



Central Tablelands Water

Media Release

31 March 2021

Lake Rowlands Augmentation study given approval to proceed

The NSW Government committed \$1 million of funding in December 2019 for the completion of a feasibility study for the Lake Rowlands dam augmentation as part of its emergency response to the drought in regional NSW.

The grant funding was provided to Central Tablelands Water (CTW) on the basis that the study be carried out in two (2) parts with the initial stage being the completion of a strategic business case investigating dam wall raising options as well as options of constructing a new dam downstream of the existing dam.

The second stage of the study includes a detailed concept design of a preferred augmentation option, a Review of Environmental Factors (REF), and the completion of a final business case.

Official approval was provided by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) – Water on 26 March 2021 for CTW to proceed with the second stage of the feasibility study of raising the wall at Lake Rowlands by 2.2 metres.

Gavin Rhodes, General Manager of CTW said, "Approval to proceed with this vital urban water security project is fantastic news. Although the study had been delayed significantly due to additional water modelling work by DPIE Water for the Lake Rowlands Augmentation and Lake Rowlands to Carcoar Pipeline projects, it is very pleasing that we can now continue and finalise our study."

"Raising the height of the existing dam wall by 2.2 metres will increase the capacity of Lake Rowlands from 4.5 gigalitres to 8 gigalitres. This will help shore up the water security needs of our existing consumers now and well into the future. In 2016 approximately 53 gigalitres flowed over the dam wall and following the drought breaking rains in 2020, 16 gigalitres has spilt since July, being well in excess of 3 times the existing capacity of Lake Rowlands. It is acknowledged that these spills have environmental and downstream user benefits, and although 3.5 gigalitres will be held back with the raising of the wall, the REF will consider potential environmental impacts of this proposed augmentation," Mr Rhodes said.

CTW's chairman, Cr David Somervaille was also delighted with the news that approval had been obtained to proceed with the study and said, "Although the delay in progressing the study has been frustrating for the CTW Board and senior management, our advocacy has remained strong and now we look forward to the outcomes of the detailed concept design, REF and final business case."

The Lake Rowlands Augmentation project aligns with the final business case of the Lake Rowlands to Carcoar Dam Pipeline project currently being undertaken by WaterNSW.

Both projects are expected to be completed by the end of 2021.

CTW is a water supply authority constituted under NSW Local Government legislation. First proclaimed in 1944 the county embraces the Shires of Blayney, Cabonne and Weddin providing drinking water to these communities. CTW currently has approximately 6,000 water connections and provides potable water to 15,000 consumers in 14 towns and villages.



Photo: Lake Rowlands continues to spill (29 March 2021). It is estimated that in excess of 16 gigalitres has spilt since July 2020.