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25 August 2000

Chris Kirby
Secretary MMLCDC
C/O PO Box
Beacon W.A.
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Dear Chris

I am writing to emphasize my genuine concerns regarding the draining of Beacon River via open deep drainage which is proposed to run through our property.

Although in favour of the concept of draining "salt back to the sea" I feel the applicant in his hasty quest for solutions to his salinity problem has overlooked our concerns, either through ignorance or lack of thought due to the rush to apply for Government funding which closes on the 30th August 2000.

I will not provide unconditional support for such a project and will certainly not be making any financial contributions to it including any maintenance in the future etc. A portion of our farm (location no's 737 & 732) which has been ear marked for approx. 3.75ha of open drainage to transport waste and saline water to the Lake McDermott system, has no sign of salinity or shallow water table whatsoever and is a highly productive part of our business.

Our soil consists mainly of heavy Salmon Gum country interlaced with sand seams throughout the profile which has poor water holding ability and is unsuitable for a deep transfer drain. We have two dams on the property close to the proposed drain which leak water extremely fast. The water holding silcrete layer is at a depth of four to six metres as indicated by recent drilling.

The proposed drain which will "leak like a sieve" has an average depth of only 2-2.5 metres.

As mentioned before the purpose of the drain is to transfer excess salt and water to Lake McDermott from an area where land owners have had a long term salinity problem placing our productive farmland at risk.

Following is a list of concerns regarding the proposed drain which have not been addressed:

1. How will the waste water be prevented from contaminating our farm (Either through seepage or overflow).

I feel subsurface sealed piping is the only option.

2. Who will maintain and clear my section of drain as I will provide no financial or physical help. (Due to the shallow grade a small obstruction will severely impede the flow, not to mention silt residues.)

3. As this proposed drain will divide my paddocks what will be done to provide machinery access across the drain.
4. Who, in the event of problems arising from the drain shall be liable and provide compensation for those landowners affected.
5. What scientific devices will be in place to monitor benefits or problems associated with the drain.
6. Who is responsible for water management and flow control associated with the drain.

Although some of these concerns are of a minor nature they all need to be addressed and solutions found for my approval. Only then can I support this drain project.

Yours faithfully



Nick Gillett

C.C. G.H.D, Shire of Mt. Marshall, John Dunne.

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Alex Campbell
C/O Don Crawford
Chair
State Salinity Council
Fax: 92257745

Dear Alex,

Re: Drainage Project initiated by John Dunne to drain the "Beacon River" through "Lake McDermott" and subsequently titled Beacon River Catchment Salinity Management Project.

I am writing with concern about this proposed drain and project prepared by John Dunne and Gutteridge, Haskins and Davey (GHD) Pty. Ltd. The Mount Marshall LCDC has supported a motion of conditional support for a feasibility study only at the recent A.G.M. This was also conditional on the support of all affected landowners from Job Rd to the Mount Marshall Shire southern boundary. It is extremely alarming that this proposal now seeks funding for a drain in year 1 of the project. Indeed the whole process seems extremely rushed. I find the proposal short of detailed analysis and thus would like to raise some issues of concern. I have previously written to the MMLCDC, Mount Marshall Shire Council, GHD and John Dunne detailing points of concern on 25/08/2000.

Our property is the second one immediately North of Lake McDermott. The proposed drain would extend 7.5 kms through Ninghan Locations 593,596,598,603. The situation is further complicated with major waterways entering the system from the West (Couper's Creek catchment) and the North East (Eyanning catchment). After significant and extended rain events all three systems flow considerable water, silt and debris joining each other at different intervals and becoming one towards the southern end of Ninghan Location 593.

The drainage proposal appears to have some major concerns for our enterprise:

(1) Drain Leakage: The surface bores we have drilled in the area of the proposed drain (to measure groundwater) indicate a depth of 4 – 6 metres to a layer suitable to hold and contain water. The soil above this is well drained loam that is unsuitable for a sealed drain. Indeed surface and below surface water drains readily downwards. Lining of the drain may be proposed as a solution. This option could have very high ongoing maintenance requirements and cleaning difficulties. If the proposed drain were to leak, then this immediately adds to our

groundwater problems. The Beacon River catchment is an extremely large system which, combined with our existing catchments, could flood our valley at such a rate any rectification strategies, if they were implemented, would come too late. In any case, leakage is certainly not acceptable in any form.

(2) Drain Blockage: The gradient is extremely shallow. Any impediment could easily block the flow. As well we have the other two catchments mentioned earlier. After a flooding rain these systems, and any other flow into the drain itself would deposit sand, silt and debris into the drain causing blockage. As the drain goes further downstream with large amounts of water entering it, there seems great potential for blockages to occur. The shallow gradient as mentioned earlier only further complicates the problem.

(3) Drain Maintenance: If the drain was not maintained properly then further leakage/ blockage problems would occur. Who is responsible for maintaining and funding this? The drain would be in existence for generations to come, farm ownership will change, the maintenance goes on. The cost over time will exceed the initial works. Who will fund this and what safeguards are in place to ensure compliance over millennium?

(4) Hydrology, Engineering and Impact Data: The proposal is being pushed along at a very fast pace. When will we have some data available to note any benefits and impacts the drain would have? Is any landowner likely to be affected? What is the impact on the Lake McDermott reserve itself?

(5) Management: Who will be responsible for managing and controlling the drain? Such things as water flows, leakage, maintenance, impact measurement, contamination, budgeting, unauthorized modifications or additions, compensation, title / control covering the drain etc need to be considered.

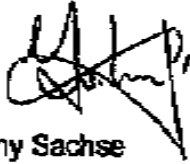
(6) Cost: How will the project and maintenance requirements be funded both short and long term? Any claims for compensation or payment default issues dealt with?

(7) Best Landcare Practice: This can only be encouraged as we look towards better water management, higher water use cropping and pasture systems combined with such things as forage perennials, specific farm forestry options etc. More research and development (e.g. better legume systems) is needed however. Strategic groundwater pumping (contained on farm) could also help. It has been disturbing however to see bush still being cleared recently in the Beacon River catchment.

I am sympathetic to those farming in valley profiles – indeed I am one. I know some farmers and landowners may feel strong pressure to fast track this drainage proposal. Indeed I can only support the collection of data for the

drainage project at present. However, because of the issues involved, only some of which I have outlined, any decision for the drain to proceed does not have my endorsement or support at this point in time. Thankyou and I remain

Yours Faithfully,



Tony Sachse