



Central Tablelands Water

Media Release

5 March 2024

Lake Rowlands Augmentation final business case to proceed

Central Tablelands Water (CTW) has welcomed the recent joint funding announcement by the Federal Minister for the Environment and Water, the Hon Tanya Plibersek MP, and the NSW Minister for Water, the Hon Rose Jackson MLC, of \$7.7 million for the completion of a rescoped final business case for the Belubula Water Security Scheme. The final business case will ensure greater water reliability and increased drought resilience for residents, businesses, agriculture and the environment throughout the region.

The final business case will consider:

- Raising the Lake Rowlands Dam wall to increase storage from 4.5 gigalitres to 8 gigalitres, securing water for Central Tablelands Water's consumers and assisting Orange with their town water security needs.
- A new pipeline between Lake Rowlands Dam and Carcoar Dam which could transfer up to 2 gigalitres of water per year, capturing spills and boosting supply.
- Building a new dam 2.5 kilometres downstream of Lake Rowlands.
- Operational rules for an interregional pipeline connecting the Belubula and Macquarie Valleys.

The Chairperson of CTW, Cr Andrew Rawson said, "this recent joint funding announcement of \$7.7m to proceed with the final business case is very welcome news. Preliminary works for the final business case first commenced in late 2021 and then the project was put on hold in March 2023 following the change of government (state) of which a review of all capital projects was conducted. Now that the review has been completed, it is extremely pleasing to have both Minister Plibersek and Minister Jackson reaffirm their joint funding commitment to this vital regional water security project."

Cr Rawson added, "the Belubula Water Security Project will improve our ability to manage expected climatic volatility due to climate change. Projected improvements to telemetry and catchment management modelling will enable us to better manage environmental flows from Lake Rowlands while capturing just enough extra water to ensure urban water security for many decades."

"CTW's Board and management have been advocating for over 20 years for the enlargement of Lake Rowlands to increase regional town water security. So, although it has been quite a lengthy wait, it is at least another positive step forward for residents, businesses, and the environment when it comes to water reliability for our region," Cr Rawson said.

The final business case will include detailed planning work as well as technical, environmental and cultural heritage assessments. This will help to determine whether the project is viable and will deliver the best solutions for the region.

This project is progressing in parallel with the Lachlan Regional Water Strategy which is currently being finalised by the NSW government.

The General Manager of CTW, Gavin Rhodes said, “it is great to see that our regional water security project is progressing with joint funding reaffirmed. As we have mentioned previously, the augmentation of Lake Rowlands for additional town water security, including drought resilience, just makes sense.”

Mr Rhodes added, “as CTW is the owner and operator of Lake Rowlands, and a key stakeholder of the Belubula Water Security Project, we are looking forward to working in close collaboration with the State and Federal governments, and WaterNSW to deliver this important regional water security project.”

According to the recent joint funding announcement, the Belubula Water Security Project Final Business Case is to be completed by mid-2025 with future investment decisions to be considered based on the outcomes of the business case.

Federal Government funding is provided through the National Water Grid Fund, which invests in priority water infrastructure projects across Australia.

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.



Lake Rowlands spilling July 2020



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