

## The Snowy 2 Fraud

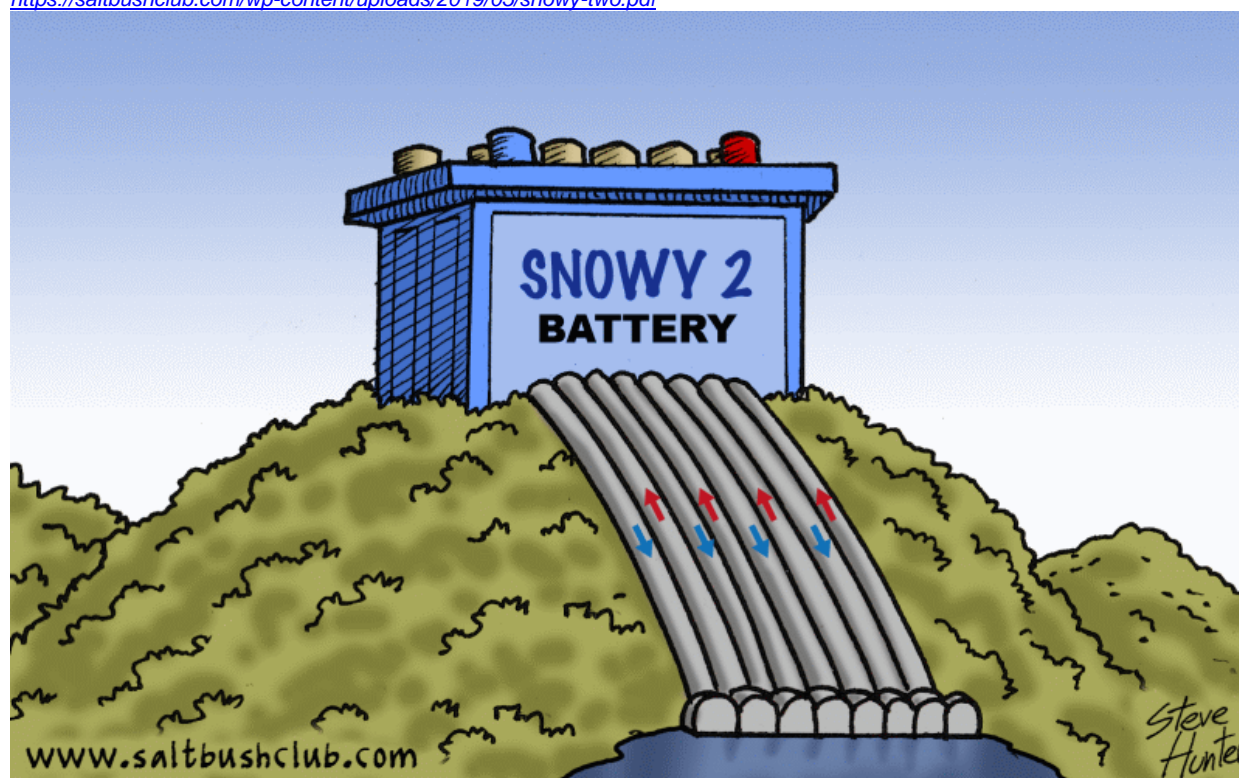
Malcolm Turnbull's "Snowy 2" debases a great name – "the Snowy Scheme".

The real Snowy Hydro-electric Scheme catches and stores water, uses it to generate reliable electricity, and then controls and releases that water for irrigation and other uses. It supplies both electricity and water.

Snowy 2 is a fraud – it provides ZERO additional supplies of water or electricity. In fact it will consume some of each. It will be a giant expensive battery propping up a grid which is becoming increasingly unstable because of the growing amount of unreliable weather-dependent wind and solar power.

It will take already stored water, buy electricity from the grid to pump that water up hill, and then recover some of that electricity by letting the water flow through turbines back down the hill.

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Their aim is to buy cheap power when wind/solar energy floods onto the grid, and use this power to pump the water back up the hill. They would then run the generators and sell electricity when power prices are high. This will damage the profitability of base-load power stations by grabbing high power prices when wind/solar fails.

(As an aside, here is one bit of faint praise - Snowy 2 is probably better value than the giant Tesla battery in South Australia, for providing backup for unreliable green energy - but that is not saying much.)

It is unlikely that Snowy 2 will provide an acceptable return on taxpayer investment. The Federal government has already spent about \$7,500 million on buying the Snowy Scheme and the Snowy 2 construction cost is sure to exceed \$4,500 million. They should sell the project and devote all this spare cash towards ensuring the construction of a couple of modern clean-coal generators. These will be urgently needed if older existing power stations are prematurely closed by green pressure.

A short term Band-Aid would be some flexible gas backup generators paid for by the wind-solar operators who have caused the mess. But of course, thanks to lock-the-gate and death-by-delay we have no spare gas, especially down south.

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*Viv Forbes is not a member of any political party, and has no vested interests in mining, energy or bio-fuels. He and his wife breed meat sheep, drive a diesel car, ride petrol quad bikes, have roof-top solar panels and a diesel back-up generator in the shed.*