

Don't Damn The Wambuul-Macquarie

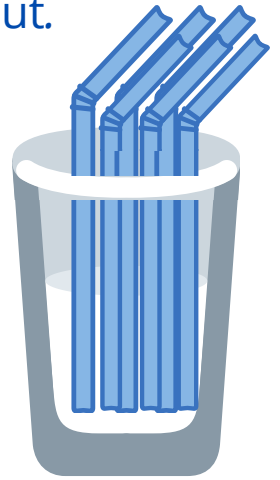
The NSW Government are planning to build a massive new dam in the river at Gin Gin, calling it a 're-regulating weir'. The gates would be 8.5 metres or 2.5 stories high, and would back the river up for 32 km.

The purpose of the dam is to give WaterNSW more control over the river, so that even more water can be pumped out.

There are already too many straws in the glass.

This dam will destroy:

- Cultural Heritage Sites
- 32km of River Red Gums & river vegetation
- Breeding habitat for struggling native fish
- A popular camping and fishing site



There will be less:

- Water for the vulnerable Macquarie Marshes
- Habitat for migratory and water birds
- Recreational fishers visiting the Valley
- Downstream floodplain grazing and unregulated irrigation
- Water for towns like Warren, Carinda and Brewarrina
- Water for the Barwon Darling-Baaka Rivers which are already stressed

It's time for the Community to decide - is the Wambuul-Macquarie River more than just an irrigation channel?

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The dam will flood a lot of cultural heritage places, including some that are Registered Aboriginal Heritage Sites. **All cultural heritage sites are irreplaceable**, but WaterNSW says “The nature of the recorded sites suggests that similar sites are likely to exist at other locations along the river and across the landscape.”



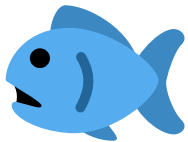
Upstream of the dam, 32km of river bank vegetation will be drowned, including many centuries-old river red gums. Eventually, the operation of the dam would mean the banks of the river would need to be lined with rock or similar to prevent erosion, creating a long, hostile place that plants, birds, mammals and reptiles could not survive in. **The dam would threaten half of the remaining threatened natural places left in the Narromine local government area.**



Downstream of the dam there would be **less water for the vulnerable RAMSAR listed Macquarie Marshes**. Australia has **legal responsibilities** under the Commonwealth Water Act 2007, the Ramsar Convention, other international migratory bird agreements and the Murray Darling Basin Plan to ensure the character of Ramsar listed wetland is protected. The Macquarie Marshes are an important cultural site for the Weilwan People, and a key environmental asset of the Murray-Darling Basin.



The Macquarie Marshes is **a wetland of international significance** because migratory birds fly here from as far away as Siberia and Asia to breed. In their own report (EPBC referral) the NSW Government says the significant impact the dam is likely to have on migratory birds include: loss or changes to habitat including changing flowing river habitats into pool habitat; changes to water flow timing; and impacts to groundwater dependent ecosystems.



The government knows this project will have **significant impacts** on the environment – this is from their own report (EPBC referral):

“This proposed action is expected to have a significant impact on the critically endangered Silver Perch, endangered Trout Cod and vulnerable Murray Cod.”

“Habitats of threatened freshwater fish under the NSW Fisheries Management Act in the vicinity will be impacted, including endangered Eel-tailed Catfish, Olive Perchlet, and Southern Purple Spotted Gudgeon.”

There are many ways that the dam will cause native fish to slowly starve and their eggs to die.

Here are some reasons, as listed in the government’s own EPBC referral:

- 💧 Change of flowing river habitats to pool habitat. Loss of freshwater habitat types such as riffle zones due to inundation, and changes to flow regimes and water quality.
- 💧 Impacts to aquatic habitats and riparian vegetation from the regular variability of water levels within the storage and the associated effects on river bank stability (*less habitat means less food*).
- 💧 Loss or decrease of available recruitment areas (*places young fish can grow*) due to changes in available habitat. Likely impacts to the structural elements that make up established habitat of vulnerable Murray Cod in the existing Gin Gin Weir pool, including potential spawning sites.
- 💧 The new operational regimes may impact larval recruitment and the movement of fish in the locality (*fish eggs will hit a patch of still water, sink and die*).
- 💧 **The alterations to important fish habitat in this locality and the potential operation effects on habitat and spawning for Trout Cod and Murray Cod may give rise to potentially significant impacts to these species.**

Wambuul Alliance