

Media release

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For immediate release

Award winning engineer commends Garrett

The winner of tonight's Eric Brier Award, Steve Posselt, has commended the Environment Minister Peter Garrett for his decision to save Queensland's Mary River from destruction.

"City dwellers are realising that they cannot take water from remote river systems to keep their taps running," he said.

Mr Posselt has spear-headed campaigns to save the Mary River, using his unique wheeled kayak to transport thousands of signatures to Minister Garrett in 2008 and to raise awareness of the fragile ecosystem of the Mary River valley and other iconic Australian rivers.

Engineer's Australia awarded Mr Posselt the Eric Brier Award in recognition for his work on understanding the problems inherent in our current approaches to water management. He recorded his acceptance speech because he is leading a delegation of Chinese water engineers down the Murray Darling to explain Australia's response to climate change.

"International water agencies see Australia at the forefront of coping with diminishing water resources," he said. "Unfortunately, our response remains primitive. We are still using drainage calculations to measure river health, when we need to treat river systems as a living organism."

Posselt believes that approaches such as that being promoted by ex Governor General, Major General Michael Jefferies are the solution to the agricultural component of Australia's water crisis.

Posselt and the delegation of Chinese water engineers will be at the Milang Hall on the shores of Lake Alexandrina in South Australia at 5:30pm this Sunday November 15th discussing with local farmers the impact of the fact that the Murray no longer reaches the lower lakes.

"When a river begins to die from the mouth up, that is because all the systems that

feed it have dried out,” Mr Posselt said. “After that, the death of the river system proceeds very quickly.”

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