

New look for Waranga Western Channel regulators

this project is employing hundreds of smaller contractors to complete the regulator installations and on-farm works

Quotes

following several bus tours of the irrigation modernisation....

"We teach the students skills to save water on farm, and the tour showed us that the capital costs of saving water and improving the delivery system are also part of a profitable future."

Peter Juers
Industry Trainer
National Centre for Dairy Education
Australia
Go-TAFE – Shepparton

"Taking the politics out of the irrigation modernisation project and talking with the irrigators, I can see how positive they are about what it means for their future, and I can see how this is strengthening the Goulburn Valley region."

Geoff Dobson
Mayor, Greater Shepparton

"Following our bus tour, members of the Hume Economic Development Network were able to discuss how the modernisation will leverage the region's existing agribusiness and food production and processing strengths. Once the project is completed, this world-class irrigation system will cement the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District as not just Victoria's, but Australia's premier foodbowl."

Tammy Atkins
Regional Manager - Hume Region,
Industry Capability Network (ICN)
Victoria

"I have now seen how the modernisation is happening and I can see I have very good working future here at NVIRP."

Sara Mould
Trainee Receptionist
NVIRP Shepparton Office



Comdain's Peter Stone (left) and Ian Wright NVIRP. Warnaga Western Channel off-take



Constructing coffer dam bank

The Waranga Western Channel at the off take is 25 meters wide and stretches for 250 kilometres and is the major water delivery channel to the Rochester and Pyramid-Boort irrigation areas.

Along the way the water is regulated by many major structures and eight of these right now are being transformed into state-of-the-art modern regulators that will more accurately measure and control the water that passes downstream.

This channel can transport 3500 megalites a day from the Waranga Major off-take during the irrigation season, and it is essential that Goulburn-Murray Water know how much water at any one time is in the system to be able to critically manage the resource.

The NVIRP works being

undertaken at this regulator off-take are being constructed by Comdain Civil Constructions Pty Ltd under the site supervision of Comdain's Peter Stone. Works at the moment include building a coffer dam on either side of the regulating structure.

The water between the coffer dams will be pumped into the channel so the work on the regulating structure can be completed. Eight new FlumeGate™ structures will be inserted into the concrete bearers that are currently housing slides with Oregon and Red Gum beams and pillars which up until now have required manual operation.

Environmental assessments are undertaken at all sites to ensure no impacts on flora and fauna. "The works will take us about four weeks to dismantle and rebuild and we have

eight of these new structures to complete before the end of the shut-down period," Peter Stone said.

"Currently at this work site there are two 20 tonne excavators and a tip truck that ferries the earth to build up the coffer dam wall.

"I am from Mansfield, one of the operators is from Melbourne and the others all run their own businesses in the area," Peter Stone said, "so it's great that we have work with NVIRP because it is not only giving the irrigators a more secure future for their farms but this project is employing hundreds of smaller contractors to complete the regulator installations and on-farm works."

Construction works on this channel will be completed by the start of the 2009-10 irrigation season.

NVIRP caring for Country

NVIRP has recognised the importance of the Yorta Yorta Peoples' right to protect Yorta Yorta cultural heritage and has engaged four Aboriginal Site Monitors to work with NVIRP construction crews on work sites throughout the region.

"The engagement of Aboriginal Monitors such as those from the Yorta Yorta People is only part of the demonstration of NVIRP's commitment to manage the cultural heritage environment in which these irrigation upgrade works are taking place," Murray Smith CEO of NVIRP said.

"Just as we are working with other stakeholders including individual landowners and modernisation consultative committees, conservation groups, and local councils, our relationship with the aboriginal community and their connection to Country is extremely important to us," Mr Smith said.

Two of the Aboriginal Monitors, Wade Smith and Shaun Atkinson are presently working at the Waranga Major

off-take alongside the crew from Comdain Civil Constructions Pty Ltd and are observing the works to ensure any cultural heritage findings are preserved. Wade Smith said, "We have identified some of the trees close to this off-take as having significant scarring in them, which means that tribal members would have inhabited this region, so these works could uncover discarded tools like broken axe heads and skinning tools.

"Our role is to monitor the areas we believe were populated and where artefacts could be found especially here along the Wanalta Floodway which would have been home to a very plentiful food supply.

"If we were to find any artefacts at this site, work would stop to allow us to engage an archaeologist to identify, record and date the find. It would be expected that these items would then be placed in safe keeping, probably at Barmah, where we have a Yorta Yorta Peoples' cultural exhibit," Wade Smith said.



Aboriginal Monitors, Wade Smith (left) and Shaun Atkinson

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Winter Construction Works are taking place in five irrigation regions throughout the GMID:

- 45 crews working at separate locations
- 700 workers inducted into OH&S program
- 17 major structures underway on backbone channels