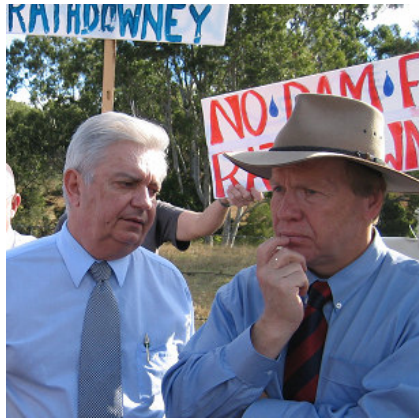


No Dam For Rathdowney Action Group

SURPRISE RATHDOWNEY VISIT BY BEATTIE



Premier Beattie surprised Rathdowney residents today with an unscheduled visit to the town. However, many left today's meeting with Beattie and Palaszczuk more concerned than ever about the apparent lack of knowledge and understanding of issues relevant to the dam.

Despite the determined efforts of the community to communicate what they consider key information to both the NRMW and the Queensland Government, it appears they have had little success.

Premier Beattie claimed not to be aware that the yield being quoted for Rathdowney dam is actually the substantially higher river system yield measured at Cedar Grove weir and not a dam yield.

Despite earlier assurances to the contrary by NRMW representatives Premier Beattie seemed to imply that water would be piped to the Rathdowney dam from higher rainfall areas.

He seemed confused about the connection of this dam to the water grid, being under the impression that there would be a pipeline connection to the Rathdowney dam. NRMW have made it clear both verbally and in writing to Rathdowney residents that was not the case. Premier Beattie seemed surprised when Minister Palaszczuk confirmed that the pipeline went only to Cedar Grove weir, which is at least 50kms from the Rathdowney dam.

Premier Beattie claimed to be unaware of the failure of the government owned Sunwater to maintain environmental flows from Maroon dam into Burnett Creek resulting in the death of the local platypus and fish populations. *(Separate Press Release available on request)*

Locals queried the written statement by Minister Palaszczuk that the Rathdowney dam would be less subject to climate change than Wyaralong and Glendower dams. However, that seemingly impossible claim, was not directly addressed by either the minister or the premier.

Beattie continued to lay heavy blame for the current water situation on local councils. It therefore seems ironic that the Beaudesert Shire whose residents are largely water self sufficient should be potentially losing their homes, and council losing rates revenue. Local councillor Dave Cockburn had previously expressed concern to residents about the Rathdowney dam proposal, as all recent council planning had been based on the government's stated intention to build Wyaralong dam.

Beattie said that the huge population growth projected for SE Queensland made the new dams necessary, and that he had no control over the population growth. This is despite claims by Jo Bragg from Environmental Defenders Office, who met with residents earlier in the day, claiming that the government had refused to consider submissions on sustainable population issues during the drafting of the South East Queensland regional plan.

Many locals were unimpressed and some even refused to participate in what they saw as another Beattie media ploy, believing that he wasn't there to listen but to try to regain some credibility after growing concern about water supply issues.

Mayor Joy Drescher and Councillor Dave Cockburn had earlier met with Premier Beattie and Minister Palaszczuk at Beaudesert Shire Council offices. Beattie seemed dismissive of the significant impact of relocation of a large section of Mt Lindesay highway and Boonah Rathdowney Rd, believing traffic use was minimal. A steady flow of trucks and other vehicles past the Tilley's Bridge during the meeting would seem to indicate otherwise. Contact with NRMW representatives had not revealed where the alternative route was planned.

Premier Beattie promised a final decision in 7-10 days time, a statement which alarmed locals, given the lack of knowledge displayed today by the Premier and the Minister. The premier left with a message from Action Group Member, Carol Taylor, "We want the right decision, not a rushed decision."



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