



4 December 2022

Pursuing the Lower Hunter's long-term water security actions

Hunter Water is progressing with two significant projects while water storages are full and time is on the region's side, so the necessary water supply infrastructure can be built to secure the region's water future.

Hunter Water has been advancing the Lower Hunter Water Security Plan (LHWSP) actions, including the on-site investigations and designs for the Belmont desalination plant and potential connection to the Lostock Dam-Glennies Creek Dam pipeline scheme.

Minister for Lands and Water, Kevin Anderson, said it's crucial planning work happens now, so the Lower Hunter is ready and resilient for the future.

"There may be abundant water right now, and while Hunter storages are at their fullest, we must make the most of this opportunity to prepare for future dry periods.

"Building the Belmont desalination plant will add up to 30 million litres per day of rainfall-independent drinking water capacity to the system, or about 15 per cent of the region's average daily needs," said Mr Anderson.

Hunter Water has appointed John Holland Group to start detailed technical investigations and designs for the desalination plant, with work continuing on Hunter Water-owned land and in the ocean.

Hunter Water Managing Director, Darren Cleary, said now is the right time to advance such investigations and designs to secure our region's long-term water future.

"We know our region's storages can go from full to critical in less than three years, so it's vital we capitalise on this moment when water is plentiful.

Work will ramp up early next year when a large exploration rig will be positioned offshore to take core samples from the seabed to improve our understanding of seafloor conditions for the desalination plant's seawater intake pipeline," said Mr Cleary.

In parallel, Hunter Water is partnering with Water Infrastructure NSW to investigate options to extract water from the Paterson River, released by Lostock Dam for supply into Hunter Water's drinking water network. This proposal would involve a water supply pump station near Paterson and a new water treatment plant and pipeline to connect to the Maitland region.

Mr Cleary said three community information sessions from Monday 5 to Wednesday 7 December would be a chance for landholders and interested community members to meet the project team to discuss the early investigations for the proposal.

"Working methodically with Water Infrastructure NSW on the final business case for the scheme allows us to understand how we can best diversify our water future.

"This approach is consistent with the LHWSP priority to improve the resilience of the water supply system, making better use of existing dams," said Mr Cleary.



Media Release

Hunter Water

Further information:

- Belmont desalination plant: www.hunterwater.com.au/desal
- Lostock Dam-Glennies Creek Dam two-way pipeline project with proposed Hunter Water connection: www.dpie.nsw.gov.au/lostock-glennies-pipeline

Community information sessions:

Monday 5 December: Tocal Homestead

Tuesday 6 December: Singleton Council Library

Wednesday 7 December: Gresford School of Arts Hall

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