



The Place To Be

# Media release

From the Minister for Environment and Climate Change

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Monday, 27 April, 2009

## WINTON WETLANDS COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT APPOINTED

The Brumby Government today announced the appointment of the Winton Wetlands Committee of Management to oversee the \$20 million restoration of Lake Mokoan to wetlands.

Environment and Climate Change Minister Gavin Jennings said the nine-member committee, made up of community and stakeholder representatives, would oversee one of the most significant environmental restoration projects of its kind in Victoria's history.

"Through the committee, this unique project will create an environmentally sustainable asset which will provide huge benefits for the environment and regional tourism," Mr Jennings said.

Members of the Winton Wetlands Committee of Management are:

- Chairperson Mr William (Bill) Hill;
- Mr John Brownstein;
- Mr Terry Court;
- Mr Paul Dahlenburg;
- Ms Sally Simson;
- Mr Allan McPherson (Department of Sustainability and Environment);
- Mr Dimitrios Scordalides (Benalla Rural City Council);
- Mr Nick Roberts (Goulburn-Broken Catchment Management Authority); and
- Mr Nick Byrne (Tourism Victoria).

Committee members have been appointed for a three-year term and will meet for the first time next month. They will oversee the implementation of the *Lake Mokoan Future Land Use Strategy*, which was developed in consultation with the local community and stakeholders.

The strategy, which is expected to take up to eight years to implement, includes the restoration of the wetlands, development of a visitor centre, bike paths, boardwalks, visitor facilities and ongoing maintenance and monitoring works.

"Restoring the wetland system will help protect flora and fauna and provide habitat for threatened species as well as create new opportunities for education, research, tourism, recreation and community development," Mr Jennings said

Welcoming the appointment of the committee, Water Minister Tim Holding said the Brumby Government was taking action to provide water security to communities across the state.

"Lake Mokoan is Victoria's most inefficient water storage and loses three in every four litres of water released into the Broken irrigation system. The Lake Mokoan decommissioning project will make available up to 48 billion litres of water annually to improve environmental flows in rivers, while providing irrigators with a modern, reliable water delivery system," Mr Holding said.

The lake, which is currently empty due to the drought, will be decommissioned later this year once a final offset package to supply irrigators is finalised.

For further information about the Lake Mokoan Project, visit [www.lakemokoan.com](http://www.lakemokoan.com) or [www.ourwater.vic.gov.au](http://www.ourwater.vic.gov.au)

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