

Murrumbidgee to Googong Water Transfer

Community update – April 2009

This update is to facilitate the community's access to information on the most recent developments of the project. ACTEW will continue to hold public meetings and update our website with project related information as well.

ACTEW recently appointed Adina Cirson as Community Engagement and Stakeholder Management Leader for the Murrumbidgee to Googong Water Transfer. Please contact Adina on the phone details provided at the end of this update if you have any feedback or questions.

What's been happening lately?

Government Approval

Following initial assessments and planning works, the construction of the Murrumbidgee to Googong Water Transfer was approved by the ACT Government in March 2009. This approval is significant and means ACTEW can continue the planning approvals process and construction.

ACTEW is pleased with the government's endorsement of our recommendation to offset greenhouse gas effects of both the construction and operational aspects of the water security projects. ACTEW is now confident that the Murrumbidgee to Googong Water Transfer project will be carbon neutral through offsetting via carbon credit purchase and with further investigations on an innovative mini hydro facility enabling almost 30% recovery of energy input.

Community Meeting

Thank-you for your participation at the community information session held in March to share key findings of the Environmental Assessment (EA) Report prior to the public exhibition period. Some of the main areas of interest presented by ACTEW at the meeting were:

Archaeological surveys undertaken in partnership with local Aboriginal groups have resulted in 73 Aboriginal recordings and 7 European recordings. The approach to dealing with such sites and artefacts has been endorsed by the indigenous groups who will now be an active part of the construction phase and continue to provide input throughout the process.

Key concerns raised during the social and economic assessment include potential disturbance to stock and animals and access to community recreational areas. In addition, potential positive impacts of the project include economic and social benefits to the wider ACT community through reduced time in severe water restrictions and through the creation of jobs.

Our specialists tell us we will have practically no impact on London Bridge. They also indicate that although there may be some initial changes in the creek away the existing conditions, this impact and any long-term changes will be within the natural variations expected in the recent past.

Our aquatic impact studies are not yet complete, but all indications are that any impacts can be managed.

Input from Council and the local community are important to us. We have listened to the concerns raised to date and we have modified our proposal where possible to accommodate those concerns.

What's next?

EIS

We expect that the Environmental Assessment will be on public display for 30 days in July-August 2009. The community will be notified of the exact dates for public exhibition and given the opportunity to make submissions for consideration by government decision makers.

Community Enhancement

ACTEW is also planning to work with the Palerang Council and the community to identify potential community benefits that can be supported through the project. We encourage you to contact Adina if you would like further information about the process or you have any ideas.

Weed Mapping

ACTEW has now engaged an independent agronomist in keeping with its commitment to rehabilitate land affected by surveys and later, construction. Houghton Agricultural Pty Ltd has carried out a review and following recent rains it is appropriate to seed and fertilise disturbed areas. If you have any issues regarding this work, please contact the Water Security Information line.

Water Security – Major Projects

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