

Thursday 10 December 2009

VIC COALITION PUTS BRUMBY ON NOTICE

The Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition has today given notice it will again oppose the gazetting of a water regulation designed to provide the Brumby Government with a legal mechanism to take water from northern Victoria.

Shadow Minister for Country Water Resources Peter Walsh said the Coalition would move a further disallowance against the order which was reintroduced by Water Minister Tim Holding.

"We've said from the outset that the north-south pipeline is flawed and we will fight it at every opportunity," Mr Walsh said.

"The order was disallowed by the Coalition with support from the minor parties in August because it broke key commitments to Victoria's food-producing communities and the environment.

"The motion to disallow the second order issued by the Minister means the regulations will again be debated early next year.

"Premier John Brumby has arrogantly pursued the same course, refusing to take the concerns of northern Victorian communities on board.

"Their concerns have not been addressed in the second order and no significant changes were made before it was gazetted again."

Mr Walsh said the motion to disallow the order would most likely be debated after the Auditor-General's report into the government's estimations on water savings was tabled.

"It is believed the Auditor-General's report will show the amount of water saved by the modernisation project is drastically less than the government's estimations," Mr Walsh said.

"Labor has grossly overestimated the water savings available through the modernisation project and it is now in a panic to raid water previously committed to the environment."

Mr Walsh said the Brumby Government had already raided 10,000 megalitres (ML) from the environmental water reserve held in Lake Eildon, and a further 12,000ML of savings from the Wimmera Mallee pipeline earmarked for northern Victoria's river red gum forests, for Melbourne in 2010.

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