

It is welcome that debate on water issues has fired up, also the food security question needs answers. For much too long these issues have been forced into a back stage position and the rush of tension surrounding mining and coal seam gas extraction have sapped our political resources.

What is forgotten and alarming is actually the dependence on the necessity of water and our worthlessness without the precious commodity. But unless there is no water coming out of the tap water rating hardly matters but the alarm bells are ringing it is now expensive and becoming very much more expensive.

In recent times there have been a number of changes, from the State and Federal Governments, with new legislation and many attached regulations. The IPART Authority to regulate pricing and partly control the NSW Govt. Office of Water. And Federally the Vastly new scheme of the Murray Darling Basin Authority. All these schemes vastly affect the way we in the Tamworth and greater regional areas function and operate. Some unusual and extraordinary water charges are occurring and restrictions of water use in dry times when irrigation is most wanted like in the case of irrigators on the Cockburn river.

Not only is the Cockburn river in our area also the Peel of course and also the Mc,Donald and Keepit dam all play a huge roll in our greater regional water systems. Is it too much to enquire and ask could our new member of New England at least have a look at our whole complex of water and some day make our system much more available to all users at all times at fair reasonable prices to all users. Yes this is a huge ask and expensive if constructions eventually necessary of suitable dams as mitigated water supplies. At least could one ask to get a leg in and get a start get some funds enough to survey and get feasibility studies underway as what is the real potential for mitigation on our rivers here and how can that help the huge requirements of all users not just the domestic needs of the T.R.C.local domestic needs.

Food security must be taken seriously in our region grain production and grazing are very big contributors to our economy but also is the production of animal fodder like lucerne oats barley and these have links to the fat lamb and cattle outputs.

Food production has not been progressing as it should and one can easily link that to a lack of development of our rivers. This done without will or want of destruction but also adding to recreational areas and water recreations so welcomed by water sports and recreation. The needs are very urgent the neglect over several years great our region and T>R>C are all busting at the seams and we need to urgently survey and study completely our water supplies,