



# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **Adrian Pederick MP JP**

Member for Hammond  
Parliamentary Secretary to the Liberal Leader for  
- The River Murray  
- Sustainability and Climate Change

Wednesday July 11, 2007

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### **Hamilton-Smith and other SA Liberals tour Lakes, Goolwa and Meningie**

SA Liberal Party Leader Martin Hamilton-Smith and six of his State Parliamentary colleagues toured the Lower Lakes and Goolwa last Tuesday July 10<sup>th</sup> to meet with local farmers, business people and residents and inspect the state of the lake and its environment.

Accompanying Mr Hamilton-Smith were fellow MPs, Adrian Pederick – local Member for Hammond and Ivan Venning and MLCs Michelle Lensink, Stephen Wade, Terry Stephens and John Dawkins.

The group met with the Chapman family on Hindmarsh Island where the matters of lake levels, salinity, the condition of the barrages and the potential impediments on river-based industries were discussed.

A visit to a nearby farm was followed by a drive across the Goolwa barrages, providing the party with an opportunity to see first hand the state of the barrages and the level of sea water leakage back into the lower lakes.

Hindmarsh Island beef farmers Colin and Sally Grundy showed the group film of the leaking barrages taken during recent bad weather. Mrs Grundy expressed her dissatisfaction with a statement by SA Water Security Minister Karlene Maywald that the state of the barrages (since recent attempts to minimise the leaks) was 'acceptable'.

The touring party then visited other landholders and farmers at Narrung and Meningie to get a better understanding of their situations and feelings about the broader issues of drought and river flows, and their concerns about the potential exodus of children from family farms.

Lakes fisherman Gary Hera-Singh addressed the group at Meningie before they moved on to visit the site of the proposed weir at Wellington.

For those who had not previously visited Pomanda Island, the site of the western end of the weir, the spectre of a 2.6km rock wall spanning Australia's greatest river became a stark reality as they pondered the river's pristine beauty.

As well as the weir's potential to cause severe and perhaps permanent damage to this unique and vital eco-system, the group was surprised by the engineering complexities presented by the river's deep, soft mud base and the 1.7 km reed swamp causeway across to the island.

Among others who took some part in the trip were Clayton fisherman Henry Jones, Tom Chapman of The Marina Hindmarsh Island, dairy farmers Colin Grundy, Mike South, Neil Shillabeer and Clem Mason, Murray Darling Basin Region 6 representative Maurice Wilhelm, Ken Lyons – CEO of SA Dairy Farmers Association, Ross Foster of SA Water and Station owners Keith McFarlane and Phil Withers.

During the evening at Murray Bridge, local farmers raised other concerns including the ongoing rehabilitation of Lower Murray swamps.

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Mr Pederick, who, with Member for Finniss Michael Pengilly, has been loudly outspoken about the issues from the start, said the day had been particularly valuable for his fellow parliamentarians' understanding of the extent, complexity and variety of problems faced by farmers, dairymen, fishermen, horticulturalists, businesspeople and river and lakes residents in general.

Mr Pederick added that the news Federal Minister for Environment and Water Resources Malcolm Turnbull had declared the construction of a weir to be a 'controlled action', requiring a full Environmental Impact Statement, capped off an informative and productive day.

Caption;

*Among State Liberal MPs touring the Goolwa and the Lower Lakes were; from left Ivan Venning, Adrian Pederick, Michelle Lensink, Terry Stephens and John Dawkins.*