

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Adrian Pederick MP JP**

Member for Hammond

**Shadow Minister for**

**The River Murray - Forests**

**Agriculture, Food and Fisheries**

Monday October 12, 2009

---

### **Decision not to make a decision on weir a mixed blessing**

Once again the Rudd and the Rann governments have put off a hard decision until after the March State election.

The decision not to make a decision about a proposed weir at Wellington has given the ailing River Murray and the desperately ill Lower Lakes and Coorong a stay of execution.

State opposition River Murray spokesman Adrian Pederick said the news that Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett had asked for more information before making a decision had given temporary comfort to the majority of South Australians and scientists who oppose the project.

'While this deferment is much preferred to a decision to approve, it must not distract the government's attention from the need to preserve the river and lakes eco-system,' Mr Pederick said.

'Water purchases are good for the future but the river needs fresh water now.

'Under the original Howard government \$10 billion plan of February 2007, almost \$6 billion was earmarked for on-ground works and improvement.

'So far, very little of that has happened. Buying more water won't help if the infrastructure is still inefficient and wasteful and allocation issues remain unresolved.

'And the lack of proper management of the entire Murray Darling Basin, independent of state interference, threatens every action we take in the meantime.

'If the federal and state governments had got on with the job earlier, flows could have been improved and the need to make a decision on a weir put off indefinitely.

'It is to be hoped that the additional information Mr Garrett is waiting for is sound scientific advice, not merely the results of approaching elections.'