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9 February 2016

Diana Laube
Presiding Member
Eyre Peninsula Natural Resources Management Board
P O Box 22
PORT LINCOLN SA 5606
(email: susan.stovell@sa.gov.au)

Dear Diana

Livestock SA is opposed to the proposed increase in the NRM levies by NRM Boards throughout the State and all Boards are urged to ask for a freeze on any increases.

In relation to Eyre Peninsula, Livestock SA is concerned at the huge 180% increase in the NRM land levy for livestock producers as detailed in the draft business plan – very much higher than the current inflation rate of around 2% which is often taken as a benchmark. This huge increase will put increasing pressure onto livestock producers in the region, most of who are currently facing a greater than one in 20 year rainfall deficiency (see <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ada/?acceptterms=accepted>). It would have been preferable if rather than an increase, given the seasonal conditions, the NRM Board asked for a freeze on any increases at least until conditions improve.

While there may be some merit in moving from the one fixed rate for all land use to differing rates for each sector, surely all sectors should be paying an increased amount towards sharing the burden imposed by the State Government on this region? It seems particularly unfair that it is proposed that residents and those with vacant land will actually pay less, leaving it to those industries that produce income and create employment for the region to pay much more than their fair share of the increase.

Producers continue to question what benefits they will get from paying increased levies, or indeed from their current levies. There needs to be a benefit cost analysis on current NRM programs and projects and as a result of this analysis, some programs and projects will need to either be cancelled or quickly finished. The Board needs to get back to its core business and assist a sustainable productive agriculture sector. Producers constantly ask what percentage of NRM income is actually spent on 'on ground projects' and how much is spent on administration.

Livestock SA, as a member of Primary Producers SA, supports the call for an independent review of the water management costs (see attached media release). Primary Producers SA has also made comments about NRM Boards' revised business plans which Livestock SA endorses. The South Australian Eyre Peninsula NRM Board is asked to support this call for an independent review.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Geoff Power', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Geoff Power
President