



What's on

Saturday, Sept 5, 7pm onwards

Watershed social at Cape Patterson Hall (lower one near the Life Saving Club). BYO food to share and musical instruments.

Monday, Sept 7, 11.30 am

Flinders Street station for leafletting head offices of the National and Westpac banks. Details: Jessica on 0407 307 231.

September 8, 7pm

Watershed committee meeting, Picasso's Restaurant, Wonthaggi. Details: Neil Rankine on neilnola@netspace.net.au

September 12-13

Some Watershed members will be supporting the "Switch off Hazelwood" community action at Morwell. Contact Jessica on 0407 307 231 if you want to car pool.

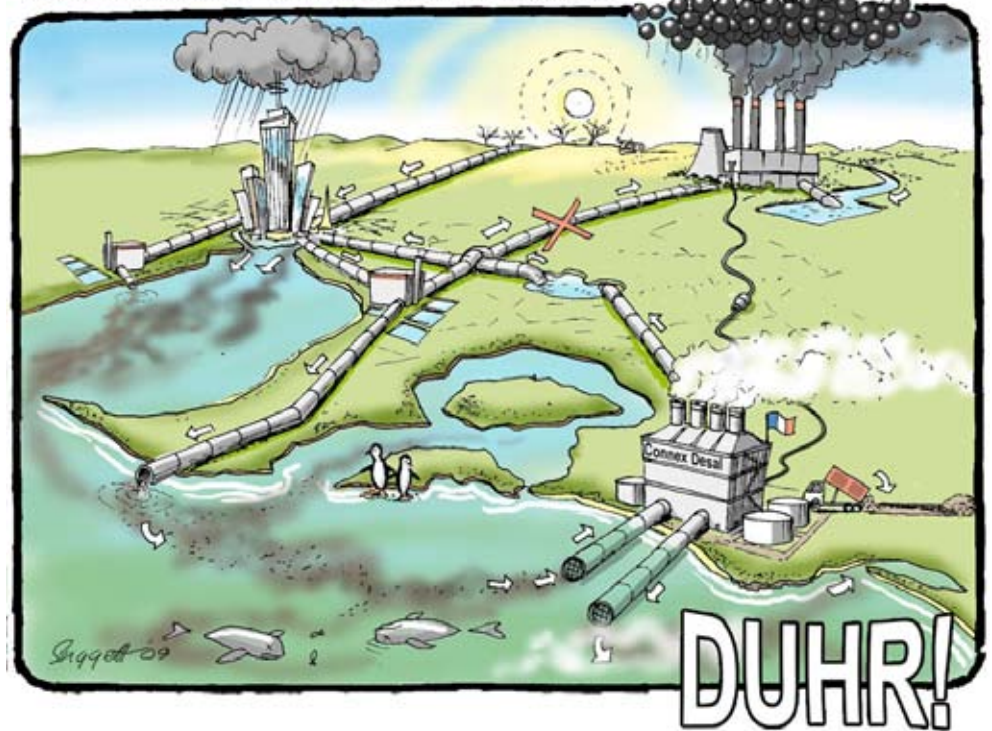
Details: www.switchoffhazelwood.org

September 24, 10am

Watershed member Richard Kentwell will appear in Korumburra Magistrates Court. Supporters welcome.

www.watershedvictoria.org.au/events

TIMMY HOLDING'S LATEST WATER PLAN - Version 4.2.1



It's not a done deal: Greens

FIGHTING the Bass Coast desalination plant has been adopted as a key election plank by the Greens in Victoria.

Unveiling candidates for the upcoming federal and state elections last month, national Greens leader Bob Brown said a key election plank for next year's state election would be fighting the project and instead promoting alternative water sources.

"It is an expensive, poorly thought out, major mistake by the Labor government," Senator Brown said. "Everybody is going to pay more for their water."

He argued the \$3.5 billion project could still be scrapped even though construction was set to begin in October.

Senator Brown cited the cancellation of the Franklin dam project in Tasmania in 1983, even after \$67 million had been spent on it.

Melbourne Greens candidate Brian Walters said installing dual flush toilets, capturing storm water and ending the logging of water catchments could boost the state's water reserves better than relying on the carbon-heavy desalination option.

Victoria's state election will be held in November 2010.

Don't bank on them

THE lead banks backing the desalination project are Westpac and the National Australia Bank. They lead a motley crew of financial investors, including banks from Belgium, China, France Italy, Japan, Spain and the UK, and a number of superannuation funds.

Westpac is keen to promote its environmental credentials. It was the first Australian company to sign the UN Global Compact CEO Water Mandate, an international project to develop positive strategies and solutions for the emerging global water crisis.

'It's about doing the right thing.'
— Westpac slogan

Along with the National Australia Bank, it has adopted the Equator Principles, a financial industry benchmark for determining, assessing and managing social and environmental risk in project financing.

In the preamble, the Principles outline how project financiers may encounter social and environmental issues that are both complex and challenging.

"We adopt these Principles in order to ensure that the projects we finance are developed in a manner that is socially responsible and reflect sound environmental

management practices. By doing so, negative impacts on project-affected ecosystems and communities should be avoided where possible."

Becoming a lead financier for this plant clearly contradicts these principles.

Write and tell them

THE financial arrangements for the desalination project will be finalised at the end of September. If you have an account with the National Australia Bank or Westpac, write and ask them how they justify their involvement with this damaging project.

Remember – consumer pressure forced the ANZ Bank to pull out of the Gunns project in Tasmania, virtually sinking it.

Visit www.watershedvictoria.org.au/content/category/letterwriting for letter-writing suggestions. Send to:

Gail Kelly, CEO
Westpac
275 Kent St
Sydney NSW 2000

Michael Chaney, CEO
National Australia Bank
800 Bourke St
Docklands VIC 3008

Watershedders will be leafletting the head offices of the National and Westpac branches on Monday, September 7. See What's On for details.

We'll be watching you

How much was that again?

THE cost of the desalination project was first reported as \$3.1 billion. It was most recently referred to by Water Minister Tim Holding as \$3.5 billion.

Yet Aquasure, the successful tenderer, has admitted to costs of \$4.8 billion, including interest and unspecified fees. Since when are these costs not as much a part of the project as steel, concrete or labour?

They will need to be reimbursed by the Victorian public just the same through higher water charges, and perhaps other taxes. There are no "free lunches", all costs are part of the project cost to Victorians. It remains the case that this project is an energy-guzzling, greenhouse-gas-exacerbating, polluting, high-cost option.

Mind your manners

AN inflammatory headline to a recent local newspaper comment piece made unsubstantiated and, in our experience, unfounded inferences about treatment of local businesses and individuals by Watershed members.

Watershed Victoria holds no prejudice toward local businesses that contract to supply goods or services to the desalination plant construction, or to individuals, local or beyond, who receive employment through the project.

However, we maintain the right to continue a peaceful protest, and to monitor the works for compliance with our laws and bylaws.

Watershed Victoria implores us all, including local businesses and individuals both for and against this project, to respect one another other's rights.

Stephen Cannon
President, Watershed Victoria

AS WATERSHED Victoria's campaign is strongly motivated by our love for the Bass Coast, we plan to ensure the desalination project complies with the Environmental Effects Study (EES) as well as act on the social and traffic impacts on our community.

In the next few weeks, we will summarise the key EES recommendations to make it clear what may be breaches and where breaches can be reported. A program will be worked around this.

At the brainstorm on August 15, members identified three main action areas:

Monitoring wildlife

WE plan to get an idea of pre-existing conditions of a few key indicators such as the endangered hooded plover, which is known to visit Williamsons Beach and attempt to breed along the coast.

Other species will also be important. Whales continue to migrate along the coast – there have been over 42 documented sightings in the last month.

Salinity measurements will be important near the outlet, although that will depend on our resources.

Noise measurement will be needed. Vibration and light glare will also affect the environment.

Breaches of EES requirements

DURING the pilot plant construction, numerous breaches of the Environmental Management Plan were identified, such as dumping of asbestos in Campbell Street, waste dumping in Skip Lane and delivery of materials using trucks that were



We're not going anywhere: More than 100 Watershed supporters gathered near the desalination site last month to protest at the State Government's announcement of the multi-national consortium AquaSure to build and manage the project. The famous blue Your Water Your Say caravan was pulled out of retirement to mark the occasion. Speakers made it clear the campaign would go on.

not compliant. We are not too hopeful of a better result now that the AquaSure consortium is in charge – the need for haste, disturbance of acid sulphate soils and waste silt flowing into the Powlett River are some of the many conditions likely to cause problems.

Social impacts

TRAFFIC and housing problems are already affecting coastal residents. We need to identify which authorities are in charge of traffic planning and compliance. A list of people whose tenancies are threatened and those who are experiencing problems with housing is being compiled, but follow-up is needed.

If you would like to help with a bird count and keeping an eye on the project, contact Chris Heislars on 0419 556 381 or Jessica Harrison on 0407 307 231.

Watershed Victoria

WATERSHED Victoria is a community group that seeks water-supply alternatives to the north-south pipeline and desalination plant. It replaces the Your Water Your Say community group, which was forced to cease operating last year. Together with Plug the Pipe and the Clean Oceans Foundation, Watershed Victoria forms the Victorian Water Forum, which is campaigning for sustainable water solutions for Victoria.

Visit www.watershedvictoria.org.au



watershedvictoria

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Ph: 0407 811778

Membership

Name

Email Phone Mobile

Address

Cost, \$15 individuals, \$30 households. Amount paid: Receipt required?

Please indicate if you would like to help in the campaign, eg. distribution, publicity, fund-raising, manning caravan

Give membership form and subscription to a committee member; OR
Post form plus cheque or postal order to Watershed Victoria, Dalyston PO, 3992; OR
Direct deposit to Bendigo Bank. Account name: Watershed Victoria. BSB: 633 000. Acc No: 134 991 850. Reference: Your name