

Lake Mokoan Project - Community Update

Department of
Sustainability and
Environment

As part of the *Our Water Our Future* action plan, Lake Mokoan will be returned to its natural state as an important wetland system.

The Lake Mokoan Project consists of two main parts, maintaining reliability of water supply to water users reliant on the Lake, and the rehabilitation of the site following decommissioning and reinstatement of a more natural water regime to the area.

Lake Mokoan Diversers

On-ground preliminary field activities for the design of the proposed diverter supply scheme have been completed. These activities together with hydraulic modelling will support the selection of the most appropriate scheme alignment, design and operation. Completion of the final design is expected to be in April 2007.

Assessment of Expressions of Interest in the construction of the designed scheme is currently being assessed, to allow construction of the scheme to commence in May 2007.

Reliability Offset Package

To assist with the development of a final package of measures to reinstate supply reliability to Broken system irrigators, a process of seeking expressions of interest from irrigators in the sale of water entitlement has commenced. Once the volumes and locations of possible entitlement purchase are confirmed, pipelines and re-regulating storages can be defined and the offset package submitted for approval.

Design of equipment for remote control and monitoring of existing storages, weirs and flow monitoring stations has commenced. New metering equipment will allow remote monitoring of a range of individual diversion flow meters. These measures will assist with improving the efficiency of operation of the supply system.

Future Land Use Strategy

The draft Strategy, community feedback and comments from the community based reference committee are being currently assessed by DSE. Key considerations are future management responsibilities, wetland restoration and development and funding requirements.

Seed collection for restoration

The very dry year has produced at least one benefit being an excellent flowering season for a number of *Eucalypt* species. This has led to a contractor being engaged to collect seed in the Lake Mokoan area. The seeds collected will be from a variety of box trees and some red gums. These seeds will be stored and utilised in future restoration works or in trial sites to determine appropriate restoration practices.

Fish management

Fish management is an important issue during the draw down of Lake Mokoan. A fish management plan is currently being developed in conjunction with the Department

of Primary Industries - Fisheries. Once a draft plan has been developed, DSE will consult with other relevant stakeholders.

A separate Fish Management Plan will be developed that will deal with issues post decommissioning related to maintenance of native fish habitat and the potential to control alien fish species such as European carp.

Pest animal control

The Warby Range Landcare Group Carpet Python Project began in 2005 to control foxes in order to protect the Carpet Python. The fox baiting program involves the Landcare group, DPI, Parks Victoria and DSE.

A local contractor has been engaged through the Mokoan Project to lay baits around Lake Mokoan in conjunction with adjacent landholders as part of the Carpet Python Project. Warning signs have been posted in areas where baits have been laid, this is generally on the southern side of the Lake. People visiting the area, especially with dogs, should stay out of areas where baits have been laid.

If you would like more information please contact the Benalla office on (03) 5761 1611, visit the website and/or come in and meet the project staff in person to discuss the details of the project.

www.lakemokoan.com



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