



Still No Water 30 June 2009

The state government's 'Water for Good' plan to secure South Australian water makes no mention of the critical state of Eyre Peninsula's groundwater supplies. There is no concrete proposal to provide new water for household use let alone needs for Eyre Peninsula's mining industry.

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said Eyre Peninsula has 80% of the state's mining exploration. The state currently receives less than \$200 million in royalties from operating mines compared with over \$3 billion for Western Australia and a similar amount for Queensland.

"The mining industry could provide the new jobs and royalties that our state desperately needs if our economic situation is to be improved from languishing second to last (only ahead of Tasmania) compared with the other states," Mrs Penfold said.

She said she welcomed the fact that the 'Water for Good' plan recognised the need for third party access to SA Water infrastructure. However, while the Liberal Party policy released recently provided a clear model, the Government's plan lacks urgency and detail.

"The mismanagement of the state's water is nowhere more evident than in the necessity by the Minister for Water Security and the Premier in claiming Liberal policies as their own.

"Their failure to take action over the past seven years has brought South Australia to the brink of disaster," Mrs Penfold said.

"Now they have to wait for the Liberals to tell them what to do."

Mrs Penfold castigated the announcement of yet another consultation in the Water Plan.

Millions of dollars have been misspent on consultations, investigations, gimmicks, and useless advertising to get people to reduce consumption of the very product SA Water has the monopoly to provide.

"The desalination plant that was 'written in blood' has not eventuated, making Minister Wright's statement in parliament that the Labor 'government never reneges on a promise' somewhat hollow," she said.

"Despite all the investigations, consultations and research done by private companies, SA Water and individuals, the Minister for Water Security has proudly announced the spending of half a million dollars on 'investigations into a suitable site' for yet another desalination investigation for Eyre Peninsula.

"The ill-conceived \$48.5 million pipeline for water to Kimba from the River Murray will never bring desalinated

water to Eyre Peninsula, she said.

Mrs Penfold said that the Minister for Water Security has said that the water security plan for Eyre Peninsula has been completed. "If that is so, why is yet another series of meetings being arranged by SA Water," she asked.

"If we are lucky, there'll still be some funding somewhere for an actual desalination plant to provide water instead of just talking about it," she said.

Water - Just Do It! 29th May 2009

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said talk is not cheap with millions of dollars already wasted on water reports and talk fests with little to show for it except the introduction of Level 3 Water Restrictions for Eyre Peninsula.

"Claims the reduction of water allocations are as a result of recent changes in climatic conditions particularly the severe drought, by the Minister for Water Security are absolute hogwash. The problem was well recognised and a desalination plant was promised for Eyre Peninsula right back in 2002," Mrs. Penfold said.

"People living on Eyre Peninsula have every right to be furious with SA Water and in particular this Minister and this government for their inaction since the 2002 desalination decision."

"There have been more than 20 investigations into locations and needs over the past 10 years and SA Water should be able to put out tenders for a desalination plant now, not in another six months or whenever they conclude their latest \$500,000 investigation," Mrs. Penfold said.

"If SA Water have as they say received only one official complaint in 12 months then they can't be listening. I urge people to ring SA Water on 1300 880 337 and lodge their official complaints and also to sign the current petition (download from www.ceduna.yourguide.com.au) so SA Water get the message." She said.

"Minister Maywald on 14th May 2009, stated that 'The government continues to fast track investigations into desalination for Eyre Peninsula...', but seven years of investigations is enough and I ask her to stop the talk and just do it or facilitate the private operators to do it." Mrs Penfold said.

In her maiden speech given in 1994 Mrs Penfold first raised her concerns regarding the future of Eyre Peninsula's water supply, particularly at Streaky Bay, and suggested that desalination utilising solar energy could be a solution. Fifteen years and millions of dollars later Eyre Peninsula is still waiting.

Ends

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Talk talk talk! A condensed history!

1998 April Spencer Regions Water Futures (Scope for Improved Water Management)

1999 October State Water Plan South Australia Volume 2 (draft for consultation)

2000 Water Allocation Plan for Southern Basins Prescribed Wells Area. Eyre Region Water Resources Planning Committee Draft

2001 Water Allocation Plan for the Musgrave Prescribed Wells Area. Eyre Region Water Resources Planning Committee Adopted

2001 September Eyre Peninsula Water Supply Master Plan – First Interim Report

2002 February Eyre Peninsula Water Supply Master Plan – Second Interim Report

2002 April EPLGA – EP Water Summit Wudinna

2002 September Tod Reservoir 6 month pilot plant study (Master Plan)

2002 October Streaky Bay Water Supply augmentation Project (final report, the 170th report of the Public Works Committee February 2002)

2003 February **\$2m trial desalination plant** commenced at Tod Reservoir (2004 March “Feasibility of desal process tested. Initial draft being evaluated by SA Water”, Weatherill)

2003 March 7 Water summit headed by Water Security Minister Maywald in Port Lincoln

2003 May Eyre Peninsula Water Supply Master Plan

2004 Eyre Peninsula Catchment Report (prepared by Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Board) “This report is the second key document in the development of a catchment water management plan for Eyre Peninsula. It follows the proposal statement that outlined the Board’s intent to develop the plan and the issues to be addressed by it.”

2005 August Augmentation fees are being charged to developers in Coffin Bay.

2005 October 21 A feasibility study into the use of aerial electromagnetic technologies to assess the geology of the site (Coffin Bay Lens) is nearing completion. We still don’t know what the capacity of the Coffin Bay lens is.

2005 Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Plan Draft for Public Consultation (prepared by Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Board)

2005 May Government announced **\$48.5m to build a pipeline from Iron Knob to Kimba bringing 1.4GL from the ailing River Murray** (completed 2007)

2005 August Public Works Committee Minority Report on the Eyre Peninsula Water Supply Upgrade

2006 Water Audit for the Eyre Peninsula. Survey, analysis and report on the use of rainwater on the Eyre Peninsula. (on behalf of Eyre Peninsula Natural Resources Management Board)

2007 January A National Plan for Water Security

2007 March Water summit hosted by Karlene Maywald at Port Lincoln Racecourse

2008 December SA Water’s Long Term Plan for Eyre Region

2009 May 8, SA Water working on a water security strategy for Eyre Peninsula “studies over next 6 months will look at options for a desal plant, including locations” (Anne Howe SA Water)

2009 May Level 3 Water Restrictions applied “SA Water investigating a number of EP locations that may be suitable for a desalination plant....”

All talk no action

14 May 2009

The announcement that Eyre Peninsula's water restrictions are to be raised to level 3 is an indictment of the mismanagement of this Government, the Ministers, the SA Water Board and the CEO, Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said.

"But the buck firmly rests with Minister Maywald who is now responsible for this massive state monopoly crucial to the future of our environment and the prosperity of the people of South Australia," she said.

Speaking to the Water Rates Amendment Bill, in parliament yesterday Mrs. Penfold again raised the unsustainability of the region's current water sources and the poor quality of water being delivered to rate payers.

Mrs Penfold asked the Minister for Water Security to exempt people of Eyre Peninsula from water rates "until such time as they are provided with safe, pleasant, drinkable water from a sustainable source, water that is at least equivalent to Adelaide's water supply."

"Despite many years of warnings that Eyre Peninsula's basins were under threat, the lack of any action by this government, other than talk fests has been disastrous. We've had numerous consultations, summits, reports, inquiries, assessments, master plans and promises made regarding Eyre Peninsula's water supplies.

The most amazing admission was last week's announcement by SA Water CEO Anne Howe that, 'South Australia has been caught out by being complacent over water supply,.....' which only reinforces what people have been saying for years, that this government and SA Water have not been listening, despite the many millions of dollars having been spent on enquiries into Eyre Peninsula's water alone.

In 1994 in a speech to parliament, Liz first raised the possibility of desalination when the Liberal Government undertook a feasibility study into the use of solar energy to distil sea water.

Technologies have changed dramatically since that time, but the need for good plentiful potable water on Eyre Peninsula hasn't.

Despite the \$32million commitment in 2002 by Minister Conlon for a desal plant on Eyre Peninsula, and all the promises - even one by Minister Weatherill on 4th June 2003 'written in blood' and confirmed by Minister Wright in 2005, we are now facing level 3 water restrictions and possible salt water intrusion of the critically overdrawn aquifers supplying Eyre Peninsula's water.

The time for talk is over. Heads should roll and desalinated water must be supplied as a matter of the utmost urgency for the region, Mrs Penfold said.
ENDS.

Opportunities go begging 5 May 2009

Eyre Regional Development Board's application for funding for the Western Eyre Peninsula Water Desalination Integrated Plan and Eastern Eyre Peninsula Mineral Export Hub have been rejected.

Mr Phil Tyler, Executive Director, Small Business and Regional Development in the Department of Trade and Economic Development, notified ERDB that applications for \$85,000 for the water plan and \$100,000 for the export hub were unsuccessful.

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said knocking back funding for a desalination plan and minerals port was

puzzling because of the dire state of water supplies on Eyre Peninsula, and the need for a dedicated minerals export port on eastern Eyre Peninsula.

"I commend ERDB for working to ensure our region has a sustainable water supply, and a dedicated port.

"Comments from state government Ministers following BHP Billiton's announcement that it won't be producing potable water for Eyre Peninsula are disturbing," she said.

She said previous promises that the Whyalla desalination plant was going to supply potable water to Whyalla and Eyre Peninsula makes the \$48.6 million spent on extending the River Murray pipeline to Kimba another government farce.

"The reason given for the pipeline extension which further stresses the River Murray was that it would be used for the delivery of desalinated water to Eyre Peninsula in the future.

"Now government Ministers are saying that Spencer Gulf cities can be supplied from the Adelaide desalination plant which won't be producing enough water to supply all of Adelaide's needs.

"And how would the water get here?" she asked. "Infrastructure is not built to bring water to the Spencer Gulf cities from Adelaide."

Mrs Penfold said the lack of funding for Eyre Regional Development Board projects even more puzzling in the light of the millions of dollars given to Whyalla and cities in the Iron Triangle during the Community Cabinet meeting in Whyalla this week.

ENDS

**The Desalination Saga 2002- 2008 "Written in Blood"
19 December 2008**

"We had the plan and we had the money back in 2002." Mrs Penfold said when responding to the Port Lincoln City Council's motion on Monday 15th December, demanding the 'State Government immediately allocate money for a Lower Eyre Peninsula desalination plant as identified in the plan'.

On 21st August 2002 the then Minister for Government Enterprises Patrick Conlon stated in Parliament that "...one of the initiatives taken was the Eyre Peninsula master plan, and in recent weeks-and I treat the issue seriously-the master plan in a condensed form has been the subject of consultation in the community.." "...There are a series of options in the master plan, including desalination."

"Soon after, at Labor's Community Cabinet meeting in Port Lincoln, Minister Conlon announced a \$32 million desalination plant for Eyre Peninsula and we were all delighted." Mrs Penfold said.

On ABC radio on the 4th June 2003 when challenged about the desalination plant, the then Minister for Government Enterprises stated that the desalination plant was "written in blood".

Mrs Penfold said, "On the 9th March 2005 when I asked the Minister for SA Water, Michael Wright, in Parliament, if the 'Government had reneged on its promise' to build the \$32 million desalination plant for Eyre Peninsula, the Minister replied stating 'I thank the Member for Flinders. As she knows full well, this government never reneges on a promise'."

"Five years after committing to a desalination plant for Eyre Peninsula this Labor Government is still planning and consulting while Western Australia already have a desalination plant providing 50 giga litres of water for Perth, that I noted in a speech on the same day in 2005, they were planning to build at a cost of \$350 million

(One the same size planned for Adelaide is now \$1.3 billion) and are now planning a second one.” She said.

“This Labor Government should stop planning, promising and talking and actually do something before the cost quadruples again or Eyre Peninsula run out of water like the River Murray.”

EP’S water disaster plan 5 December 2008

Drought stricken Eyre Peninsula needs action on water now – not more money being spent on yet another plan.

Minister Maywald’s summary at the launch in Port Lincoln this week “Meeting Future Demand – SA Water’s Long Term Plan for Eyre Region” was that \$2 million was ‘to get more information to report to you’.

“\$2 million on more talkfests, to gather more data, to undertake more monitoring and produce yet another annual review that might one day lead to bringing in more River Murray water or possibly a reverse osmosis desalination plant for Eyre Peninsula, is not going to provide the new water that the region needs right now,” Member for Flinders Liz Penfold says.

The CEO of SA Water stated a project manager had been appointed, ‘to progress options’ of which sea water desalination and the second stage of the pipeline to bring more water from the ailing River Murray were the two options identified at present.

“We have climate change staring us in the face that is likely to make an already diabolic water situation, much worse. All the Minister has given is yet another plan, in a long line of plans, that plans to make another plan but take no action to provide new water,” Mrs. Penfold said

“The people of Eyre Peninsula and I are fed up with plans when what we need is urgent action.”

People living on Upper Eyre Peninsula are paying thousands of dollars to replace pipes and electronic equipment ruined by calcium scale from the water provided by SA Water. Clothes are being bleached in washing machines by excessive chlorine levels.

Eyre Peninsula’s Robinson Basin at Streaky Bay and Polda basin near Lock are already exhausted with some concern of seawater incursion in Lower Eyre Peninsula’s basins.

Eyre Peninsula has huge potential for mining, with massive associated benefits for the whole State but will need an estimated 9 gigalitres of water.

Mrs Penfold said while this Government dilly dallies, there have been solutions available.

“The environmentally “green” desalination plant, planned for a location near Ceduna, has been stalled by a Government and its water department seemingly hell bent on making ‘plans’, she said.

In the meantime, the proponents of desalination project have gone to Queensland, while our State loses yet another opportunity and we miss getting new water to where it is most needed by the community and the mining industry.

“The Labor Government should recognise that Minister and the CEO of SA Water have failed over a number of years in their water responsibilities and ask them to resign,” Mrs. Penfold said.

Labor can’t be trusted on water

5 September 2007

Delays, face saving and senseless decisions characterise the Labor state government's approach to the state's water crisis, Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said.

"The private company seeking to build a desalination plant at Ceduna still hasn't got a response from the Minister for Water Security Karlene Maywald to a letter sent last March, the BHP desalination plant proposed for Whyalla is years away, and a desalination plant for Adelaide is still not on Labor's radar," she said.

"The Ceduna desalination plant would replace highly chlorinated hard water currently being delivered to the district, would be totally sustainable environmentally, and would help to take pressure off the River Murray."

Mrs Penfold said the proposed plant to serve a new hotel and marina at Ceduna along with current users, and to be a possible water source for processing mineral sands, is solar powered, mechanical vapour compression technology and the salt will be used for existing commercial salt production.

"Taxpayers are not being asked to fund this project which one would expect the state government to facilitate as quickly as possible in light of the state's dire water situation.

"But more than two years on, the Labor state government still isn't facilitating the proposal and federal grant opportunities are being lost.

"I commend Ceduna District Council for sticking with the project despite Labor's delays and inaction, for instance a Labor Minister taking more than 12 months to respond to a letter from council."

Mrs Penfold said it was senseless that the Labor government extended the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline to Kimba at a cost of \$48.6 million to deliver a scant 1.4 gigalitres of River Murray water but has not facilitated private enterprise to provide much more water at no cost to taxpayers.

"Last financial year alone, the state government took \$300 million of water users' taxes and dividends from the government-owned SA Water to top up state coffers.

"Now we have Water Minister Karlene Maywald and her fellow Labor Ministers blaming these same people for using water and accusing them of not being trusted to use drippers to keep their gardens alive.

"It's Labor that can't be trusted on water," Mrs Penfold said.

More talk but no more water in the pipe! 15 February 2007

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said Water Security Minister Karlene Maywald's hasty announcement of yet another Eyre Peninsula water summit is just an excuse for more talk and no action.

Minister Maywald announced plans for a 'special summit' on Eyre Peninsula's water supply in response to Mrs Penfold's questions and speech in Parliament last week.

Mrs Penfold's concerns were reinforced by constituent and media questions and comments at the state government's community forum in Port Lincoln on February 12 and 13.

She pointed out that the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association held an Eyre Peninsula water summit in Wudinna on the 5th April 2002.

In September 2002 a Rann Government Cabinet meeting held in Port Lincoln gave a commitment 'to address Eyre Peninsula's escalating water supply problems'.

"With nearly five years having passed, I can only hope that Ms Maywald in her new role as Water Security Minister can do a bit more than talk.

"Eyre Peninsula actually needs new water in our pipes not water taken from the overdrawn southern basins to top up Robinson Basin at Streaky Bay after being de-chlorinated. Nor even the totally inadequate 1.4 gigalitres pumped to Kimba 600+ kilometres from the overdrawn River Murray," she said.

The government's pipeline linking Eyre Peninsula to the river will cost more than \$48 million. A much better and more sustainable investment would have been desalination plants built by private enterprise at little or no cost to taxpayers.

Ms Maywald said she needed to get facts and data to make decisions on an informed basis, not on emotion. However, Mrs Penfold said the summit would simply be going over ground that had already been exhaustively covered.

"Consultants PPK developed a Water Supply Master Plan for Eyre Peninsula for the government after extensive consultation, part of which responded to an SA Water request that specific consideration be given to Streaky Bay's water supply.

"The Master Plan report received in 2002, after two interim reports, was based on detailed consultation with the very departments and people that the Minister now says she will be getting her facts from.

"How many more times do the same people have to tell this government the same story about water on Eyre Peninsula before it listens and takes action?"

"The 2002 report was followed by the Eyre Peninsula water summit in Wudinna and a levy imposed by the Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Board (now EPNRM Board) which is additional to the River Murray levy – and that was to help solve our water problems! Yet all we have seen is escalating expense, no action and no new water.

"In any case, SA Water should have been able to come up with solutions and take the necessary action to provide Eyre Peninsula with a reliable water supply instead of a pipeline that few if any asked for and which was never one of the favoured options in any of the reports."

Mrs Penfold said that the only difference between 2007 and 2002 is that there is even more data confirming Eyre Peninsula's water crisis – a crisis for which Labor's very expensive SA Water \$48.5 million pipeline to Kimba bringing 1.4 gigalitres of water from the River Murray will not be a solution.

Mrs Penfold raised the matter through a speech and questions in parliament the week before the Cabinet visit to Eyre Peninsula to force the government to look at the issues.

"There are more than enough facts already available for the government to facilitate the desalination plants at Ceduna, Streaky Bay and Port Lincoln that are already outlined in reports and, in the case of Port Lincoln, even tested.

"It seems that Ms Maywald has fallen into line with Rann Labor government tactics: spend hundreds of

thousands of dollars to confirm what is already known.

“No amount of special summits will add one litre more to our water supply,” she said. ENDS

Rann must move on looming west coast water disaster 6th February 2007

Eyre Peninsula’s water supplies are in danger of collapse with the government’s water supply strategy for the peninsula – or lack of it – has been described as unsustainable.

Local MP Liz Penfold said she had been alarmed to discover that underground water from the Uley Basin of Port Lincoln, which supplies most of Eyre Peninsula, was being pumped into the Robinson Basin near Streaky Bay.

She said the reason given by SA Water was supposedly ‘... to improve the condition of the aquifer and increase its long-term viability as a water source for the region’.

“Pumping water hundreds of kilometres from one already overdrawn underground basin into another similarly overdrawn basin is simply not sustainable.

I honestly have no idea what former Minister Wright and the Board of SA Water have been up to, maybe Premier Rann can explain?

Mrs Penfold described the transfer of water from the Uley to the Robinson Basin as ‘robbing Peter to pay Paul’.

She said it represented just one of the most recent in a succession of nonsensical decisions by SA Water and the Rann Government about water on the West Coast.

“It is clear that a desalination plant at Ceduna has to be considered as part of a much-needed ‘West Coast Water Solution’,” Mrs Penfold said.

“Instead we have disaster after disaster.

“In 2003 SA Water spent \$7.8 million on a 65 kilometre pipeline to link Streaky Bay to the main Tod – Ceduna system and bring in 180 megalitres of water a year. This was to take the pressure off the same Robinson Basin while a water solution was found for the whole region.

“The Robinson basin was still expected to provide about 50 percent of the required water. However only 10 percent was able to be drawn from the basin and obviously even this was too much.

“Because the Robinson Basin is overdrawn and cannot provide the expected amount of water to Streaky Bay a second pipeline is being surveyed at present and water to Wirrulla and Streaky Bay is being alternated to ensure that pressure is intermittently adequate to provide water to stock along the routes.

“This is a totally inadequate outcome and is causing havoc for users.

“In 2006 SA Water spent \$48.6 million on a 90 kilometre pipeline between Kimba and Iron Knob to link Eyre Peninsula’s water system to the overdrawn River Murray via Whyalla and bring 1,400 megalitres of water per year. This was to take the pressure off the Uley, Lincoln and Poldas Basins but is yet to be completed and was inadequate to even replace what SA Water has overdrawn on their allocations.

“The Poldas, Uley/Wanilla, Lincoln South and now the Robinson basins are – as a constituent put it to me –

“totally stuffed”.

“The Robinson Basin assessment was inaccurate and the pipeline was inadequate. Worse still the Eyre Peninsula water assessment was also totally inaccurate and the pipeline inadequate as well as being inappropriate, bringing as it does water 600 kilometres from the River Murray.

“Last year \$281 million was put into general revenue to spend on other things from SA Water and even the capital works budget was underspent, despite \$48.5 million being spent on a useless pipeline to Kimba.

“With water so important and water management by this government so bad I fear for the future of our whole State.”

Local MP says no to \$48.5 million pipeline 30 June 2005

In giving evidence to the Parliamentary Public Works Committee this week Member for Flinders Liz Penfold reiterated that the proposed Iron Knob to Kimba extension of the River Murray pipeline to deliver 1.4 gegalitres of water to Eyre Peninsula was ill conceived.

“Already the Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Board are asking that the 2.3 gegalitre stage two of the project be implemented immediately, to enable the underground water resources to recover and make up for SA Water having already overdrawn their licensed allowance. This would come with an estimated cost of an **additional \$7 million.**”

“According to statements from the Minister for Administrative Services Michael Wright, the government was not expecting to source the 2.3 gegalitres of water from BHP Billiton’s (previously Western Mining’s) proposed desalination plant at Whyalla until 2010. If this is brought forward the full 2.3 gegalitres will have to come initially from the River Murray and who is to say it will end there. The Whyalla desalination plant may never be built and Eyre Peninsula will continue to need more water”

Mrs Penfold said that SA Water indicated at the hearing that they had severely discounted the expected water requirements for new housing, mining, horticulture and other manufacturing industries, which were submitted by Eyre Peninsula Councils, Eyre Regional Development Board and Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association.

“It is my view that it should not be up to SA Water to decide what is a viable use for water and what is not. Their charter is to provide the water for the people of the State. However instead they are a cash cow for governments, providing about \$270 million of so called profits into general revenue and expect people and business’s to pay for their own water supplies.”

“It is just as well this wasn’t the attitude in the late 1800’s when the pipeline from Port Lincoln was built using gravity to take the water to Ceduna, or most of the development and life as we know it on Eyre Peninsula wouldn’t be here.” she said.

Mrs Penfold said taxpayers’ dollars should be used for infrastructure that can not be provided by private enterprise. State spending should provide a return on investment to the people of South Australia in the long term.

“SA Water and the government are not facilitating private investment in water, and are stifling development that would occur if Eyre Peninsula had an ample supply of good water,” she said.

The consortium that are looking at a 100% green proposal at Ceduna have advised that they would expect to be able to provide about half (5 gegalitres) of Eyre Peninsula’s current water requirement for the \$48.5 million

that may be spent on the pipeline to provide only 1.4 gigalitres initially.

“There is also a lost opportunity cost, in that this money could be used for standardising and lengthening the railway on Eyre Peninsula while it is currently being upgraded. If it is not done now I doubt that it ever will be. An extended railway would enable the huge variety of mineral that are found in the area to be transported by rail to the location where they are required. For example silver lead and zinc to Port Pirie, iron ore to Whyalla, coal to Port Augusta and out through Darwin, Port Adelaide or Fremantle. This could be a catalyst to really start the mining industry on Eyre Peninsula and a huge saving in lives and money on our roads.” She said.

“One comes up with seriously disturbing questions no matter from what angle the state government’s curious pipeline proposal is looked at,” she said.

Pipeline a dumb idea 26 May 2005

The new pipeline to be built across northern Eyre Peninsula has been slammed as a dumb idea by Member for Flinders, Liz Penfold, who said it would knock new developments on the head.

“The State Government is going to spend \$48.5 million to pump water out of the River Murray, putting further pressure on a river system that is already drastically depleted,” she said. “If the Minister has adopted my proposal to support a desalination plant built by private enterprise at Ceduna, that huge amount of money could instead be used to upgrade roads and railways on Eyre Peninsula, which we also desperately need.

“There is no vision in this pipeline proposal, it’s just a short term, old-fashioned solution to a long term problem. And it will do nothing to ease the existing water restrictions on EP.

“The pipeline will only meet the needs of existing users and will stifle many of the 5000 proposed new developments for the region which have been identified by the Eyre Peninsula Water Catchment Management Board,” Mrs Penfold said.

“An example is the announcement today that Terramin Australia and Zinifex Australia are going to spend \$8 million on exploring lead, zinc and silver deposits north of Kimba. There is no way merely extending the River Murray pipeline will meet the water needs of such a future development.”

“South Australia is supposed to be the innovative State. But instead of developing a new source of water and adopting the cost-effective, environmentally friendly and innovative option of a desalination plant, Minister Wright’s pipeline is just going to put more pressure on the fragile River Murray.

Mrs Penfold said private companies had expressed interest in building a five gigalitre desalination plant at Ceduna to service the town and surrounding areas. “This would meet more than half of Eyre Peninsula’s current water requirements and all the Government has to do is pay the company a fair price for the water, which would then be sold to householders and business through SA Water at the usual price,” she said.

“This would cost SA Water less than the \$3.60 per kilolitre it now costs to get water to Ceduna,” she said.

“And this desalinated water would be of good quality, whereas water that has to be pumped thousands of kilometres from the River Murray would be highly chlorinated.

“A desalination plant would have been a win-win for everyone. Instead, the people of South Australia are being sold out with this dumb idea of taking more water from the River Murray. We are all paying the River Murray levy in the expectation that the funds raised will be used to increase environmental flows and looking after the river. That is not going to be the case under this proposal.

“Minister Wright has said the water for EP will be bought from South Australian and interstate irrigators who already hold water allocations. So instead of buying those allocations to increase environmental flows that water

going to be pumped to Eyre Peninsula.

“It will be impossible for the State Government to always exactly match the need from EP with the supply from these irrigators.

“The Minister has also said the new pipeline could also take water from a desalination plant that Western Mining Corporation has proposed to build at Whyalla. But we have no guarantees that project will go ahead and if it does, it won't be in operation until 2010 or later.”

COST OF WATER ON EYRE PENINSULA 27 May 2003

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold is alarmed that an informal show of hands at a meeting could be seized by the State Government as approval to increase water prices on Eyre Peninsula above the rest of the State.

Mrs Penfold said Mayor Peter Davis suggested at the Eyre Peninsula Water Summit at Wudinna last year that the price for water be increased to \$2 a kilolitre.

“I am advised that the response was a show of hands, not a vote, and that many at the summit did not indicate an opinion as they considered it inappropriate and/or the incorrect forum for such a far reaching decision as this,” she said.

She said the SA Water Board members, on their recent visit to Eyre Peninsula, asked whether there would be support for increased water charges. The members indicated that they believed this was the case because of the “supposed” support given at the Wudinna meeting.

Mrs Penfold has urged councils to advise the Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Board, the Minister for Environment and Conservation John Hill, and the Minister for Administrative Services responsible for SA Water Jay Weatherill that they do not support any proposal to increase water charges above those applying to the rest of the State as a matter of economic importance and social justice.

“I do not believe Eyre Peninsula residents should pay more for a reticulated water supply than their counterparts in other regions of South Australia.

“If the government believes the price of water should be increased, then a small increase across the whole of the State's consumers would be the way to go.

“We are already disadvantaged economically by freight and travel costs caused by distance,” she said.

Mrs Penfold also questioned where extra revenue from an increase would be spent. “It is unlikely to go towards the various water saving and water re-use schemes being proposed which I consider are the most important step after the establishment of the desalination plant.

“SA Water is in the business of selling, not saving, water,” she said.

Mrs Penfold also expressed concern at the mercenary attitude of SA Water in charging an augmentation fee of \$5000 on all new blocks in Coffin Bay, ostensibly to finance the provision of water for the expansion of the town.

“I am not aware of this practice being implemented anywhere else in the State,” she said.

EYRE PENINSULA WATER SUPPLIES 6th May 2002

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold today called on the State Government to implement action urgently on Eyre Peninsula's water supplies.

Mrs Penfold's call comes in support of the Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Board's refusal to recommend a 5% increase in water allocation requested by SA Water.

"The Board's decision is based on the combination of increased usage with the prospect of low water recharge," she said.

Mrs Penfold said the Eyre Peninsula Water Supply Master Plan being prepared by United Utilities and SA Water has been in preparation for more than a year although it has not been released for public comment yet.

"Alarmingly, SA Water has recently indicated that there will be no more new commercial, industrial or housing water allocations on Eyre Peninsula without increased allocations from the underground basins," she said.

"This puts in jeopardy in Port Lincoln alone four major developments – the Peninsula Motel, the Lukin Development, the old ETSA site housing development, and the Marine Innovation Centre project."

Mrs Penfold said towns across Eyre Peninsula have several subdivisions and marine developments in the planning stages that are being halted, including Ceduna Keys and Coastal development (over 500 blocks), Smoky Bay (70), Venus Bay (200), Elliston (55), Lincoln Lakes (200), and Coffin Bay (50).

Mrs Penfold agreed with Mr Wayne Cornish, the Presiding Member of the Eyre Peninsula Catchment Water Management Board, that "increased overdraw on aquifers without a plan to augment supply and prevent damage to the aquifer was fraught with danger."

She applauded the Board and the general manager, Geoff Rayson, on the Board's request for the government to commit to 'new water' to augment supply.

Mrs Penfold outlined a number of possible solutions. Reverse osmosis could be used to desalinate brackish water in the Tod reservoir. Brackish water is cheaper to desalinate than sea water however water availability may not always be secure. Sea water desalination, especially to supplement the water from the Tod catchment and at Ceduna, must be considered. In the long term underground water at Lock could be desalinated by dewatering the proposed coal mine.

Linking Eyre Peninsula to the River Murray has been mentioned on a number of occasions however I doubt that this would be acceptable to most South Australians. "It seems a rather backward move in light of the problems associated with the River Murray," she said.

Mrs Penfold said at least 10 megalitres per day capacity is needed. The estimated cost per kilolitre, based on research of various water supply solutions, varies between 63 cents and \$1.33. "Private enterprise investors are interested in providing the desalination plants needed.

"For a speedy resolution to this problem the government must facilitate their involvement as quickly as possible, or undertake to provide this infrastructure through SA Water," she said.