

# CASE STUDY: The History of Water Supply on the Central Coast

## Where would you have put the dam? The history of water supply on the Central Coast.

Regional News, Dungog Chronicle

Wednesday 11 July, 2007

### New pipeline for Central Coast

The 'No Tillegra Dam Group' has welcomed the announcement ... to fund the Mardi Dam to Mangrove Creek Dam transfer pipeline on the Central Coast...

The 'missing link' Mardi to Mangrove transfer pipeline will secure water supply for the Central Coast well beyond 2050, according to the Gosford Wyong Authority (GWWA) in its most recent Waterplan 2050.

Chairman of the 'No Tillegra Dam Group' Warwick Thomas said ... "We have constantly stated that there were more cost effective ways of overcoming the water shortage problems on the Central Coast, other than building the \$340 million plus dam at Tillegra..."



Plate 1: Mangrove Creek Dam; below the wall. (Wyong Council)



Plate 2: Mangrove Creek Dam; dam storage. (Wyong Council)



Plate 3: Mangrove Creek Dam; water tower. (Wyong Council)

## NOT HERE, PLEASE

**Dam construction is almost always a controversial and emotive issue.**

**As a means of ensuring urban water supplies, the building of a dam to capture and store surface runoff from a catchment is nearly always cheaper than other options such as desalination of sea water or recycling treated wastewater. On the other hand, building a dam locks up the catchment, preventing many other forms of land use for the indefinite future. Furthermore, a dam has a wide range of environmental impacts (some good, some bad) on the catchment, both above and below the wall. Unless, as rarely happens, the dam is intended to occupy an uninhabited locality, the decision to build is often at the expense of existing land holders and their ways of life.**

**These issues apply not only to dam-building but to the provision of the whole gamut of infrastructure – water treatment plants, reservoirs, pipelines etc concerned with providing clean water supplies for human populations.**

## CASE STUDY

In this Case Study we will explore the decision-making processes involved in the provision of water supply. We will use the history of the development of the water supply on the Central Coast, particularly the construction of the Mangrove Creek dam, as an example of the research, planning, and political debate required to decide between competing priorities in the supply of this most precious of our resources – clean, fresh, H<sub>2</sub>O.