

Dam the Mary River? Save the Mary River!

MEDIA RELEASE April 1, 2007

Save the Mary River Coordinating Group

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More dam lies from Deputy Premier Bligh

JUST hours after the Cooloola Shire was drought-declared by the Queensland Department of Primary Industries, Deputy Premier Anna Bligh spoke in a television interview about the implications for the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam.

She said: “The actual catchment area is still the largest, best performing catchment in the south-east corner. If the dam had been built two to three years ago it would be close to full now.”

But Darren Edward, process engineer of Dagon, just north of the proposed dam wall near Gympie, disputes Ms Bligh’s data and has claimed the dam would have only collected 5 per cent capacity under her projection.

With other researchers campaigning against the proposed Mary River dam, he has spent months analysing the dam modelling work conducted by the DNR&W and Queensland Water Infrastructure (QWI).

As a result, the Save the Mary River Coordinating Group has developed its own time-step model of the proposed dam, using the same Government data which ends at June, 1999, which totally ignores the past eight years of drought.

“Our model is based on actual recorded stream flows in the river at the dam site, not just rainfall records, and shows that if the Traveston Crossing Dam had been completed to stage 1 on April 1, 2004, then by April 1, 2007, it would only have been 5 per cent full,” Mr Edward said.

The Save the Mary River group’s hydrological model is a “daily time step model”, working exactly the same way as the Government’s modelling software.

“Even though we believe the DNR&W work under-estimates the effects of evaporation and seepage, we’ve done our calculations employing exactly the same set of assumptions used in the Government’s modelling,” Mr Edward said.

“If Ms Bligh or anyone else doubts our results then I ask them this: If every other dam in South-East Queensland has dropped in level over the past two to three years, then how can anyone expect a new dam, starting at empty, to have filled over the same period? The concept is ridiculous.”

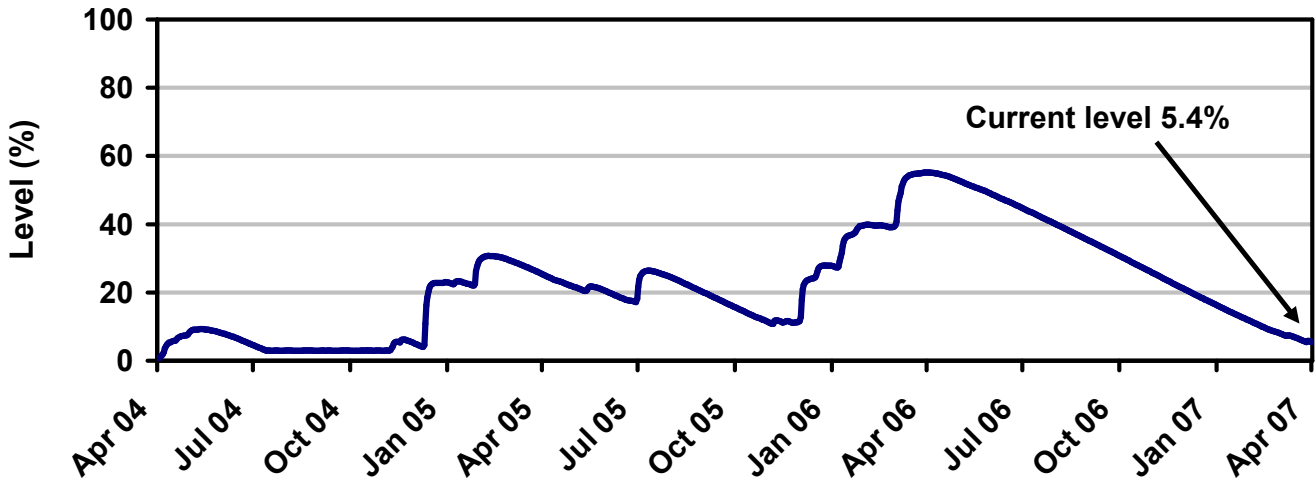
Mr Edward said that the Save the Mary River group had tried to discuss their calculations with the DNR&W and QWI.

“Just last week we organised a forum at Griffith University, but all of the Government and QWI people we invited declined to attend. One even cited their reason as a conflict of interest,” he said.

“I cannot understand why they would want to bury their heads in the sand like that.

“The Deputy Premier is on record saying the dam would have filled in the past two to three years, so we challenge her to produce the proof that her statement is based on fact and it not just ‘more of the same’ propoganda designed to reassure people in Brisbane that the Government knows what it is doing.”

Traveston Crossing Dam Levels (if completed to Stage 1 on 1st April 2004)



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