

LOWER FITZROY RIVER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT

AUTUMN 2013

Dear Valued Stakeholder,

LOWER FITZROY RIVER INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT UPDATE

The project team would like to thank you for your continued interest in the Lower Fitzroy River Infrastructure Project (the project).

The project

The Gladstone Area Water Board and SunWater Limited (as joint proponents) propose to develop infrastructure to capture and store water, by way of raising the existing Eden Bann Weir and constructing a new weir at Rookwood on the Fitzroy River and are currently seeking environmental and business case approvals. The key components of the project include:

- The Eden Bann Weir (Stage 1) was built in 1994. It is proposed that a Stage 2 raise will be to RL 18.2 m and the addition of gates as Stage 3 will raise the structure to RL 20.2 m. The weir is located approximately 50 km north-west of Rockhampton.
- The proposed Rookwood Weir is a new build at a site located approximately 54 km south-west of Rockhampton. The Stage 1 infrastructure development will be built to RL 45.5 m. The addition of gates at Stage 2 will raise the weir to RL 49 m.
- The Project will allow for the capture and storage of unallocated water resources that are available in the system (76 000 ML/a).
- The project will provide for the implementation of a flexible strategy to allow the rapid delivery of water to meet anticipated future demands.
- Associated with the weirs will be fish and turtle passage structures. Associated infrastructure may include upgrades to state, local and private roads, and bridges and crossings to maintain existing access after inundation.

The project has been proposed to address the potential demands from urban populations, industry and agriculture within the Gladstone and Rockhampton regions and along the Capricorn coast to secure future water supply and improve water security in the short- to medium-term.

Legislative framework

In May 2011, the Coordinator-General declared the project to be a 'significant project'¹ under section 26(1) of the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (Qld) (SDPWO Act). This declaration initiated the statutory environmental impact assessment procedure of Part 4 of the SDPWO Act, requiring the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the project. Terms of Reference (ToR) for the EIS were finalised in April 2012.

In January 2010, the Commonwealth Government Environment Minister determined that the project is a 'controlled action' under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act) (reference number EPBC 2009/5173), due to the likely potential impacts on matters of national environmental significance. The Commonwealth's *Guidelines for the EIS* were finalised in June 2010.

The project requires approval from both the Commonwealth and State governments before it can proceed. The Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPaC) advised that a separate assessment process will be undertaken for the project. The proponent is preparing an EIS to address Commonwealth and State requirements.

Following this, a separate assessment report will be completed by each jurisdiction. It is intended however that many of the associated administrative procedures will be undertaken in a coordinated manner by the State and Commonwealth governments to avoid duplicating work and confusing members of the public.

¹ Recently renamed 'coordinated projects'.

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Project update

In recent months, our efforts have been focussed on preparing the EIS for adequacy review by the State and Commonwealth governments. Following this, the EIS will be placed on public exhibition for a period of six weeks.

As part of the public exhibition period the proponent will:

- Place public notices in local newspapers to provide details about: the timing of the public exhibition period; the locations where people can view the document, including static and staffed display points, together with web-based information; and how to make public submissions in response to the EIS;
- Provide information about the public exhibition period and submission requirements on the project website;
- Produce and distribute further project updates to publicise the release of the EIS, provide information on the public exhibition process and call for submissions;
- Notify key stakeholders (recorded on the project database) of the Draft EIS and review period;
- Conduct Agency Briefings and Community Information Sessions to present the findings of the EIS.

Where to get information

Project website: www.fitzroyweirs.com.au
 Freecall: 1800 423 213
 Email: fitzroyweirs@ghd.com.au
 Write to: Reply Paid 668, Brisbane QLD 4001

Coordinator-General website:
<http://www.deedi.qld.gov.au/cg/lower-fitzroy-river-infrastructure-project.html>

SEWPaC website:
<http://www.environment.gov.au> (search referrals)

Should you no longer wish to receive updates on the project please contact the project team.

Yours faithfully

The Project Team

Project Manager: Lesa Delaere
 EIS Manager: Geraldine Squires

