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Minister for Lands and Water
Minister for Hospitality and Racing

MEDIA RELEASE

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WATER SECURITY PLAN FOR LOWER HUNTER

Water security is at the heart of a new 40 year strategic water plan that will provide confidence for communities and businesses in the Lower Hunter area.

The strategy will ensure the region has a resilient, secure and sustainable water supply now and for future generations.

The NSW Government's Lower Hunter Water Security Plan (LHWSP) sets the region up for economic prosperity and underpins growth, liveability and quality of life in considering new sources of water. It includes new ways to reduce the water we use to effectively balance water supply and demand in the region.

The LHWSP includes a range of supply and demand measures to ensure there is enough water to supply homes, businesses and industry in the region for the future and during drought.

The LHWSP has been developed with significant engagement with the Hunter community and reflects community values and priorities while being both robust and adaptable in the long term, ensuring a resilient and sustainable water future for the region.

Minister for Lands and Water Kevin Anderson said the Lower Hunter community has been overwhelmingly supportive of the plan.

"Safe and secure water is important to regional communities, and this plan clearly lays out how the NSW Government will continue to support the Lower Hunter over the next 40 years," Mr Anderson said.

"This plan is a foundation for the region's continued economic development, the largest in terms of economic output of any region in Australia.

"I thank the community for their broad and extensive engagement with the LHWSP over the past three and a half years. The high level of support puts the region in a strong position to manage future challenges and overcome adversities such as drought."

Hunter Water Managing Director, Darren Cleary, said all LHWSP actions attracted support from the community, with strong support (97 per cent) for water conservation and leakage reduction, which are foundational elements of the plan.

“Hunter Water will also continue to explore the opportunity to access deep groundwater sources near Tomago and opportunities to reduce evaporation from our dams,” Mr Cleary said.

“Analysis conducted while developing the Plan confirms our region is more vulnerable to drought than previously thought, so improving the resilience of the water supply system is paramount. To generate greater flexibility and to meet community expectations of a reliable water supply to withstand drought means acting now to support continued regional prosperity.”

The LHWSP will deliver:

- Increased investment in water conservation, efficiency and leakage reduction actions
- Construction of a permanent desalination plant at Belmont to supply up to 30 million litres of water per day
- Assessing the viability of a Hunter Water connection to the Glennies Creek Dam-Lostock Dam scheme in the Upper Hunter
- Increased investment in new, highly-treated recycled water schemes to support community green spaces and local industry

To view the Plan, visit www.hunterwater.com.au/waterfuture

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