

**How long
must the
community
wait for
promises to
be honoured?**

CANOEING WESTERN AUSTRALIA

7 February 2007

Chronology of commitments re the loss of the Harvey International Slalom Course as a result of the construction of the Harvey Dam by Water Corporation

DATE	COMMITMENT	SOURCE	HONOURED
Community consultation and approval stage			
March 1999	“The Corporation will incorporate the needs of the Stirling Dam Slalom Course in the planning and design of the project (release provisions are in accordance with those specified by the Water and Rivers Commission in the water allocation plan for the Harvey Basin)”.	Water Corporation	X
November 1999	“The (Water) Corporation has confirmed that once the upgrading works are completed at Stirling Dam in 2003, the new outlet works will be able to provide discharge rates of 12 to 14m cumecs as required for white water canoeing”.	Water and Rivers Commission	X
January 2000	“.. the Slalom Committee is willing to forgo its request for water for the Australian Team training in July/August 2000 and in the summer of 2000/2001 as part of our support for Water Corporation’s involvement in this significant community project”	Canoeing Western Australia	✓
April 2000	Water Corporation included monies for a white water park in its budget program 2000 \$20 000 2001 \$830 000 2002 \$8 million 2003 \$2 million	Water Corporation	X
Construction stage: The contract to build the Harvey Dam was let in September 2000			
March 2001	“ However the Commission has no fundamental objection to the WA Canoeing Association negotiating alternative arrangements, particularly an alternate facility, with Water Corporation.”	Water and Rivers Commission	X
May 2002	“the Corporation's role will be to: provide CWA with financial support to design and construct the White Water Park”	Water Corporation	X
July 2002	“In view of the progress towards the proposed Whitewater Park, Canoeing WA is prepared to forgo its water provision from Stirling Dam for the summer of 2002/3 ”	Canoeing Western Australia	✓
Dam completed stage: The Harvey Dam was opened October 2002			
November 2002	Water Corporation terminated the employment of its white water park consultant	Water Corporation	X
September 2003	Water Corporation withdrew its budget allocation of April 2000	Water Corporation	X
June 2006	Water Corporation advised Canoeing Western Australia that funding for the proposed white water park was a whole of government issue	Water Corporation	X
August 2006	Chair, Water Corporation Board declined a CWA request to discuss Water Corporation’s business practices in its dealings concerning the Harvey International Slalom Course	Water Corporation	

BACKGROUND

The Harvey International Slalom Course has been closed since 1998 as the result of Water Corporation's construction of the Harvey Dam.

In their negotiations seeking approval to build the Harvey Dam, and during construction, Water Corporation made a series of commitments to retain or replace the Harvey International Slalom Course, one of the best natural courses in the world. They also allocated appropriate funding.

Now nearly eight years after their initial promises, Water Corporation have got the dam they wanted but they still have not honoured their commitments!!!

Since Water Corporation closed the Harvey International Slalom course they have reaped operational profits totalling about \$2.5 billion!!

There are over 8000 registered Friends of the White Water Park. (www.whitewaterperth.org.au) Its patron is Fiona Wood, Australian of the Year, 2005.

Ongoing water use of the proposed white water park is minimal. It uses non-potable water and requires less water than one hole of a golf course.

Below are extracts from documents held by Canoeing WA that show:

- Commitments Water Corporation has made regarding the provision of water for white water canoeing below Stirling dam, or the development of an alternative facility.
- Canoeing WA voluntarily forgoing its water provision water for the Harvey International Slalom Course in the summer of 2000/2001 and 2002/3.
- About 6 weeks after Canoeing WA agreed to forgo its water for 2000/2001 Water Corporation allocated \$10.85 million for the white water park

Specifically Water Corporation's commitments to:

- incorporate the needs of the Harvey International Slalom Course in the planning and design of the new Harvey Dam project
- provide water for Canoeing WA as per the water provision in their licencing agreement for water from Stirling Dam
- be able to provide discharge rates of 12 – 14 cumecs as required for white water canoeing
- provide Canoeing WA with financial support to design and construct the White Water Park
- assist Canoeing WA to relinquish its Water Provision provided the White Water Park arrangements meet Canoeing WA's requirements and conditions

have not been honoured

Canoeing WA believed the promises made by Water Corporation.

In the light of these promises and in a spirit of cooperation to assist Water Corporation in its dam construction and repair program:

- A training camp at the Harvey International Slalom Course in July/August 2000 for the Australian Slalom Squad in preparation for the 2000 Olympic Games, was dropped
- Canoeing WA cancelled its slalom program at the Harvey International Slalom Course for the summers of 2000/2001 and 2002/2003

Our actions resulted in a considerable increase in the water retained in Stirling Dam.

Please forward this document to friends concerned about the broken promises and who want a white water park for Perth

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In spite of the promises, since the completion of the new Harvey Dam, no water has been made available to Canoeing WA for the Harvey International Slalom Course, nor has an alternative facility been built.

After the Harvey Dam was opened in October 2002:

- Water Corporation
 - has not kept its promises.
 - withdrew its 2000 budget allocation for the White Water Park, in September 2003
- Canoeing WA has been unable to access its water provision.
- The community appears to have lost the Harvey International Slalom Course which was one of the best natural slalom courses in the world.
- No alternative white water facility has been built

Water Corporation, after taking the Harvey International Slalom Course, has failed in its responsibility to honour its commitments by saying that the issue is now a whole of government matter and that it is waiting, without serious commitment or support, on the outcome of the Armadale Redevelopment Authority and its interest in developing a white water park..

It has committed that it might undertake a social cost of the loss of the Harvey Course but has the right not to go ahead if it chooses. There is no commitment to do anything after the review.

Water Corporation should honour its promises to replace the white water facility it has taken from the community.

It should be proactively working with Canoeing WA and assisting the Armadale Redevelopment Authority to resolve the issues, particularly financial, to ensure that the white water park is built, rather than sitting in the wings allowing the Armadale Redevelopment Authority to make the investments and do all the work which honours Water Corporation's promises.

PROPOSAL

- 1. Water Corporation reinstates the current value of its 2000 budget allocation for a white water facility for Western Australia**
- 2. Water Corporation immediately commence meaningful negotiations with Canoeing WA and the Armadale Redevelopment Authority, and make a financial commitment to assist in funding the development of, and Canoeing WA's access to, the white water park at Champion Lakes**

ENQUIRIES

Colin Thorpe

Director, Canoeing WA

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White Water Park Website: www.whitewaterperth.org.au

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11/1/2000 Letter from Water Corporation to Colin Thorpe for Canoeing WA
“In relation to your offer, on behalf of ACAWA (now Canoeing WA), to forego canoeing on the Harvey River during August 2000 and the following summer, this is appreciated and will certainly be viewed positively within the Corporation.”
Signed: J I Gill, Managing Director, Water Corporation

31/1/2000 Letter from Canoeing WA to Water Corporation
“I wish to advise that the Slalom Committee is willing to forego its request for water for the Australian Team training in July/August 2000 and in the summer of 2000/2001 as part of our support for Water Corporation’s involvement in this significant community project”

Signed: Greg Kaeding, President, Canoeing Western Australia
(*This is written confirmation of an earlier verbal offer to Water Corporation which they acknowledged in correspondence above of 11/1/2000*)

About 6 weeks later Water Corporation budgeted \$10.85 million for the white water park.

4/4/2000 Water Corporation included monies for a white water park in its budget program

- 2000 \$20 000
- 2001 \$830 000
- 2002 \$8 million
- 2003 \$2 million

(From parliamentary questions.)
These budget allocations were withdrawn in September 2003 after the Harvey Dam was opened in October 2002.

***Construction phase:
The contract to build the Harvey Dam was let in September 2000***

26/3/2001 Letter from Water and Rivers Commission to Canoeing WA
“The Harvey River Basin Surface Water Allocation Plan was prepared by the Commission to define water available for use from the Harvey Basin. This Plan provides the basis for licencing the taking of water by the Water Corporation from the Harvey-Stirling system, including commission approval to construct and operate the dam system. The plan has been approved by the Minister for Environment and has been agreed to by Water Corporation.

“With respect to white water canoeing the plan provides for a reasonable provision of water over the irrigation season in terms of:

- 14 kL/s flow
- average of 7 hours/ day
- minimum of 40 days with an additional 15 days for training and conduct of nationally or internationally significant events; and
- with a reliability to be determined.”

“This requirement to provide water for canoeing is an obligation on the Water Corporation and is to be a condition of their licence to operate the Harvey Stirling system under the Rights in Irrigation Act 1914.”

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“However the Commission has no fundamental objection to the WA Canoeing Association negotiating alternative arrangements, particularly an alternate facility, with Water Corporation”.

“The Commission’s position requires that the following matters be satisfied:

1. The WA Canoeing Association consents to relinquishing its right in part or in whole to the releases as specified in the Allocation Plan, to the satisfaction of Water Corporation.
2. The Water Corporation negotiates terms for establishing alternative facilities to the satisfaction of the WA Canoe Association.”

Signed: Harry Ventriss, Director Regional Services

2/3/2002 Water Corporation funded a visit by interested parties from Western Australia to the Penrith White Water Stadium

17/5/2002 Extract from MOU between Water Corporation and Canoeing WA (CWA)
(expired 2005)

General

Each party will use its best endeavours, and in good faith contribute and provide assistance in the negotiations, feasibility assessments and related activities concerning the proposed financing, design, construction, ownership, management and operation and development of the White Water Park.

Corporation

Subject to the Corporation being satisfied that the Water and Rivers Commission (**Commission**) will remove the Water Provision on instruction from CWA, the Corporation's role will be to:

- (a) provide CWA with financial, technical and support resources to complete marketing, feasibility and other studies, together with a business case, in connection with the White Water Park;
- (b) * provide CWA with assistance concerning the management of practical details including Intellectual Property relating to the White Water Park;
- (c) * provide CWA with financial support to design and construct the White Water Park, the nature and extent to be determined; and
- (d) * assist CWA to relinquish its Water Provision provided the White Water Park arrangements meet CWA’s requirements and conditions. The Water Provision could then, subject to any appropriate changes required to be made by the Commission, be used at the Corporation’s discretion.

* ***3 of these 4 commitments have not been honoured.***

CWA

CWA's role will be to:

- (a) Represent user input and advice into the research, design, construction, management and other aspects of the development of the White Water Park;
- (b) subject to being satisfied that the arrangements meet CWA’s terms and conditions, advise the Commission of its proposal to relinquish the Water Provision; and

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- (c) subject to being satisfied that the arrangements meet CWA's terms and conditions, in return for assistance and investment provided by the Corporation and subject to the requirements of any applicable legislation, CWA will irrevocably relinquish the Water Provision.

19/7/2002 Letter from Canoeing WA to Water Corporation
"In view of the progress towards the proposed Whitewater Park, Canoeing WA is prepared to forgo its water provision from Stirling Dam for the summer of 2002/3"

Signed: Neville Hine, President Canoeing Western Australia

***Dam Project complete:
The Harvey Dam was opened October 2002***

29/11/2002 Water Corporation terminated the employment of its white water park consultant.

September 2003

Water Corporation withdrew its budget allocation, made in April 2000, for a white water park

8/2/2005 Canoeing WA meeting with Verity Allen, Chair, Board of the Water and Rivers Commission and senior staff.

She confirmed that the extracts of 26/3/2001, 28/5/2001, 19/3/2004, above, still represented the Water and Rivers Commission position.

18/8/2006 Letter from Tim Ungar, Chair Water Corporation Board in response to a request by Canoeing WA for a meeting.

"I note your concerns that you consider the Water Corporation has not fulfilled its commitments made to Canoeing Western Australia prior to the construction of the Harvey Dam.

.... I understand that you may be concerned about the outcome of the current process. Nevertheless, I believe that we should wait for the completion of the process before exploring this matter further.

Therefore at this stage, I do not consider that a meeting would be of benefit."

Signed: T Ungar Chairman Water Corporation Board

(NOTE: 8 years after Water Corporation initially promised to "incorporate the needs of the Stirling Dam Slalom Course in the planning and design of the project" the proposal to wait for the outcome of the "current process" (by the Armadale Redevelopment Authority) appears to be yet another delaying strategy.

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16/10/2006 Letter from the Department of Water to Canoeing WA

...“As a result the Corporation in a letter dated 1 September 2006 made a commitment to:- “carry out an independent assessment of the social benefits lost in permanently forgoing future white water canoeing below the Stirling Dam if it is agreed by the Department of Sport and Recreation, DoW, and the Corporation that the assessment is necessary after the Armadale Redevelopment Authority has completed its evaluation of proposals to develop a white water park at Champion Lakes.”

(NOTE: This gives Water Corporation the option of vetoing their own commitment. There appears to be no commitment to do anything after the social cost review has been completed.)

“You have requested that the DoW convene a meeting between Canoeing WA, Water Corporation and the Department of Sport and Recreation to seek the best community solution for the loss of the Harvey white water canoe course. However, I propose to wait until such time as the Armadale Redevelopment Authority has completed its evaluation of the proposals to develop a white water park at Champion Lakes.”

Signed: R D Hammond A/Director General

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SPORTING & RECREATIONAL RIVERS LOST AS A RESULT OF DAM BUILDING



- HELENA (Mundaring Dam) Lost 1903**
- CANNING Lost 1940**
- WUNGONG Lost 1979**
- SERPENTINE Lost 1961**
- NTH DANDALUP Lost 1994**
- STH DANDALUP Lost 1972**
- LOGUE BROOK DAM Under threat**
- HARVEY (Stirling Dam) Under threat since 1998**
Harvey International Slalom Course
- HARRIS Lost 1990**
- COLLIE (Wellington Dam) Under threat**

* Creeks dammed

Colin Thorpe

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Penrith Whitewater Stadium

The model for the proposed Champion Lakes White Water Park



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