

Lake Mokoan Future Land Use Strategy implementation

The Victorian Government announced funding of up to \$20 million for the implementation of the Lake Mokoan Future Land Use Strategy.

The Strategy will enable the restoration of the wetland and the construction of recreational and tourism facilities. These facilities include boardwalks and walking/cycling tracks to allow visitor access to the wetland, camping areas, educational signage and places in which to launch canoes and kayaks. The Government is considering who will oversee the project, including community member involvement.

Lake Mokoan Operation - 2008/09 season

Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW) will continue use of Lake Mokoan as an operational storage during the 2008/09 irrigation season to supply the irrigation and domestic and stock water to diverters in the Broken Water System.

Goulburn-Murray Water has harvested as much water as possible to date in order to supply 2008/09 needs, and will continue harvesting operations when opportunities present. Seasonal conditions so far this year have yielded much less than average inflows.

Without significantly improved inflows, Lake Mokoan will dry out as evaporation and demands in the Broken Water System remove water from the storage.

Lake Diverters Pipeline

The G-MW Board has approved the construction of the Lake Mokoan Diverters Pipeline Project at an estimated cost of \$14.5 million. The project will involve the construction of a pumping station downstream of Lake Mokoan on the existing outlet channel, a 28 km pipe network and a 75 ML capacity operational pondage. These works will provide a water supply to diverters who currently pump water from Lake Mokoan. Agreement has been reached with the CFA to provide water points along the pipeline, accessible by air as well as by truck.

Part of the construction works is to deepen a section of the outlet channel to supply water from the Broken River to the proposed new pump station. The bulk of the earthworks has been completed with G-MW's construction crew, utilising both local contractors and experienced G-MW excavator operators.

As the irrigation season is fast approaching with the continued

dry weather, the channel deepening works will be put on hold within the next week or so. This will allow the water stored in Mokoan to be released to provide stock, domestic and irrigation water throughout the Broken System.

Following the completion of the first stage of the channel deepening works, G-MW will construct a 75ML operational storage at the eastern end of Lake Mokoan. Local contractors will be invited to provide earthworks plant to support the construction of the storage.

Tenders are also being assessed for a contract for supply of PVC pipe materials for the pipeline. The project team expect to award the pipeline supply contract within the next two weeks. A separate contract will be awarded for the installation of the pipeline.

Depending on material supply, contractor availability and weather conditions completion of works and commissioning of the pipeline scheme is currently planned for January 2009.



Works commence on the outlet channel. The channel will be deepened to allow water to flow from the Broken River to the dam wall and into the proposed new pumping station.

Reliability Offset Package

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) and G-MW have continued meeting with the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) and local irrigator representatives.

These meetings are considering water supply offset measures aimed at minimising the impact of Lake Mokoan's decommissioning on irrigators. At the VFF's request, DSE has engaged the Valuer-General to provide independent advice on the value of water in the Broken irrigation system.

The Valuer General, supported by local valuers has undertaken an assessment of a range of typical irrigated properties in the Broken system, the outcomes of this assessment are now being discussed with the VFF and irrigator representatives.

At the request of the VFF sub-committee, an assessment of the level of service provided to Broken irrigators in the current system compared with possible future delivery systems is being undertaken.

Upgrading of controls for remote operation and monitoring of the Lake Nillahcootie outlet structures has been completed and commissioning of the new systems operation is underway.

Installation and remote monitoring of 90 irrigation diversion flow meters throughout the Broken system is well advanced, with G-MW crews installing about one third of the required new meters, installation of the monitoring system has just commenced.

Flood Study

An extensive study is being undertaken regarding whether there are any potential affects on flooding in the Benalla area as a result of decommissioning Lake Mokoan.

The Benalla Rural City Council is working in partnership with the DSE, the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (GB CMA) and G-MW to ease concerns raised by the Benalla and District Flood Awareness Group and the community. Environmental and civil infrastructure engineering consultants, Cardno- Treloar, have almost completed a study of the impacts of Lake Nillahcootie on flooding in Benalla.

Further assessment of the impacts of flood flows into and out of the future Winton Wetlands, the current Lake Mokoan site, is also being undertaken, by GHD Consulting.

The studies, funded by DSE, are expected to be completed later this month.

www.lakemokoan.com

