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MEDIA RELEASE

A resounding call for NSW leadership on water from inland communities

Workshops on water issues in inland NSW have drawn together people from all walks of life who are very concerned about the health of our inland rivers.

“People are very concerned about the state of rivers and wetlands in NSW and have despaired at the lack of political will to deal with the legacy of mining our waterways,” explained Amy Hankinson, Coordinator of the Inland Rivers Network.

“We are keen to see leadership from the NSW Government to fix our rivers and show the other states what we can do.”

“People are particularly keen to see action in the Northern Basin and the Darling River. The Darling is dying and nothing is being done.”

“Putting more water back into the Darling would be a very positive step towards recognising the value of the river and looking after the communities along it. It would also help give regional people faith that the politicians in Sydney are paying attention to their plight.”

Three workshops were held in Broken Hill, Narrabri and Forbes over the last six weeks and were co-hosted by the Inland Rivers Network and Environmental Defenders Office.

A range of water issues concerned people attending the workshops.

“Obviously our parched rivers and wetlands were at the top of the list, and people are also very worried about people draining our rivers for free and stealing environmental water, as well as threats from mining, such as cyanide in people’s drinking water,” said Ms Hankinson.

“People are also concerned about the security of stock and domestic water – many people feel they are losing this basic water because the government continues to let too much water be taken from the system.”

“The NSW Government needs to get a move on and fix our rivers because regional communities and the environment are suffering.”

“People who attended the workshops also recognised that it is not the drought that is causing all the problems – people know that sucking too much water from the system has caused an artificial drought for many years before this.”

For more information please contact Amy Hankinson on 0407 279 088.