

Libs-Nats must push for new "Bulk Water" allocation system in Murray-Darling Basin if irrigated agriculture is to have a future.

By Kevin Long Ph 5441 2394 - Bendigo

*It took only a few days for the Liberals to back-flip on their promise not to use water from the North-South pipeline for Melbourne. However, a deeper problem is still not being addressed. Courage is needed **NOW** to re-write the disastrously failing bulk water allocations which the Victorian government has tried to lock in until 2019 as part of the Murray-Darling Basin deal.*

Letter To: TED BAILLIEU, MLA (23 Sept 2008)
LEADER OF THE VICTORIAN PARLIAMENTARY LIBERAL PARTY

Dear Mr. Baillieu ...

Last week I thought you were "Seeing the Light" but this week it seems as though you have put your "Dark Glasses" back on. We hope that one day even the Liberal Party, being driven from the big end of town, might realize that **unless you look after the country people your electoral chances will be minimized.**

North of the divide, we have no option for water other than to reduce our consumption (thus our production also) and to **"bank" some of the water from the good years so we may survive through the drought years.**

This means that the current Bulk Water Entitlement Rules (BE), which are intensifying the water shortage, need to be changed.

There are **three ways** in which our leaders are adding to the devastation being experienced by the rural people due to the water shortage.

1. ... by authorities failing to review the Campaspe System's BE, where Clause 15.2 demands a review whenever the annual inflows fall by 2 Gigaliters.

LEGALLY, THIS SHOULD HAVE BEEN INVOKED THREE YEARS AGO !!

2. ... by agreeing to endorse this allocation to 2019. (In March 2008 in a meeting between Murray Darling Basin Commission, Federal Government and the States of Qld, NSW, SA and VIC ... all agreeing to this ludicrous, backward decision). Shame on them all.
3. ... by insisting on building the North South pipeline to carry extra water out of the region.

If you want to earn your keep and do something good for this country **get the agreement reversed and setup a new BE that saves water to cover the "drought years".**

The current BE's primary aim is to supply a non-existing 100% water right, 99 years of every 100 years. **It never rations the supply to save for the drought year.** We allocate all available water in the attempt to give 100% allocation.

We don't even save any operational losses. It all has to flow in each year. How much inflow do you think would be yielded from a low rainfall year like: 1982 - 206mm, 1994 - 272mm, 2002 - 275mm? Last year Bendigo received 445mm - and that was our wet year of the El Nino-La Nina cycle!

Let's plan for the next truly dry year of the cycle – likely to be 2009.

Let's not be ostriches ... with climate change we can expect many more dry years before 2019.

For more info: www.TheLongView.com.au

"Bulk Entitlement (Campaspe System –
Goulburn-Murray Water) Conversion Order
2000 (Vic) made under "Water Act 1989"