



FAMILY FIRST



Steve Fielding **Family First** Senator for Victoria

MEDIA RELEASE

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HOW TO SAVE THE MURRAY IN 1 YEAR

A TUNNEL from the Upper Yarra Dam to Lake Eildon would feed the starved Murray River and give hope to struggling farmers along the Murray River system, Family First Leader Senator Steve Fielding said today.

Senator Fielding said the Federal and Victorian governments must unite on this issue and build a 30 kilometre tunnel to connect the Upper Yarra Dam to Lake Eildon at a cost of \$300 million.

“Only a big nation building project like the Snowy can save the Murray,” Senator Fielding said.

Sending more water to help the critically ill Murray would be made possible by the Federal and Victorian governments supporting a \$2 billion pipeline from Tasmania to Victoria to service Melbourne’s water needs and free up water from the Upper Yarra Dam. The feasibility of transporting the water from Tasmania to Victoria by ship should also be considered, as well as a plan to service South Australia.

The Upper Yarra Dam feeds water to the Thomson and Silvan Dams, both providing Melbourne with most of its water. Under Family First’s Water Policy, water from the Upper Yarra Dam would be redirected to the Murray River and Melbourne’s water needs would be serviced via a \$2 billion pipeline from Tasmania.

“The project to send water from the Upper Yarra Dam via a tunnel connecting to Lake Eildon should take just 12 months. The water would flow from the tunnel into Big River then to Lake Eildon, then on to the Goulburn River which flows into the Murray Darling Basin and ultimately the Murray River,” Senator Fielding said.

“Within 12 months and at a cost of just \$300 million, the Murray River could have about 200 gigalitres flowing into it. This year the river had 130 gigalitres, its smallest flow ever. Within a year there would be a massive improvement in water flow to the Murray.”

Senator Fielding said farmers along the Murray were so desperate to survive they have begun abandoning 25 percent of their crops because they simply can’t water them.

“They will probably lose 40 percent of their crops by this summer and many will be forced to sell their water rights just to survive. It’s heartbreaking. The plan to pipe water from Tasmania and use that water to service Melbourne and then tunnel water from the Thomson Dam over to the Murray gives these farming communities hope that within a year, their crops will become viable and they will prosper.”

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