

Thankyou so much for including me for an opinion on the east coast water sharing plans. Firstly let me thankyou for the increased vigilance toward the western rivers.

Seaside Fernbay Estate is a 200 hectare site ,50 % developed into a 850 block housing community 10 kilometres north from Newcastle. We have 3 major parks , irrigated , with 1 park having a bore and WAL for 2 Mg , and other two watered from Townwater (Hunter Water) at a cost of \$2.89/Kl. Our calculations anticipate in a full drought we would require about 10Mgs per year for each park. However worst case scenario is that in a full blown drought we would be refused townwater access , with penalties applied , and our parkland grass would die. We live on top of the Stockton aquifer and have built on sandy soil that has no nutrition and drains quickly.

We believe that the Stockton Aquifer has a 14,000Mg /year allocation availability and currently about 2,500Mgs are allocated and or used.

EVALUATION

1/ Environmental outcomes. The drought of 2017-2020 was harsh yet the floods and rain of 2021-2023 lifted the water table over one metre according to PSSCouncil.

We lost a lot of native introduced flora and the local native fauna struggled except for a very small lagoon that is within a small remaining rainforest area. With Hunter Water restrictions we witnessed a lot of local flora and fauna stress. With a permanent water supply we can support the native environment.

2/Social outcomes. Our parks are the only community gathering areas and we also cater for the visiting population entitled to use our facility at our expense. There are BBQs , picnic tables, ablution block, shelters, playgrounds and more that give families, youth and adults social and recreational services.

3/ Economic outcomes. Say in a dry year we use 10Mgs/park/year of underground water which equates to 10,000Kls. At \$2.89/Kl equates to \$28,900 per park per year that Hunter Water will charge IF they allow usage. Say \$60,000 but we also legally go short of the 8 extra Mgs for the park that has a 2Mg WAL.

4/ Cultural outcomes. The seaside Fernbay community association has bylaws that protect aboriginal cultural areas from within the estate. We are surrounded by their lands and national park. We are legislated to work together with the Worimi people.

5/ Plan objectives improving outcomes. Our plan is basically to improve our water supply to sustain the vital resource we require for our parks by purchasing 30Mgs from WaterNSW at their next CA 'controlled allocation". We want to acquire a BEL so as not to compromise the underground water supply from the Stockton Aquifer.

6/ The NRC control, research, legislation and governance is adequate for maintaining what is the supply from a natural resource that would selfishly be exploited without some control that otherwise would exhaust the resource like what has happened in the Murray Darling inland river system.

Please may we be offered an opportunity to acquire 30Mgs from the Stockton coastal aquifer via WaterNSW Controlled Allocation to ensure our community parks survive.

My final say is that water (apart from oxygen) is our most vital resource in the world and our research and science must protect the supply for future generations and current provision respected with regard to natural climatic change and human interference in climate change. History of ice ages and climate are examples whereby Angkor Wat and Babylon became lost civilisations.

Regards Terry Bellamy