

MEDIA RELEASE

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Shadow Minister for

River Murray – Sustainability and Climate Change

Agriculture, Food and Fisheries – Forests

February 6, 2009

Letter to the Editor – Stock Journal

Sir

In light of Agriculture Minister McEwen's confusing response (SJ Letters 5/2/09) to my earlier letter (SJ, 29/1/09) about river flows, your readers may like some further clarification.

The 350 gigalitres which we are told flows past Wellington into Lake Alexandrina each year is specifically referred to by DWLBC as 'dilution flow'.

It is part of the annual 696gl dilution flow to which South Australia is entitled to maintain acceptable river water quality, as referred to in parliament last Thursday by his fellow Labor government minister Karlene Maywald.

It is the barest minimum flow required to maintain salinity in the river below lock 1 – where most of Adelaide's water is pumped from – and fit for human consumption.

Mr McEwen referred to it as being for the environment. Environmental flow is specifically for the benefit of the environment. Dilution flow is specifically for the benefit of human consumption – critical human needs.

It might suit the government to have the public believe they have generously given 350 gl to the environment but they know the environment is an incidental beneficiary. This water flow will still be required even if they build a weir at Wellington.

It is difficult enough to keep all South Australians united in their stand for a better deal for the river without having government ministers confusing the issue with incorrect and misleading statements.

No wonder decision makers in the eastern states don't understand our predicament.

Yours

Adrian Pederick MP JP

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