

Newsletter.....December, 2019

Water update

On 3rd December a small group met with State member Jon Krause to discuss our water problems. It was pointed out that TMPA had had years of unsuccessful discussions with the state Dept. of Natural Resources attempting to have the mountain a declared area. Residents and local carrier concerns were discussed and Mr. Krause gave us some advice for our impending meeting with the Minister for Natural Resources.

This took place on 12th December. The Minister himself was unable to attend, so our meeting was with his Chief of Staff together with an independent hydrologist from SEQ catchments. We were impressed with the quality of attention we received, a big step up from what we have become used to. This meeting was primarily to accept Julie Wilkinson's petition of 33,000 names calling for state government action to alleviate the problems residents are having accessing water during this severe drought. We also asked for the legal interpretation of the Queensland Water Act 2000 and enforcement where necessary to protect our ground water. Both men took copious notes of new information we were able to impart. A reply is expected mid January.

What became evident in our various meetings is the weight attached to the **Todd Report of 2011**. This was a well compiled preliminary report using just 55 bores. Time and expense prohibited a wider study. Certainly it was not exhaustive enough to provide the evidence of the "sustainability: of the aquifer being claimed by some extractors.

Using figures from the Todd Report it is claimed that the amount of water taken off the mountain by commercial extractors is only a small percentage of the annual rainfall which is presumed to restore the aquifer. What reaches our aquifer is questionable. Certainly this has changed over time.

Much of our rainfall comes in big storms, delivering many inches of rain water. We even get flash flooding, particularly in the Curtis Falls area and at St. Bernards. Water from these storms flows via streams & channels and a fair amount of this just tips off the mountain. One has only to drive down Henri Robert Drive after some serious rain to witness the many water falls falling down the mountain side. We need days of gentle soaking rain for water to reach many of the aquifer sections.

Then there are other questions. Of the more than 1000 bores sunk on the mountain, over 500 have either been abandoned or have dried up. . Why have so many bores ceased functioning?. Many people have been reporting they have had to deepen their bores to get a satisfactory flow rate. And what is the state of our deep ancient water far below the surface?. Then there are now nearly 4,000 houses, structures and concrete across the mountain leaving less room for water to permeate. We have a long way to go for a sound assessment of the health of our aquifer. .

Section 166 of the Planning Act

Scenic Rim Regional Council has released a statement about Section 166 of the Planning Act. Two businesses sought to rely on Section 166 of the Planning Act to provide ground water to local carriers without the necessary development approval. To see why this was not deemed necessary see council's explanation in their media release. (*Attached*).

Reply to Council's media release is also attached. This is being widely circulated.

2004 radio talk back session with Steve Austin re then water problems is also attached. Same problems – fifteen years ago !!

Canungra Tamborine Mountain deliverers are now unable to source water from Canungra, which is now trucking in supplies for their locals. Qld Urban Utilities' water tank there was installed at great cost when it was discovered half way through court hearings of an appeal by Canungra residents and TMPA against Council's decision to approve a 300 small lot subdivision on the understanding that Canungra had reticulated water. It did have this, but the "reticulated water" came from the creek. Court proceedings were delayed whilst band aid procedures were put in place. Hence the Qld Urban Utilities tank filtering water, still from Canungra Creek.

The **Save Our Water** group has been busy lobbying for better management of our aquifer. They currently have an ePetition to State Parliament on Facebook wherein they request the House to declare a water emergency; cease commercial extraction for bottled water, etc. Click on following link to open the petition.

<https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/work-of-assembly/petitions/petition-details?id=3263>.

Water meeting

A meeting is planned for 19th January at the Vonda Youngman Community Centre from 11 am to 1 pm. to discuss the water situation. Hopefully there will be some sort of progress made by then.

MMM – Tamborine Mountain

As reported in detail by Federal member, Scott Buchholz, in the 11th December edition of the Scenic News, we failed to have this inappropriate classification changed.

Developed by the Department of Health in 2015 it relies on data provided by the census. This source does not provide information other than linear distance from urban areas. That this model was unable to properly evaluate the rurality of this area is of major concern not only to Tamborine Mountain residents, but to the residents of the large catchment area which it services. Tamborine Mountain practices service the village of Tamborine (MMM2), the districts of Boyland (MMM5), Wonglepong (MMM4) and Biddaddaba (MMM4).

Adding ours to these districts and the many other areas in Australia where people are similarly disadvantaged, the 2016 MMM model is woefully inadequate.

TMPA has written again to the Federal Minister for Health with a copy to Prime Minister. Someone in this country must be responsible for the quality of modeling produced by the Department of Health.

To all members and supporters, have a safe and happy Christmas with best wishes for 2020.

Jeanette on behalf of TMPA

