



Media Release

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For immediate release

Hunter Water retires faithful public servant after 85 years

Hunter Water will spend more than \$15million protecting a valuable wetlands environment and enhancing water security for the Lower Hunter, with the replacement of the Chichester Trunk Gravity Main between Tarro and Shortland.

Announcing the upgrade, Managing Director Kevin Young says for more than 8 decades this pipeline has provided a critical link in Hunter Water's network, transferring water between Dungog and the Grahamstown catchment.

"The new 7.4km pipeline will be laid underground, next to the current pipeline for 3km then following a new route for 4.4km, bypassing the sensitive wetland environment at Hexham Swamp Nature Reserve," Mr Young said.

The current pipeline path is prone to flooding and major flood events, like the great floods of 1955, which caused significant damage to the pipe structure.

Mr Young says laying the pipe underground not only provides an environmental benefit, it will also improve visual amenity for surrounding residents and secure the pipe from potential flood damage.

"The aging existing pipeline regularly requires shutdowns for maintenance, reducing security of supply and causing disruptions for local customers, particularly in Hexham. The new pipe also increases water pressure for local businesses and residents."

"This replacement pipeline will provide a secure and reliable water transfer facility for the next one hundred years. Once the new pipeline has become fully operational, the existing old pipe will be removed, further improving water flows into the wetlands area," Mr Young said.

Tenders for the project open tomorrow, with construction due to commence in early 2010.

In line with Hunter Water's community consultation policy, local residents will be kept fully informed about the upgrade and the construction process.

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