Department of Sustainability and Environment

# Monthly Update - December 2008

## Flood Studies

An extensive study has been 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 Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority and G-MW to address concerns raised by the Benalla and District Flood Awareness Group and the community.

Environmental and civil infrastructure engineering consultants, Cardno-Treloar, have 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, has also been undertaken, by GHD Consulting.

The studies confirmed previous reports that decommissioning of Lake Mokoan will not adversely impact on future flood risks in Benalla nor further downstream to Shepparton.

## Winton Wetlands Committee of Management

A committee of management is to be formed to manage the restoration of the Winton Wetlands. The committee will consist of five community positions, including a Chairperson, for an initial three year term.

Government nominees from DSE, Benalla Rural City and Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority will also form part of the committee which is expected to be announced early in the New Year.

The committee will utilise the Lake Mokoan Future Land Use Strategy which provides a vision and strategy for wetland restoration and development.

## Lake Mokoan Operation - 2008/09 season

Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW) will continue to use 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.

G-MW has harvested as much water as possible 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 reduce water from the storage.

## Lake Diverters Pipeline

G-MW has approved the construction of the Lake Mokoan Diverters Pipeline Project at an estimated cost of $14.5 million. The project involves the construction of a pumping station downstream of Lake Mokoan on the existing outlet channel, a 28 km pipe network and a 75 ML pondage.

The outlet channel has been deepened and construction of the pump station has commenced. These works have been undertaken by G-MW with support from local contractors.

G-MW, supported by plant hired from Exton's of Benalla, has commenced construction of the operational storage at the eastern end of Lake Mokoan.

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 and at the storage, accessible by air as well as by truck.

**Pump station construction**

Depending on material supply, contractor availability and weather conditions works on the pipeline scheme is now expected by late February 2009 with commissioning and operation to commence soon after.

## Reliability Offset Package

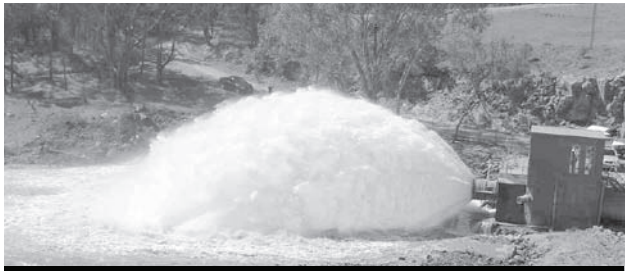
DSE and G-MW are continuing to meet with the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) and local irrigator representatives to consider water supply offset measures aimed at minimising the impact of Lake Mokoan's decommissioning on irrigators.

Following a general meeting of Broken System irrigators in late November, the VFF and irrigator representatives are now assessing irrigator interest in the sale of water entitlements, especially in areas where system operating losses can be minimised and major works can be avoided.

A further VFF/Irrigator Offset Package proposal is expected to be submitted to DSE for consideration in coming weeks.

At the request of the VFF, an assessment of the level of service provided to Broken System irrigators in the current system compared with possible future delivery systems has been completed.

Commissioning of the upgraded controls for remote operation and monitoring of the Lake Nillahcootie outlet structures has been completed.



**Lake Nillahcootie outlet**

Installation and remote monitoring of up to 90 irrigation diversion flow meters throughout the Broken System has continued with about three quarters of the meters installed.

Concept designs and cost estimates have been prepared for a range of additional remote control and monitoring sites throughout the Broken System, including Broken Creek.

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GOULBURN-MURRAY WATER

GOULBURN BROKEN CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY