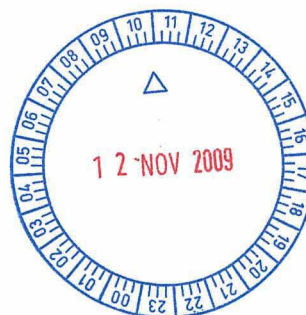


John B Clark

PUBLIC



Cassandra Stephenson
Committee Clerk
Standing Committee on Public Administration
Legislative Council
Parliament House Perth WA 6000

Subject: Submission re Recreation Activities within Public Drinking Water Source Areas. I refer to the south west and Peel regions.

The social, economic and environmental values of the public being able to access public drinking water supply areas for recreation are well recognised by government. Historically inland fresh water areas were used for public recreation in the Peel and south west region of WA. When government woke up to the fact that the population, agriculture and industry required more water (governments had known for 20 years prior re the future shortage) the areas that were open to public recreation were closed. These water areas were then declared for public drinking water supply and a water source protection plan (WSPP) was instituted and the water was taken to supply Perth and its environs via the Integrated Water Supply System (IWSS) from the Peel and south west region of WA. Recreation means many things to many people, to some just being able to visit the fresh water is sufficient, others do sports, fish, individual hobbies, picnicking, historical family reunions, walking, water skiing, boating, camping, cub/scouts/brownies/guides, orienteering, swimming, marron fishing, bird watching, canoeing, cycling and I'm sure there are other interests. The fresh water dam/river areas are the recreational places of choice for the public to carry out their recreation in many forms which means many things to many people. Thankfully with the change to a Liberal/National party government in WA the Logue Brook Dam was saved from becoming another lost recreation area, which the religious group and the camping/chalet managers based there were pleased about as there's nowhere else to go. Fresh water dams lost/restricted for recreation purposes or earmarked for PDWSA:

- Harvey Dam
- Stirling Dam
- Samson Brook Dam
- Wokalup Dam
- Wellington Dam (Pending)
- Harris Dam
- Brunswick Dam (Pending)
- Glen Mervyn Dam (Pending)
- Blackwood River Dam (Pending)

The Standing Committee investigating the **costs to access drinking water recreation areas** know that the public have already paid to government via taxation and water consumption charges to visit the areas that are still available. The Committee will also know that the public are still paying taxes and water charges for water areas they cannot visit due to the closure of these areas to the public. To answer the costs question I suggest that there be NO costs to access drinking water recreational water areas.

Cost benefits to public health are apparent re recreation. Obesity and diabetes 2 are a major medical problem in Australia, so the more exercise people get the healthier they become, being able to recreate in public drinking water source areas will open up alternative forms of exercise to help prevent the onset of obesity and diabetes 2.

Water quality in the recreation areas is not a concern as the testing done by the water authorities can confirm. The water is potable in areas where recreation can take place, the arguments and documentation via the Water Corporation and their departments on the subject of drinking water is that if there is any form of human contact the water it is a danger to human health, regardless of water treatment at dosing plants many times before getting to the consumption stage. Water from Samson Brook has been used for drinking water since dammed in 1941 and then from another dam 7 km below built in 1962, recreation took place at both dams until 2002 when a decision was made to divert on average 8 billion litres of water to the IWSS. The water quality has been drinkable for 61 years with recreation taking place in the Samson Brook and its catchment area. Waroona Dam was built in 1966 with recreation taking place for 36 years which includes water skiing with upwards of 60 boats rotating use on the dam during Xmas/New Year holiday periods and 1200 people there on Boxing Day. The water quality test records the water as still good!!

I do not differentiate between cultures and the use of available water areas, the water is there for all Australians to use.

Management is already in place regarding the monitoring of water quality, but would have to be more frequent to comply with the modus operandi of the Water Corporation. Management would have to be augmented and changed to accommodate the recreational impact that will occur, other government departments/agencies with expertise in the areas of recreation will have to be part of an inter-agency management body and should include the following:

- Water & Rivers Commission
- Dept; of Conservation & Land Management
- Dept: of Fisheries
- Dept; of Transport
- Dept: of Police
- Local Government for the specific area re Rangers.
- WA State Government

I suggest a **Management Plan** to formalise a structure being a Management Committee, co-ordinated and chaired for example by the Water Authority and the DCLM conducting the day to day management of the recreation activities with priorities agreed by the Management Committee. Additional funding from the WA Government will be required to include recreational status requirements in the PDWS catchment areas.

I cannot inform the position re interstate and international legislation and policy and practice in regard to PDWSA, this would be for the Committee to research.

The following government documents mention the importance to the public of the recreational/social use of potable water sources, but in the main a mention in the documents was as far as it went

The government document Regional Western Australian Development Policy 2003 @ page 51 mentions that **“the recreational needs of people utilising the ocean and our rivers must also be taken into account when considering management of these terrestrial water resources”**.

Government document State Water Plan 2007. At page 16 headed The Value of Water Resources states that the **“WA Government is committed to managing water resources for current and future generations and finding the right balance to realize the environmental, social and economic values of water”**.

An holistic strategy was recommended in the Samson Brook Catchment Area Water Source Protection Plan, Water & Rivers Report WRP 50 of 2002 @ page 18, **“development of an holistic strategy for the south west for future development of proposed water supplies such as Logue Brook and Wellington, recognising the importance of these resources to the recreational fishing community and in line with the principles of sustainable development”**.

The Dept; of Water, South West regional water plan June 2008 (Draft Strategic Directions) @ page 12 headed The Vision states that **“ The South West Region’s water resources and services are sustainedly managed under the stewardship of all communities and organisations to protect and enhance the unique ecological, cultural, economic and social values they support “**.

A document of interest to the Committee re the subject is The Waroona Waterways Recreation and Tourism Master Plan 2003 by Regeneration Technology Pty Ltd it was prepared for the WA Water Corp; in conjunction with the Water & Rivers, DCLM and Waroona Shire. **The Recreation/Tourism Master Plan was a key outcome and a key issue re the effect on recreation/tourism due to the Samson Brook Redevelopment Scheme to a PDWS.**

Summary: I have supplied the names of 9 dams in the Peel and southwest of Western Australia for referral/consideration for the Committee to investigate. There would be more dams in the inquiry area that I am not aware of that would be of interest to the Committee. There have been many documents, mainly government ones that mention the subject of this submission, but they have all come to nothing in seriously considering fully utilising the inland fresh water areas for recreational/social use, even though the subject has been documented in 1986 and possible earlier.

I am at a loss as to why government base their resistance to the use of any PDWSA for recreation/social use. Recreational/social use of water does not destroy it, waste or contaminate it or move it, the water is just enjoyed by many thousands of people and reused for other purposes. Mining, forestry, log trucks, burning, feral animals, all contaminate the water catchment areas and the water, this has happened for many years, nobody jumps up and down about this contamination!

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John B Clark'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'John' being more legible than the last name 'Clark'.

Mr John B Clark 10/11/09