

AUST COMPETITION &
CONSUMER COMMISSION
MELBOURNE

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29th June 2015.

Thank you for the opportunity to let you know how my friends and I feel about irrigation water issues in Northern Victoria.

1. Cost of irrigation water. In 1975 the sale of 3 cows covered the cost of our water. In 2009 it took 3 large truck loads.

2. We are required to pay for the water costs even if we don't get any due to lack of water in the system.

3. We must pay before we use it. No one else sends an account before delivering goods.

4. Environment flows are prioritised. They get water when we don't.

4. I have been told environment flows are not paid for and do not have to pay storage costs, or per megalitre.

5. If you sell your irrigation water to another irrigator they must also pay for the same water

6. In the 1800's Haffey Irrigation System was set up to get water to Northern Victoria and the farmers had to pay a premium for the certainty of water supply. with the uncertainty and reconfiguration of our channels this has grossly decreased our land values.

7. Reconfiguration - Between 2010 and 2012 farmers were encouraged to help close channels because of the evaporation. In our area 2015 we are still waiting for Goulburn Murray Water to work out what is going to happen in our area. We have been told that we should not be worse off but also may not be better off. Between 2010 and 2012

most (all) farmers dealt with were pleased with the outcome as they gained considerably. Our futures are on hold until we know what is happening.

8. Pension - water is an asset as far as centrelink is concerned. \$1.50 per \$1000 value at present is taken off aged pensions per fortnight. (Cover the cap)

The Australian govt. has already past legislation to make this \$3. per \$1000 in 2017.

A dairy farmer must have 3 megs per cow. 100 cows = 300 megs

3 megs @ \$2000 = \$600,000 centrelink value
 $\$600 \times \$1.50 = \text{minus } \$900 \text{ pension per fortnight.}$ This equates to \$300 pension per fortnight per couple.

In 2017 it will be minus \$1,800 (no pension)

If you sell your water you still have to pay your water charges. 3.74 water shares equals \$18,000 a year 2014/2015 rising annually

To avoid paying this amount \$30,000 per share has to be paid
 $3.74 \times 30,000 = \$102,200-$

This cost has been overlooked, by centrelink in their asset 3 assessing,

Goulburn Murray Water should look at their Budget to lessen water charges.

The environment should pay a fairer share for storage, water use and channel maintenance.

My husband Sydney Angel and I are in our late seventys and in poor health. Nurses visit us twice a day, every day. We have had to leave our home in Kerang after 39 years for medical reasons and also because GMW deliberately released Kow Swamp (an irrigation water holden) and flooded our property ^{in 2011} which has never recovered, neither has our health. We are in limbo. Until we know what GMW plan to do with our farm and area.

We rent a house in [REDACTED] to get these health services

Town's contemplating using environmental water flows for mini hydro electric schemes should be asked to make a fair contribution eg. Lal Lal Reservoir, south east of Ballarat. This scheme is being enthusiastically supported by the Govt.

4.

Yours faithfully
RUTH ANGEL