

Media Release

Date: Sunday 3 August 2008

Historic irrigation icon gets 21st century upgrade at Waranga Basin

An historic icon of the Goulburn-Murray Irrigation District's irrigation system will merge with 21st century technology today when the Waranga Basin Minor Offtake's custom-made gates are installed.

Built in 1904, the 104-year-old gate superstructure is being modernised as part of the Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project's (NVIRP) Early Works program.

The size of the structure made it unsuitable to be upgraded with the smaller automated gates being installed throughout the rest of the region.

Its original cast iron gates will be replaced with 1.8 metre (wide) by 2.2 metre (high) flat-panelled stainless steel "sluice" gates, which were purpose-built in the United States and air freighted to Melbourne.

"The Waranga Minor Basin Offtake is a historically significant structure in the region and NVIRP is delighted to be able to preserve it while upgrading it to 21st century standards," NVIRP CEO Murray Smith said.

"That's what irrigation renewal is all about – recognising the importance of irrigation, acknowledging the past and building upon it to create a more secure future – with the flexibility to respond to individual circumstances.

"The installation of the purpose-built gates is quite a feat – there was a tight timeframe in which the gates had to be designed, manufactured, delivered and installed."

The two sluice gates, which each weigh seven tonne and can deal with a flow rate of 2.2 billion litres of water per day feeding into the Central Goulburn channels 7 and 8, are made to the high American Waste Water Association standards. There are no equivalent standards in Australia. The gates are expected to be fully installed by August 8, 2008.

A hydraulic actuation system will replace the old-fashioned crown wheel and spindle system that previously raised and lowered the old gates. The actuation mechanism will be part of the channel control system and automatically regulate.

Photo Opportunity

Installation of custom-made sluice gates at Waranga Minor Basin Offtake

Date: Monday, August 4

Time: 10.30am. Please call site manager Bob Adams on 0438 966 533 to confirm on Monday

Address: Tatura-Rushworth Rd, Rushworth end. *VicRoads* ref: 32 C10

Photographers may be required to undergo a safety induction and wear safety gear on site.

There will be no spokesperson on site for interviews.

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