



Department of Environment and Conservation

LOGUE BROOK DAM

POSITION STATEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

The following is a position statement on the role and responsibilities of the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) in respect to the management of Logue Brook Dam and Catchment Area.

Current statutory provisions

Approximately 93% of the Logue Brook Dam and Catchment Area is State forest, vested in the Conservation Commission of Western Australia (CCWA) for the purposes of water catchment protection, timber production on a sustained yield basis and recreation.

DEC manages the land in accordance with the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 (CALM Act). Section 55(1a) of the CALM Act requires that a management plan specify the purpose, or combination of purposes, for which an indigenous State forest or timber reserve is reserved, being one or more of the following purposes: -

- (a) conservation;
- (b) recreation;
- (c) timber production on a sustained yield basis;
- (d) water catchment protection; or
- (e) other purpose being a purpose prescribed by the regulations.

DEC manages the Logue Brook Reservoir and Catchment Area in accordance with Forest Management Plan 2004-2013 and the Logue Brook Reservoir and Catchment Area Management Plan 1990-2000. DEC's predecessor (CALM) and the Water Authority of Western Australia prepared the latter plan jointly and is still in force.

The Logue Brook Reservoir and Catchment Area Management Plan 1990-2000 specifies that provision of water to the Harvey Irrigation District is the primary objective of the reservoir and catchment. Timber production is the second priority objective in that same plan. The Forest Products Commission manages the sustainable timber harvesting in accordance with the Forest Management Plan 2004-2013. Recreation is endorsed by the management plan as long as the types of activities and level of use do not conflict with the primary land uses.

Section 21 of the Forest Management Plan 2004-2013 identifies water objectives, including, that the quantity and quality of water used for environmental and consumption purposes should be protected and, where necessary and practicable, enhanced.

Recreation

The reservoir and catchment area is a popular area for a wide range of recreational activities. These include fishing, camping, bushwalking, swimming, picnicking, canoeing, four-wheel driving, motor-bike riding, sightseeing, nature appreciation, power boating and water skiing. The Department does not collect visitor use data for the entire Logue Brook Catchment.

Traffic counter data is collected for the Logue Brook dam wall and varies from 25,000 to 40,000 per annum. An estimate of the recreational use of the area surrounding Logue Brook Reservoir is between 40,000 – 60,000 visits per annum. The level of recreational use is likely to increase in line with national and local trends. At Logue Brook Dam, DEC manages three picnic sites, one camping ground and access for water skiing, boating and fishing. Camping numbers are estimated to be around 10,000 camper nights per annum

DEC leases 11.5 hectares of land on the southern side of the reservoir for a caravan park. The lease expires in September 2018. The Logue Brook Caravan Park currently provides caravan and camping sites, cabin accommodation and a shop/café.

The Munda Bididi Trail is a long distance off road cycle trail through jarrah forest from Mundaring to Collie that follows part of the eastern side of Logue Brook Dam and uses the Logue Brook Caravan Park for overnight camping. The Munda Bididi Trail is designed to link with campsites or townsites along the trail and the Logue Brook Caravan Park generates income by providing facilities for Munda Bididi riders.

Options

DEC believes there are three clear options at Logue Brook: -

1. Do nothing, i.e. retain the status quo - irrigation supply and recreation
2. Create a potable water supply, remove recreation and provide alternatives
3. Coexistence of recreation and the provision of potable water

DEC favors exploring the potential for a collaborative approach to achieving coexistence (Option3) before a socially less desirable alternative such as 2 are considered. DEC supports a flexible, risk management based approach to determining the compatibility of recreational use in water catchments and reservoirs that involves stakeholder and community consultation and the preparation of risk management options, on a case-by-case basis.

Trade-offs

In the event that coexistence is not feasible or acceptable then the impacts and costs of displacing recreation and tourism to other locations needs to be considered. The attached table provides a summary of existing uses and possible alternatives

The potential to relocate water skiing, boating, fishing, camping and picnicking facilities and the caravan park to other areas is limited. Relocation of these activities will place pressure on other areas already experiencing capacity issues. Most relocation options are of a lower quality than those existing at Logue Brook. The upgrading of picnic facilities below Logue Brook Dam wall is possible but not desirable because of space, access and slope constraints. Some alternative recreational opportunities are a considerable distance from Logue Brook and would disadvantage local users. For example, Lane Pool Reserve provides opportunities for swimming, canoeing, fishing, picnicking, bushwalking and camping but is around 60 kilometres from Logue Brook.

In respect to water-skiing the closest alternative opportunities are the Glen Mervyn Dam, Waroona Dam and Stockton Lake, which are up to 100 kilometres from Logue Brook. Swimming, fishing, picnicking, canoeing and sailing are also possible at this site. The Water Corporation has indicated it would consider water skiing on Harvey Dam or Drakesbrook Dam, which are much closer to Logue Brook than Glen Mervyn.

If the Harvey Water Pipe Project is approved the Munda Bididi Trail will need to be realigned and an additional camping facility provided to replace the role the caravan park currently plays as a campsite.

DEC supports ongoing visitor access to the Hoffman Mill via Hoffman Mill Road and Logue Brook Dam/Scarp Roads. The Hoffman Mill site will continue to require management and consideration could be given to further development of recreation at this site.

DEC believes ongoing management by DEC and/or Water Corp rangers will be required to monitor unauthorised 4WD and trail bike access in any future RPZ. Track closure and rehabilitation will also be required.

Social values

While DEC recognises the importance of providing safe drinking water supplies, it also recognises that the opportunity to participate in recreation is vital to the health, wellbeing and sustainability of local communities.

Little research has been conducted on the public health and environmental impacts of recreation in catchments, particularly Australia. While information exists on the impacts of recreational activities there is only limited research on the impact of particular types or levels of recreational use. While the cause effect relationships between recreational use and water quality are well established, further research is required to quantify these relationships. What is clear from research is that by far the greatest impact on water quality is not recreation and tourism activity but historic and inappropriate land use practices in the surrounding catchment.

The diversity and complexities of water catchments and their inter-relationships in delivering potable water to the Integrated Water Supply Scheme means that it is not possible to provide a uniform policy prescription.

Economic and social impacts

Any decision to remove/relocate recreation from Logue Brook Reservoir raises a number of issues: -

- the economic cost of compensating the leaseholder of Logue Brook Caravan Park for the loss of up to 12 years of business opportunity;
- the economic cost of relocating and providing alternative recreation opportunities;
- the social cost of lost recreational opportunities that are only partially replaced or cannot be replaced at all;
- the economic loss of the recreational and tourism expenditure to the local economy, and
- who pays for these losses and costs?

The following table provides a summary of current recreation use on nearby water bodies (within 100 km) and the potential to accommodate changes in use or additional use.

	Swimming	Canoeing/Boating	Water skiing	Day use/picnicking	Camping	Walking
Wellington Dam *	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO (Wild camping at present, potential with development)	YES
Drakesbrook Dam*	YES	YES	POTENTIAL	YES, but requires further development	NO (Potential with development)	?
Waroona Dam*	YES	YES	YES, Currently at capacity	YES	YES	Yes. limited
Harvey Dam*	NO (below dam only) Has potential in dam but water quality issues exist	YES (electric, and self propelled vessels only)	POTENTIAL, but water quality issues exist	YES, Good facilities below dam. Potential above but would require major development	NO but has potential for a caravan park and camping ground	Access issues ??
Brunswick Dam	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	No
Brunswick River and catchment	Lack of water	Lack of water	N/A	YES, but requires some development	NO? (wild camping at present, potential with development)	POTENTIAL, but requires some development
Stirling Dam & catchment	NO	NO	NO	YES, but requires further development	NO	NO (potential trails below dam wall)
Hoffmans Mill	N/A	N/A	N/A	YES	YES, but seasonal from 1 st Nov to Easter (end school holidays)	YES
Bancel Bk Catchment	NO	NO Lack of water	N/A	NO	NO	NO
Below Logue Bk Dam	Lack of water	Lack of water	N/A	POTENTIAL	NO	YES, link to existing trails, requires further development

YES = Approved Current Use NO = Not approved current use N/A = Not applicable POTENTIAL = Not a current use but has potential to be

* = Irrigation dam