State'

1. Will Traveston Dam help solve the current water crisis?

No! If it does not rain in the major catchments in 2008, Brisbane will be in serious trouble. The proposed dam could not be constructed until at least 2012.

2. How well would it have performed during the current drought?

Deputy Premier, Anna Bligh stated on March 30, 2007 that "if the dam had been built two to three years ago it would be close to full by now." This statement was contradicted during the Federal Senate Enquiry in April 2007, when the Queensland Government advised that "if Traveston Dam had been built prior to 2003... it would have been at approximately 16% in April 2007."

The figures prove that if Traveston Dam already existed, it would be failing along with the other SEQ dams!

3. Will it provide water security for the future?

No! The current demand for water in Brisbane is 400,000 megalitres (ML) per year, or roughly 200,000 Olympic swimming pools. By the year 2050, it is estimated that Brisbane will need at least twice as much. Based on the government's figures, Traveston Dam Stage 1 will provide less than 8% of the water needed in 2050, and Stage 2 is only marginally better at 12%. The construction of Traveston Dam would use billions of dollars on a project that will not even begin to future-proof the state's water supply.

4. What's this Stage 1 / Stage 2 / split proposal all about?

In April 2006 the State Government announced their intention to build a 'megadam', based on the results of a desktop study. This was met with voluble public outcry so the proposal was diluted into a two stage plan.

In Stage 1, the dam wall would be constructed to the maximum height, but the water level limited. Stage 2 would entail some alteration of the floodgates, and the water level allowed to reach full capacity. The government remains cagey about when Stage 2 may be implemented. This split proposal has generated much confusion in assessing the full impact of the dam, and made full and thorough environmental impact assessments impossible.

5. How cost effective is it really?

The original desktop study used to select and justify Traveston Crossing Dam was based on an annual yield of 215,000 megalitres (ML) and a construction cost of \$1.0bn – giving a unit cost of \$4,695 per ML/yr capacity. Now, at \$1.7bn for construction for 70,000 ML (Stage 1), the unit cost has risen by over 500% to \$24,300 per ML/yr.

An independent report by the University of Technology Sydney on the water supply needs of SEQ, puts the total bulk cost of water from Traveston Dam at between \$3.40 and \$4.65 per kilolitre and the cost of desalinating seawater at \$2.06 to \$2.55 per kilolitre. Current Brisbane City water rates are \$1.15 per kilolitre. A kilolitre of water is 1,000 litres (about what the average house uses in one day).

6. But it's a crisis... are there any real alternatives?

There's plenty of alternatives... they're cheaper and more environmentally responsible, both on a small and large scale. These include household and industry demand reduction, household installation of water-saving devices, stormwater harvesting, rainwater tanks, recycling waste water, desalination, and more.

The University of Technology Sydney report found that Traveston Dam is an expensive and unnecessary component of Queensland's water plans.

7. The Mary Valley is very flat. Is it really a suitable site for a dam?

The proposed dam, if full, would have an average depth of 5 metres, making it the shallowest in South East Queensland. However the Queensland Government has gone to extraordinary lengths to divert attention from this by selectively comparing it with a few selected dams in the north of the state where there is heavy tropical rainfall.

Any way you look at it, Traveston Dam would be shallow because it is located on an alluvial flood plain. Shallow dams are prone to substantial evaporation and seepage losses, and suffer aquatic weed infestation, which require expensive and ongoing weed control programs.

8. What about the track record of the State Government in dam building?

The State Government has held up the recently completed Paradise Dam on the Burnett River as the model on which it will deal with environmental issues associated with the proposed Traveston Dam. But how perfect is Paradise?

In the late 1990's, the World Bank commissioned an extensive study into the impacts of dam construction worldwide and established international guidelines for the development of new dams.

Five years on from the World Commission on Dams, the World Wildlife Fund published a report that singled out 6 dams worldwide for a special mention as examples of worst practice. One of these is Paradise Dam.

In addition to that, Paradise Dam has never exceeded 30% capacity and is now almost empty. Is this really the level of environmental excellence that the Queensland Government aspires to?

9. Do fish ladders really work?

The way the Government proposes to protect the endangered fish species in the Mary River is with a fish ladder.

In 2002, the Queensland Department of Primary Industries conducted an experiment at the Walla Weir on the Burnett River, which has a fish ladder. They electronically tagged

1,285 lungfish and monitored their passage through the fishway 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for an entire year. During that time, only 7 fish successfully navigated the fish ladder. The rather understated comment by the DPI at that time was that "the fishlock does not appear to provide optimal passage for fish".

On the ABC's 7.30 Report on June 22, the Premier stated that the fish elevator ladder at Paradise Dam "seems to be working effectively as far as I am concerned."

The government has been reluctant to release information relating to the effectiveness of the fish transport device in place at Paradise Dam. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Traveston Dam finally admits that "the Paradise Dam fishway has largely not been in effective operation since the dam was constructed due to low water levels associated with prolonged drought."

In addition, there are plans to install a 'world first' Turtle Ramp on Traveston Dam, to facilitate turtle movement over the wall. It is environmentally negligent to trial a 'world first' design on an already endangered species after the destruction of it's remaining habitat.

10. What about the water grid? Is it a good idea?

Taking water from the Sunshine Coast to supply Brisbane is a short-term fix. The SEQ water grid simply delays the inevitable so that we can all run out of water together.

The water grid is dinosaur technology. Moving water around the southeast corner does not create one new drop of water... but it does use vast quantities of power and will ultimately increase the cost of the water enormously.

The Queensland Government is spending \$9bn on the Water Grid, and the cost is escalating by the day. In June 2006, The Deputy Premier announced another \$600M to fast track the western corridor recycling line, the total cost of which (\$2.3bn) is now comparable to the cost of a major desalination plant. At a public meeting in July 2006 Premier Beattie said "if you were right about desalination being cheaper we would do it tomorrow. I just wish that you were right and I was wrong". It seems that he was indeed wrong.