



Dam the Mary River? Save the Mary River!

MEDIA RELEASE March 26, 2008

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River crisis: Don't let the Mary become the Murray - kayaker joins the fight

LAST year when river campaigner Steve Posselt set out on his epic journey by foot and kayak from Brisbane to Adelaide via the Murray-Darling, he entered a world of unknowns.

For four months he paddled and walked, often dragging his wheeled kayak behind him as he wound his way through four states of Australia.

Steve plans to be at Traveston Crossing for the second anniversary of the State Government's dam decision on April 27 when he will draw the media spotlight to the heart of the fight to save the Mary River.

He will then continue downstream through Maryborough, the Great Sandy Straits in the lee of Fraser Island before paddling southward along the coast and back to Brisbane. The entire trip is estimated to take five weeks.

Steve's earlier trip down the Murray-Darling system gave his Australian audience a fascinating journey as he made regular reports on the state of the rivers and spoke at many venues along the way.

The former water engineer is passionate about rivers and educating people about climate change, and it is this that fuelled the trip and turned him into a modern day adventurer.

Steve reached Adelaide at the end of September and is now turning his attention to the Mary River near Gympie where, despite massive opposition, the State Government is forging ahead with plans to build the Traveston Crossing Dam.

But Steve's "involvement" amounts to much more than lobbying or letter writing. On April 12, he and his kayak will depart Brisbane paddling up the Brisbane River, across Wivenhoe Dam then across Somerset Dam on the Stanley River.

A gruelling walk with kayak will be necessary as Steve climbs out of the Stanley catchment near Woodford, climbs to Bellthorpe at the southern end of the Conondale Ranges and descends into the upper catchment of the Mary.

As with the Murray trip, Steve will maintain a regularly updated website on his travels and it is anticipated he will be joined by other paddlers along the way.

His message is plain. He can see the writing on the wall about climate change and its impact on our traditional methods of water supply and sees as sheer folly the addition of another dam when dams across Australia have been letting us down.

When he adds ever-increasing fuel prices and the diminishing supply of oil to the equation, he just shakes his head at the wisdom of flooding good farming land near urban centres when there are less expensive, more reliable alternatives.

Before setting out, Steve will give three presentations on his Murray Darling expedition as fund-raisers for the Mary trip:, Gympie Civic Centre on Wednesday April 2nd at 7.30pm and Noosa at the J on Thursday April 3rd at 7.30pm

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