Wheezer the lungfish says, "Save the Mary River!"

Dam the Mary River? Save the Mary River!

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Save the Mary River Coordinating Group
Support and Information Centre, Kandanga Railway, Ph: 5488 4800
http://www.savethemaryriver.com/ savethemaryriver@gmail.com

Mary River Dam won't save Gympie from floods

Deputy Premier Anna Bligh's claim that the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam would protect Gympie from flooding is positively misleading, according to the research team working for the Save the Mary Coordinating Group.

"Our long-term hydrological modelling of the Government's dam proposal, based on historical flows in the Mary River, shows that a dam storage even bigger than the Government's latest proposal would have had almost no flood mitigation effect at all on the recent historic major floods," group member Steve Burgess said.

This was because the dam would have been almost full when the flood events of 1968, 1974 and 1989 occurred.

Mr Burgess has been studying the likely hydrological impacts of the dam proposal since its original announcement in April.

In a major press release and information brochure, the Government chose to make an example of one past flood event (1999) and show that their computer modelling suggested that the dam would have reduced the flood height from around 22 metres to around 18 metres. (This is still regarded as a major flood by the Bureau of Meteorology and would still have submerged the Normanby Bridge – the highest crossing over the Mary River).

"I am confident that the Government modelling is credible in this prediction.

"I am also absolutely confident that the same modelling approach shows that the dam would have had no significant mitigating effect at all on flood levels in Gympie from many other past major flood events, like 1974," Mr Burgess continued.

"One has to ask why the Minister is presenting the information concerning one only flood example (which followed years of drought), and not the many other major flood events where the dam would not have had any mitigating effect at all.

"To be truly honest with the people of Gympie, Ms Bligh should also present the information the Government has about all the other major floods like the 1974 flood, which many Queenslanders would remember.

"I don't think insurance companies will be changing their premiums on the basis of this information – it's a bit of a joke, really."

End

Media contacts: **Kaili Parker-Price 0419 672947**
Steve Burgess 5484 3749