

# Media Release

## Peter Walsh MLA



Member for Swan Hill State | Deputy Leader | Shadow Minister of Agriculture | Shadow Minister for Country Water Resources

Thursday 20 December

## LABOR DITCHES CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITIES

Member for Swan Hill, Peter Walsh, has criticised the Brumby Government for its dumping of the locally managed Catchment Management Authorities.

“Under the new natural resource management structure the existing CMAs will be merged to form huge Natural Resource and Catchment Authorities which will take up large slabs of the State,” Mr Walsh said.

“The existing North Central CMA will be merged with the Goulburn Broken and North East CMAs to form the Northern Rivers NRCA a region stretching from Khancoban in Victoria’s high country to Swan Hill in the west and Macedon in central Victoria while the Mallee and Wimmera CMAs will form the Wimmera-Mallee NRCA which will run from the Grampians in the south to the Sunrasia irrigation area in the north.

“This means that valuable local knowledge and experience will be lost as the CMAs are centralised with management coming from yet to be determined centres far removed from the local scene,” he said.

“CMAs were set up to incorporate valuable local knowledge in the management of our land, water and biodiversity, yet Labor’s plan means each authority will manage much larger regions with vastly different environmental issues.

“This new structure will restrict the input of local communities into the management of local catchments,” Mr Walsh said.

“Membership of each Authority will be based on appointment by the Brumby Government and will be dependent upon criteria determined by bureaucrats far removed from the local scene.

“John Brumby can’t be trusted on the environment when he moves to limit community input and ownership of environmental management,” he said.

“Labor’s *Securing Our Natural Future* white paper is going to have massive implications for our State and these changes to the CMAs will be just the first of many that will create major challenges for our local communities,” Mr Walsh said.