

\$2.5m cost a bridge too far

By LOUISE THROWER

SNOW and rain cut access for Currawang Rd residents for the umpteenth time two weeks ago.

The deluge washed out a causeway motorists have been forced to use, given the dilapidated state of the adjoining Komungla Bridge.

But the chances of ever getting the bridge replaced appear slim to nothing, following a council decision.

The 60-plus-year-old structure is rotting and falling apart, engineers say. Patching it up, estimated to cost \$400,000 to \$500,000, is a waste and will not render it safe.

Consultants, Jones Nicholson have recommended Council seek grant funding for a replacement.

But with government money hard to come by and Oallen Ford Bridge taking priority, council staff say Komungla won't be replaced "anytime soon."

It's expected to cost \$2.5 million.

Many machinations later, they're now investigating a low level two-lane bridge to at least give residents decent access in heavy rain.

At the most recent meeting, councillors decided to partially demolish the timber bridge to stop residents running the gauntlet.

It has been closed for the past year due to its condition but motorists have dismantled barriers and illegally used it during wet weather, council engineers said. The structure had a five-tonne, 20km/h speed limit.

In addition, they've agreed to a series of stop gap measures, namely, investigating the upgrade of alternative route - Thornford Rd - to improve wet weather access, including installation of culverts. Engineers are also exploring the widening of Komungla causeway. A report will be brought back to the November 20 council meeting.

But Cr Andrew Banfield didn't think widening would address the problem.

"The width of the causeway is not the problem. It's an elevation issue," he said.

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Main photo: Louise Thrower

There's something fishy going on

DEPARTMENT of Primary Industries officers yesterday released 50 to 60 trout into Pejar Dam ahead of Sunday's Fishing Classic.

Hundreds of anglers, young and old, will be hoping to snare one of the sizeable Rainbow Trout (photo right) during the Classic.

Five-year-old Toby Jones is pictured above getting some expert angling tips for the event from the Classic's major sponsor, Tackleworld owner Josh Lambert, during last Sunday's Get Wet @ the Weir Water Week activities.

The day, which culminates Goulburn Mulwaree Council's Water Week celebrations, kicks off at 6.30am and continues until 3.30pm, with prizes for both adults and children.

More details, pictures p10 and p22



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