

LOWER FITZROY RIVER

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION AND NEED

Background

In December 2004 the Queensland Government, in partnership with local government, committed to developing the Central Queensland Regional Water Supply Strategy, a long term water supply strategy for the region.

The strategy identified that further infrastructure on the Lower Fitzroy River is required in order to provide the appropriate reliability of supply to meet the needs of urban populations, industry and agriculture.

The Project was identified as appropriate infrastructure to satisfy short, medium and long term supply requirements.

Project demands

Future demand for water resources is predicted due to the continued growth of industrial and urban expansion in the Lower Fitzroy and Gladstone areas and potentially some agricultural development within the Fitzroy Agricultural Corridor. In addition to direct increases in demand there is also a potential requirement to improve the level of reliability of the existing water supplies locally and regionally.

Key potential water demand triggers:

- Gladstone Area Water Board (GAWB): water supply to Gladstone via GAWB's proposed Gladstone-Fitzroy Pipeline (30,000 ML/a)
- Rockhampton and Livingstone Shire Councils: to support improved reliability initiatives and increased urban water supplies
- Industry and mining: to support economic growth in Rockhampton's Gracemere-Stanwell Industrial Corridor and industrial demand in the Gladstone region
- Agriculture: Regional Development Australia's Growing Central Queensland initiative; the lower Fitzroy Agricultural Corridor; and linkages to development in Northern Australia and improved agricultural competitiveness regionally

Water resource planning

Water Resource (Fitzroy Basin) Plan 2011

The Water Resource (Fitzroy Basin) Plan 2011 reserves a nominal volume of water (76,000 ML) for strategic water infrastructure on the Fitzroy River as the strategic water infrastructure reserve.

The Project is recognised as strategic water infrastructure to which water allocations may be granted.

Fitzroy Basin Resource Operations Plan

The Fitzroy Basin Resource Operations Plan specifies that submissions to make unallocated water available from the strategic water infrastructure reserve on the Fitzroy River may be made by:

- The Gladstone Area Water Board for up to 30,000 ML of the reserve for urban and industrial water supplies
- A local government authority for up to 4,000 ML of the reserve for urban water supplies for the Capricorn Coast
- A person or entity for up to the remaining 42,000 ML, with no intended use specified

Regulatory framework and environmental assessment process

The Project is a 'controlled action' requiring assessment and approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

The Coordinator-General declared the Project to be a 'coordinated project' for which an EIS is required under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971*.

In January 2014, the Project transitioned to assessment through the bilateral assessment process executed between State and Commonwealth governments. A single EIS addresses both State and Commonwealth requirements.

Environmental assessments

Environmental assessment has been undertaken to include:

Scenic amenity and lighting

- Topography, geology and soils
- Contaminated land
- Land use and tenure
- Flora
- Aquatic ecology
- Terrestrial fauna
- Surface water resources
- Groundwater resources
- Water quality
- Air quality
- Greenhouse gas
- Noise and vibration
- Waste
- Transport
- Cultural heritage
- Socio-economic
- Hazard and risk
- Cumulative and consequential impacts
- Matters of national environmental significance

A framework environmental management plan has been prepared to address avoidance, mitigation and management of impacts.

As appropriate offsets are proposed.



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