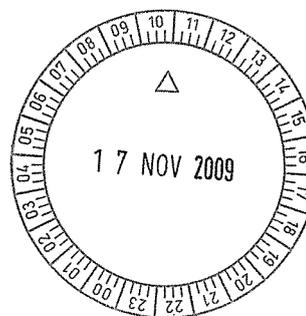


The Committee Clerk,
Public Administration Committee
Legislative Council
Parliament House,
Perth, WA 6000.

PUBLIC



9th November 2009

Dear Sir/Madam,

As a keen freshwater angler and a final year student of Marine Science at Murdoch University I would like to express my interest and views on the proposed changes to recreational access of our catchment dams.

Freshwater angling has been a hobby of mine from a young age, and in recent years, limitations to public access of our catchment areas for the purpose of preserving drinking water quality, has significantly impacted the range of areas available for recreational fishing. I consider the re-opening of public access to catchment dams to be beneficial to a number of separate parties and not just for recreational fisherman, though the importance of sustainable, controlled use has to be stressed in order to ensure that quality of our water supplies is not compromised.

Controls and regulations must be put in place if public access was to be re-instated. A permit to fish these bodies of water would be ideal, with a recreational user either paying an annual fee or a nominated fee each time they enter a catchment area. The revenue obtained could then be used to upgrade facilities such as perhaps putting toilets etc and fund further research into related areas. Log books should be used when entering and leaving the park as hiring to staff to maintain entrances would prove costly. Also in regards to the sensitivity of the areas to human impact, I believe that a footprints approach should be used where recreational users take and leave with everything they took into the area and leave nothing behind but their footprints ensuring minimal impact on the surrounding environment and water supply. Another note of importance is to ensure that no recreational user may be permitted to bring any domesticated animal or harmful species of plant that could be potentially detrimental to the area's delicate flora and fauna. People found to be violating these recommendations should have strict fines imposed upon them.

The act of fishing itself should be limited to shore based fly and lure only. If vessels were to be used, the vessel must be electric motor only. Wading should be limited where possible and fishing off structures should not be permitted. Areas of specific importance to the Water Corporation or structural integrity of the catchment dams should similarly be off limits. By following these methods we can ensure that the act of fishing itself also has minimal impact on the surrounding environment, water quality and the workings of the water corporation. This will also minimise any security risks presented.

Other benefits are the impacts on the economies of local communities in the areas of these catchment dams. As avid fisherman flock to fish these pristine bodies of water, there will be no doubt that this increased activity will be represented in money flowing into local communities through tourism and money spent at local fishing craft stores. This is to mention a few ways that revenue will be represented in local economies.

In addition to recreational fishing I would recommend the following activities to be permitted also-kayaking, rowing, sailing, bush-walking, bird-watching and cycling. Similar frameworks as the one I have proposed for recreational fishing would need to be put in place in order to monitor and regulate such activities.

Many of these catchment areas are considered to biodiversity hotspots due to the way they provide an environment of relatively low level of human impact to a wide variety of many of Australia's endemic and endangered flora and fauna. Along with the maintaining the quality of our drinking water it is essential that we preserve such fragile ecosystems for future generations, and treat the right to use these catchment areas for recreational purposes as a privilege whilst imposing heavy fines upon those who take this right for granted.

I greatly anticipate further responses, and hope that a decision is made that is mutually beneficial to all hopeful recreational users, the water supply and environment.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Goodlich