

MEDIA RELEASE

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Mineral Resources Development – Forests

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Cracks appearing in Wellington weir plan

Cracks are beginning to appear in the Pomanda Island weir project says local MP Adrian Pederick.

The controversial proposal to build a 2.6km wide weir between Pomanda Island and the eastern shore of Lake Alexandrina has yet to be decided according to state minister for the River Murray Karlene Maywald, but vehicle access to the island is already under construction.

‘The cracking we have seen on other parts of the river bank near Murray Bridge has begun to occur on the existing mud track where they’re about to build the causeway,’ said Mr Pederick, who is also Shadow Minister for the River Murray.

‘Hundreds of thousands of tonnes of rock required for the weir wall have to be carted across this 1.6km causeway, which is being laid across a swamp that separates Pomanda Island from Nalpa Station, south west of Wellington.

‘The carriageway they’re building is meant to carry B-doubles full of rocks, potentially weighing in excess of 60 tonnes each, and it’s not just a few dozen truckloads but thousands.

‘I visited this area over two years ago while drillers were taking core samples and it was apparent then the swamp was on two metres of sand sitting on at least 20 metres of soft mud.

‘It doesn’t take much imagination to think of the disastrous possibilities.

‘This whole weir project has been flawed from the start,’ says Mr Pederick.

‘From that day in November 2006 when Premier Rann first blurted out the idea, it’s been flawed in its concept, flawed in its cost and flawed in its design.’

‘We have long known there is almost no solid base to the river in the entire area and the swamp is no exception.

‘And locals told us that in a north-westerly blow, waves up to six foot high surge across the lake shore to the narrow mud causeway and into the river on the other side. If that water pushing across is salt water, as Premier Rann has said, we’ll have yet another disaster on our hands.

‘So much for protecting Adelaide’s water supply.

‘The state government should accept that this is a plan fraught with disasters – immediate and future - and abandon it now.’

Caption 1. *Local MP Adrian Pederick inspects cracks in the Pomanda Island causeway.*

Caption 2. *A calf died after falling into a crack on the causeway.*