



VITONGA EAST FARMS PTY LTD (ACN 003 206 531)
AS TRUSTEE FOR THE BREMNER FAMILY TRUST TRADING AS

BREMNER FARMS



23 June 2011

Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry

Dear Sir,

Our submission to the inquiry is brief but requires action to prevent serious damage in the next flood.

The Dalby town Council installed a desalination plant at the Water treatment works on the Moonie Hwy in 2004 with an accompanying evaporation pond to dispose of the salty brine left over from the process. These ponds highlighted in the map attachment and the photo hold highly concentrated salty water.

Our concern is these ponds were built in the middle of a flood plain between the Myall Creek and Condamine River. During the flood in Jan 11 the flood water went within 30-40cm of over topping the main pond. If this had occurred thousands of tonnes of salty water would have washed over our farmland adjoining the ponds. The ponds have a bunded pond surrounding the main salt pond. The bunded pond is supposed to catch any water leaking from the main pond and prevent contamination. During the floods the bunded area was completely inundated providing no protection in the event of a wall failure (see Photo).

The pipeline that delivers the salty water to the ponds runs along our boundary. This is also an unacceptable risk to our property as future leaks may go undetected as the pipe is buried. Soil movement in our area is normal and at some stage in the future the pipe will fail.

We believe the ponds should be removed as soon as possible and the brine water treated and removed by a different method.

We have approached the Western Downs Regional Council verbally about the risks and dangers of their pond particularly when it begins to become full in the future. They do not accept our concerns and council officers appear not to care now or after their retirement, while we as farmers wish to continue to look after our land long after salt ponds reach the end of their life.

A further issue with the ponds is that during the flood they diverted river water across our land that would have normally would have flowed west but was forced to flow north across our land causing considerable more crop damage than if the ponds had not been there. This can be seen on the eastern side of the ponds

Further information on the desalination plant can be found here

http://www.wdrc.qld.gov.au/web/guest/services/water_treatment_processes.shtml#desal

Also attached to this email are a photo of the ponds and a satellite map taken a few days after the flood

Your Faithfully

Kim Bremner

for and on Behalf of

IR & FL & JI & KA Bremner & Bremner Farms