

Author name: Anonymous

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Submission: Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission.

I own a property in Ourimbah Creek Valley and have owned this property for some 15 years.

My concern is the \$5,000 plus increase in annual charges for storm water services.

Clearly this is a major increase. My property is primarily virgin bush specifically managed for wildlife protection. The property does not generate any income due to its conservation primary aim.

As the property is some 120 acres of protected rainforest, there is no farm animal life on the property.

The thought of being charged an additional \$5,400 or so per year is distressing and I would counsel IPART to reconsider this increase.

While the property is large, there is only one income to support its upkeep and maintenance.

I can see some logic in charging more for large acreage properties but this ignores the ability to pay.

Surely, as there are far more standard residential blocks and an expected massive increase in dwelling numbers including units over the next decade, it would be far more logical to charge per household as each household would equally benefit from the stormwater fund.

The proposed charge assumes that owners of acreage would somehow benefit 20 to 40 times more than owners of suburban blocks.

This assumption is clearly in error.

So from the aspects of ability to pay and equity (fairness) my submission contends that the sliding scale water charge needs to be revisited and recalibrated so that it reflects the benefit obtained per rate paying household.

