

No Tillegra Dam Group

Save the Williams Valley



- On 13 November 2006 the NSW Premier, Morris Iemma, announced the construction of a major new 450 billion litre dam at Tillegra on the Upper Williams River, approximately 230 kms north of Sydney. The announcement was made without the prior knowledge of the local community and Dungog Council.
- Hunter Water Corporation's estimated cost of the project is \$300million for the dam plus associated pumping and hydro-power works costing a further \$40million to provide water to the Lower Hunter and the Central Coast. HWC immediately commenced purchase of land by direct negotiation.
- The project, which has been scrapped several times over the last 50 years by both past Labor and Liberal governments, will wipe out about 90 family farms and, from a technical perspective, is likely to cost a much higher amount than the \$340m due to geological instabilities in the surrounding rim zone.
- Hunter Water's own Integrated Water Resource Plan published in 2003 rejected Tillegra, putting it the second least attractive water supply, being rated only above expensive desalination.
"Building a new dam at Tillegra would be far less cost effective than many demand management and water conservation initiatives. In environmental and social impact terms progressive works to optimize the Grahamstown scheme are minor compared with...a new dam in the upper catchment area."
Hunter Water Corporation Integrated Water Resource Plan, published 2003
- The report's recommendation was to continue with the augmentation works of Grahamstown Dam and the continuation of education and better demand management initiatives resulting in a lower environmental impact.
- To date no environmental assessments, cost analysis, geotechnical, hydrological, social or safety reports have been released publicly.

"No Tillegra Dam" Group/ Save the Williams Valley

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At the Hunter Water Community Information Session at Dungog on the 16th December 2006...

- The Managing Director of Hunter Water, Mr Kevin Young, admitted that the Tillegra Dam was a political decision, **NOT** a decision initiated by Hunter Water.
- A representative from the Premiers' Department made **NO** apology for the way the Tillegra decision was dumped on the affected families in the valley.
- Residents were told the Dam will go ahead despite known fault lines in the geological structures close to the proposed dam wall, but Hunter Water has as yet done no up to date detailed geotechnical analysis, instead relying on pre-Newcastle earthquake reports over 20 years old.

The 'No Tillegra Dam Group' (NTDG) has been established by residents and supporters concerned about the dam proposal and the lack of information being provided to the community.

- The NTDG has adopted a Mission Statement and Key Objectives calling for a moratorium on the Tillegra Dam to allow for appropriate studies on the probable effects of the proposed dam and to provide viable long term solutions other than dam construction.
- The NTDG has engaged its own consultants in geology, engineering, hydrology and environmental impact assessment, to investigate the issues and provide alternatives to the Tillegra Dam.

Among the questions still unanswered:

- Why is this dam needed when in October '06 Hunter Water was topping up the Central Coast and aware of climate change but still said Tillegra Dam would not be built for at least twenty years?
- Why is this dam needed when Lostock Dam remains untapped and Hunter Water has yet to implement Stage Three of the Grahamstown expansion — both recognized as more cost effective solutions?
- We need a water management plan that values every drop of water including that going down the drain. A plan that values consultation. A plan that sees *every* resource as precious, including prime-quality farmland and pristine rivers.
- Why is this dam needed when education of water users and better water management such as tanks, smart garden-watering systems, grey-water re-use, have yet to be fully implemented?
- Why is this dam needed when existing Central Coast plans for harvesting flood flows in the Wyong River and Ourimbah Creek and linking Mardi and Mangrove dams aren't being implemented?

It's not just about water.....

- **Our future needs good farmland**
- **Our future needs wild rivers**
- **Our future needs efficient living**
- **Our future needs water supply solutions sustainable in the long term**



Why Tillegra Dam is not the best way.....

“Rainwater, stormwater and recycling are the first measures to take before considering another expensive dam, which will destroy one of the Hunter’s most fertile regions, its environment and the longstanding communities that have lived there since early settlement.

Currently only 4% of Hunter Water’s effluent is reused on golf courses, farms etc, compared to only 3% in Sydney and a commendable 20% in the country towns and cities of NSW. The Hunter does not recycle stormwater, nor does it have a high use of rainwater tanks for harvesting rainfall on-site.

As the Hunter region has an excess of water and will even export water at up to 35ML/day by November 2007, why do we need a new dam?

In last year’s IPART (the NSW government’s “independent” pricing body) water pricing review, Hunter Water did not include the dam costs in it’s projected capital works, another sign that Tillegra Dam is not a business investment decision for the “independent” Board of the Hunter Water Corporation, but one purely driven by the political needs of our current embattled NSW Government.”

*Dr Charles Essery, independent water industry consultant.
Newcastle Herald 22 February 2007*

“Water planners have two fundamental options available...
- to encourage water conservation or to increase water supply.
Voluntary water conservation is often the most affordable,
environmentally sensitive option available...”

*Securing Australia’s Urban Water Supplies
Report commissioned by the Department of the Prime Minister and
Cabinet, November 2006*

“Big dams, they were the solution to the 19th century and the 20th century, and they’ve done us really well. They have served as well over the last two centuries but that’s not going to be the case any more. We have to get away from climate sensitive infrastructure and start to look for a range of measures that would help us be flexible in meeting our water needs.”

*Dr Arlene Buchan, Australian Conservation Foundation
‘Difference of Opinion’ ABC TV 19 February 2007*

“The Premier’s announcement...circumvents established urban water planning processes designed to protect consumers and the environment and allow public input. Tripling the available surface storages in the name of “drought-proofing” seems like gold-plating for a system that has performed well to date. In the longer term, the Central Coast has its own supply alternatives that it may choose to pursue. Building the dam (Tillegra) will simply entrench higher than necessary water usage in both industry and the community. *Tillegra’s the dam we just don’t have to have*”

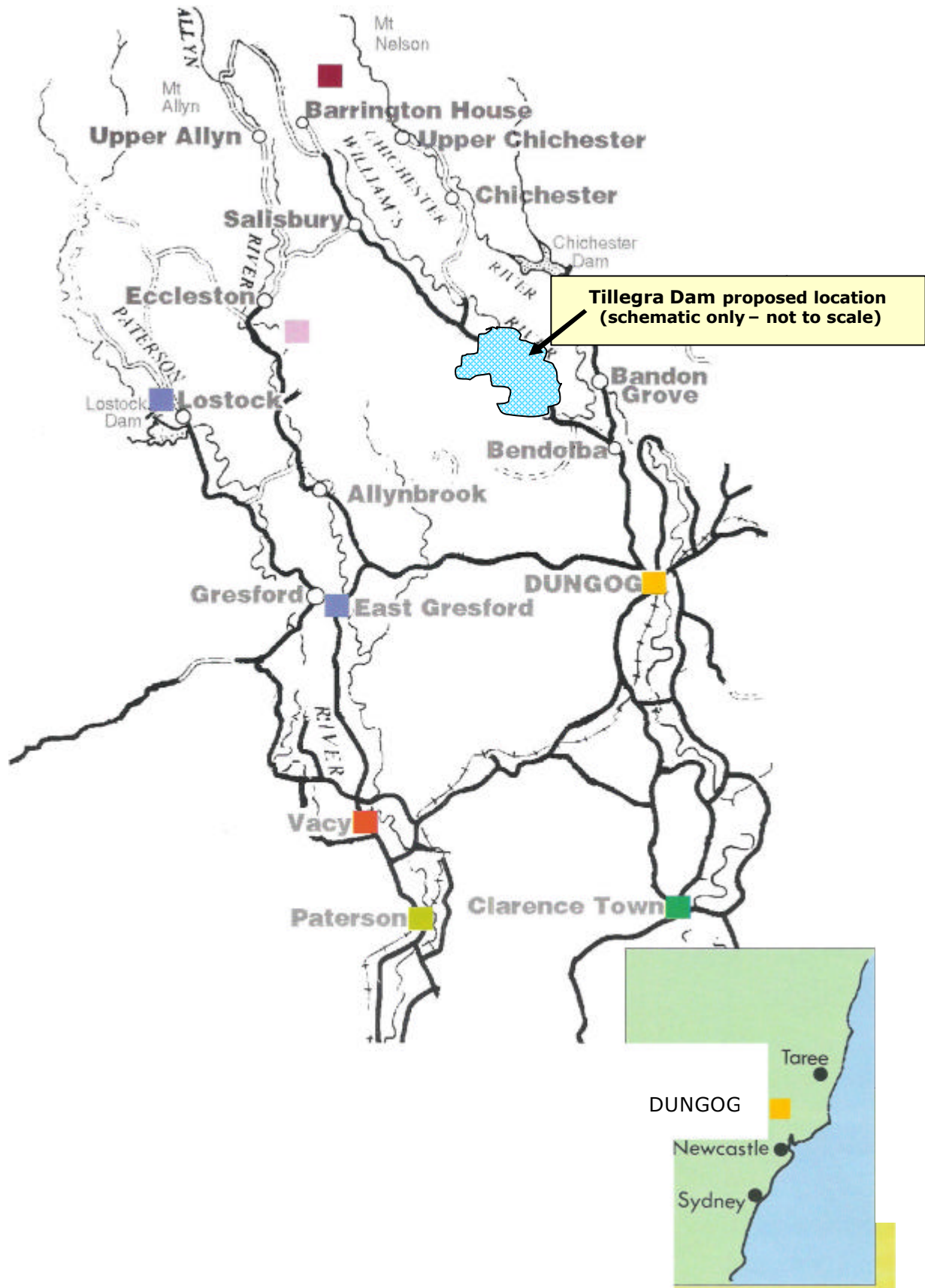
*Dr Simon Fane, Institute for Sustainable Futures,
Newcastle Herald 17 November 2006*



**Concerned local residents, including local landholder actor Hugo Weaving,
meeting at Tillegra Bridge, site of the proposed dam.**

“It’s just wrong” – Hugo Weaving

Regional Map Showing Location and approximate Inundation Area of Tillegra Dam



Map courtesy of Tourist Information Dungog
The Dungog Information and Neighbourhood Service