

WUNGONG DAM, JARRAH THINNING PROPOSAL

1892. Hon Jim Scott to the Minister for Government Enterprises

- (1) Is the Government planning to thin the jarrah forest in the Wungong catchment in the hope of increasing runoff into the Wungong Dam?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that many people consider that this is a high risk strategy because it may increase the salinity of the water in the dam?
- (3) Why then is the Government proceeding with this plan when other options such as water conservation have not been fully explored?
- (4) Will the Minister table any environmental assessments carried out by the Water Corporation on this jarrah thinning proposal?

Hon NICK GRIFFITHS replied:

- (1) Yes, the Government agreed to support the development of this trial in the State Water Strategy. The trial cannot take place, if it is to occur, until community consultation and regulatory approval has been obtained.
- (2) Yes. However, I am advised that such a view is contrary to research over more than two decades.
- (3) Given the serious implication of a drying climate, evaluation of methods of increasing the yield from existing sources, new source options and aggressive water conservation programs need to be vigorously pursued.
- (4) Any assessment, or need for advice on the project proposal, would follow the procedures of the Environmental Protection Act (1986). These procedures include the provision for extensive public input and consideration by the Environmental Protection Authority.