

TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

"Protecting the quality of living on Tamborine Mountain"

NEWSLETTER - May, 2015

Resident concerns regarding large scale commercial water extraction for off mountain sale have been escalating over the past fifteen years. With a view to having Tamborine Mountain considered a Ground Water Protection Management area by the State Government, a meeting was held yesterday, Wednesday, 12th May, with the Director General on behalf of the Minister for Natural Resources.

This meeting came about in response to letters sent to the Minister outlining our water problems by our two Councillors, Nigel and Nadia, - not from Council itself as stated in the last Newsletter – and the 3rd March letter from TMPA (circulated with the March Newsletter).

The two State Government representatives were briefed on, a) the general overview, b) overview of bore depletion problems and resident input, c) water sustainability - a comprehensive slide presentation of statistics and graphs outlining the water problem (extraction has doubled in 10 years), and d) community perception.

Further input from the five locals (including Nigel and Nadia) added more information and suggestions of avenues that could be looked at.

There was not a lot of feed back from the two State Government representatives. It was pointed out that time was required to carry out scientific studies. This we do not have. Also, information at the State's disposal states the Tamborine Mountain water system is not under stress. At the end of the meeting, this viewpoint was not explained, or at what point would "under stress" apply. Comment was made that many Tamborine Mountain residents, whose bores are severely depleted or have run dry, would say the mountain's aquifer is already under stress.

Whether all the information given triggers a legislative requirement for a declaration of a Ground Water Protection Management area remains to be seen.

With a decision on the Gillion (Power Pde) development application imminent, it was stressed resolution of the situation is urgent.

Gillion Pty. Ltd. (Power Pde) – commercial water extraction

It appears that management of commercial water extraction on Tamborine Mountain falls to Scenic Rim Regional Council. Contrary to the Mayor's statement (media reports and emails to individuals) that Council has no authority to manage or control the volume of water extracted for commercial use, the reply from the Minister for Natural Resources states that this activity is regulated through the planning scheme administered by the Council. (Letter attached).

On Tamborine Mountain this activity is inconsistent with the planning scheme. Although alarm bells were sent to Council, the planning department's original Gillion report recommending approval was not altered. This unfortunate published report allowed Gillion's commercial extraction (a court declared unlawful activity) to continue for a number of years. In court the Judge ("between a rock and a hard place") vented his frustration on Council's lawyers.

Guanaba sports D A on T M's eastern slopes

Following a flurry of activity, this issue is set to be decided next week. A Kaiser Road resident wrote to all the Councillors with a number of key points.

Several current newspapers are featuring an ad from the developer showing a tranquil leafy scene, with a lone bicycle rider gently riding along a narrow flat track. A lesson on how to mislead the public.

Decision time in Council

On Tuesday, 19th May, Council's Planning Committee will be dealing with both Gillion (Power Pde) and the Guanaba sports development applications.

The Planning Department reports will be on the Council's website late tomorrow, Friday 15th. Everyone is crossing fingers hoping the planners and Council will do the right thing for a change. Both applications conflict with the planning scheme.

Anyone can attend both the Planning Committee meeting on the 19th, and/or the General Meeting on the 26th. in the Council chambers in Beaudesert. The likely starting time is 9 am, but it is not clear what time the Planning Committee will start.

It is important to have a good representation from locals.

It would be nice to get some good news for a change.

Jeanette