

Media Release

From Lake Mokoan Future Land Use Steering Committee

Thursday 21st September 2006

DRAFT LAKE MOKOAN FUTURE LAND USE STRATEGY RELEASED

The community-based Lake Mokoan Future Land Use Steering Committee has endorsed its draft plan for the future rehabilitation of the Mokoan wetlands for release for public consultation. The Steering Committee have also included three additional recommendations to the Future Land Use Strategy, recommending no permanent removal of structures until current reliability is confirmed and irrigation offsets are in place, that the State Government commitment to underwrite funding for the decommissioning and establishment phases of the project and that the future governance of the process is based on business principles that includes community members.

Committee Chairperson, Sally Simson, said the document provided an inspiring vision for the area following the decommissioning of the lake that encompasses the rehabilitation of the wetland system, and guides complementary activities including agriculture, recreation and tourism.”

Ms Simson said the strategy has been developed following a community consultation program, which has included public meetings, workshops and stakeholders focus groups.

“Members of the committee and the community should be congratulated for helping shape the draft strategy by sharing their ideas and local knowledge during the past 18 months.” Ms Simson said the strategy would now be presented to the Minister for the Environment, and placed on public exhibition for comment for a four week period.

“The community’s involvement in the process is extremely important in balancing local aspirations for the site with environmental and economic issues.

“I would strongly urge the community to have their say on the document. Two ways of providing input have been organised, by attending the information session to be held on the 25th of September 2006 at DSE offices, Benalla, and by providing written feedback on the strategy to the steering committee over the public consultation period, before the document is finalised.”

Copies of the Lake Mokoan Future Land Use draft Strategy will be on view at the DSE Benalla, DSE Wangaratta, Benalla Rural City and Rural City of Wangaratta Offices. For further information about the draft strategy or the broader Lake Mokoan project visit www.lakemokoan.com. Further information on the Draft Strategy can be obtained by contacting either Tony Long or Dave Pasztaleniec on 5761 1611.

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