



Media Release

Date: Monday, 14 December 2009

Preferred strategy for Swan Hill modernisation

A preferred strategy to modernise the Swan Hill region's irrigation infrastructure will be unveiled on Friday (December 18) at a project reference group (PRG) meeting with a final report due early in the new year.

The preferred strategy will be recommended by consultants URS engaged by Northern Victoria Irrigation Renewal Project (NVIRP) to carry out feasibility studies on the various options investigated for the Swan Hill Modernisation Project.

It is expected that decommissioning channel number nine, which runs through the township, will be a key feature of the chosen strategy. However, more analysis will most likely be needed to determine how this part of the project will be funded.

"The PRG supported an options paper received in October, however, more detail was required on a number of issues," NVIRP CEO Murray Smith said.

"Taking into account the social, environmental and economic impacts, the consultant will now recommend the best option for the region.

"If the recommendation is supported by the PRG, we will then need some further analysis and investigation into opportunities for shared funding by the various beneficiaries and a final report will be delivered early in the new year.

"Although this has taken time, it is important to carefully consider all options, with a key focus on the community's needs, the environment and economic efficiency to ensure the best outcome for the community.

Mr Smith said the PRG had been a vital part of the community consultation process to ensure that this outcome would be reached.

The PRG consists of representatives from the irrigation community, Swan Hill Rural City Council, Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE), Department of Primary Industries, Goulburn-Murray Water (G-MW), North Central Catchment Management Authority, Torrumbarry Reconfiguration and Asset Modernisation Strategy group and NVIRP.

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