

ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY OF THE KIEWA VALLEY

NEWSPAPER ARTICLES WATERWAYS & EROSION

1895:

Erosion Gully at Gundowring "Fencing off a Dangerous chasm"

A matter of considerable interest to land holders in this part of the world was brought before the Yackandandah Shire Council at its last meeting. An application had been made by Mr. Quirk, a farmer at Gundowring that the council would fence off a dangerous chasm which had been gradually washed through his property, owing to a channel which had been cut in the first instance by the order of the council.

His application was considered reasonable; and a resolution passed that the fence should be made. A notice of motion was tabled at a subsequent meeting that the resolution should be rescinded. It was urged that the council ought not to admit its liability to any claim for compensation, that the erection of the fence would constitute such an admission, that the fence might fall in as the banks washed away from the action of the the flood water,- and would have to be put up again, and that the way would be opened for further claims which might be put in for damage done to the property through which the chasm had been formed.

This view of the case met with no support, the rest of the councillors holding the opinion that when the liability of the council was as clear as in the case in point it should be admitted, and reasonable compensation made.

Source: "KERGUNYAH." *The Australasian* (Melbourne, Vic: 1864 - 1946) 7 Dec 1895: 9.
<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article139718514>

1902:

Mining affecting water quality & sedimentation of Kiewa River below Yackandandah Creek junction

The Murray river-bed was being completely silted up by mining operations on the Victorian side. At the junction of the Mitta Mitta and the Murray Rivers there was abundant evidence that the holes had become sand banks. The president, with reference to Cr Leighton's remarks that the Murray was the property of New South Wales, mentioned that the bulk of the water came from Victori. Cr Bassett was loathe to take any steps that would discourage the great industry of mining. To put a stop to sluicing would be to wipe out the miner.-Cr Morrison agreed that all landholders on the river frontages suffered more or less from mining.

At the same time, he would hesitate before doing anything that would injure an industry that afforded employment to so many people.-Cr Beardmore regarded it as a "shame and disgrace" that the noblest river in Australia should be destroyed by mining.-Cr M'Farlane had heard a great deal about the alleged ruin that had been inflicted on the river frontages, but as one who had known the whole of the rivers in this district for over 40 years, he could see little difference. The exceptionally dry season was largely responsible for the trouble. Cr Whan? considered other interests more permanent than the mining industry. Capitalists who made fortunes out of mining could surely dispose of their tailings.

Good rivers were already too scarce in Australia, and the few we had should be carefully conserved, Cr Muller was neither a fisherman nor a miner, but he knew that the Kiewa River was beautifully clear until the Yackandandah Creek joined the stream. The giant nozzle that ran whole hills into the river did not afford much employment to anybody. Cr Pollard would not like to see mining stopped, but he know quite well that above the junction of the Yackandandah Creek with the Kiewa River the water was fit to drink, while lower down it was undrinkable, even by stock. - He had often been compelled to sink "a hole a foot or two away from the muddy stream in order to get a drink of water.-On the motion of Cr Beardmore, seconded by Cr When, the council agreed to co-operate, and the president was deputed to give evidence.

Source: WODONGA SHIRE COUNCIL. (1902, September 5).
Wodonga and Towong Sentinel
<http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article69570323>