



Hon Stephen Robertson MP
Member for Stretton



**Minister for Natural Resources
and Mines**

Ref N/05/01897
CTS 03355/05

14 JUL 2005

Mr N J Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Alice and George Streets
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to your letter of 25 May 2005 enclosing a copy of Petition No. 473-05 lodged in the Queensland Legislative Assembly.

The Petition draws to the attention of the House the pumping of vast quantities of potable bore water from Traveston for non-rural use.

The *Water Act 2000* (the Act) provides for the sustainable management of water and other resources through a regulatory framework. Under section 20 of the Act, a person may take or interfere with subartesian groundwater for any purpose unless a moratorium, a water resource plan or a declaration limits or regulates the taking of subartesian water. Groundwater in the Traveston area is not controlled by any of these instruments and therefore the potential use of subartesian water, as outlined in the petition, is consistent with the Act.

The groundwater at Traveston is largely confined to a small deposit of basalts in the immediate town area and consequently has local significance, but is not a regionally significant resource.

Where there is high reliance on the use of groundwater for regionally significant economic activities and there is evidence of stress on the resource, my Department may seek to implement a regulatory control to achieve a level of groundwater management. My Department is currently focusing on areas with degraded groundwater resources associated with agricultural and horticultural activities of regional economic significance, as well as those supporting urban water supplies.

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The draft Water Resource (Mary Basin) Plan 2005 is currently being developed and will be released later this year. Submissions have been received in response to public consultation regarding the groundwater assessments and it is not probable that the subartesian water in the Traveston area will be designated for regulation in this Plan.

While the groundwater use at Traveston is consistent with the Act, my Department will monitor future developments and implement any necessary actions to ensure sustainable outcomes for the resource and the community.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Robertson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

STEPHEN ROBERTSON MP