

PROJECT UPDATE

Wyangala Dam Wall Raising

DECEMBER 2020

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The project

Wyangala Dam Wall Raising project will provide thousands of Lachlan Valley region residents and their communities with improved water security and increased drought resilience.

The project is jointly funded by the NSW and Federal governments.

It will see the existing 85-metre high dam wall raised, increasing water storage capacity by 650GL or 53%.

The upgrade will help make sure local water supplies are more resilient in times of drought and increase capacity to meet the area's needs well into the future.

Where is the project up to?

WaterNSW is continuing extensive investigations for the project to inform the development of the final business case, the Environment Impact Statement (EIS) and the design. A key area of investigation at this time is the hydrology and flood models for the Wyangala Dam Wall Raising project.

These models are key to finalising the inundation level, associated mapping, the EIS and, ultimately, understanding the impact on people's properties and the two holiday parks around the dam. The modelling will also be used to assess the impacts on the environment and both upstream and downstream infrastructure.

This modelling and mapping is complex work, and it is critical that we get it right.

In line with the NSW Government's previous announcement, WaterNSW is continuing with the design and business case for a 10m increase in Full Supply Level (FSL).

Over the next six months we will continue this modelling and mapping work, including further investigations of potential impacts, which will inform the environmental assessments as well as design and construction considerations.

These hydrology and flood models use historical data and predictive forecasts including the effects of climate change. We will also run several iterations of the models to check they accurately reflect the movement and storage of water in, upstream and downstream of the dam.

We expect to start these inundation discussions with landholders in early 2021 and anticipate we will have the final inundation mapping available by mid-2021. We will continue to work directly with impacted landholders, as well as Reflections Holiday Parks management and van owners throughout the project.

Progress has also been made on an early works package – a water treatment plant to provide clean drinking water to the Wyangala Village and to the Reflections Holiday Park. We refer to the treatment plant as ‘no regrets’ work as it is separate from the wall raising construction and brings additional local benefits. In late October, WaterNSW issued a request for tender and briefed the market. Work on the treatment plant is expected to start mid-2021.

Both the Wyangala Waters and the Grabine Lakeside holiday parks will continue to operate throughout the planning and construction of the project.

This newsletter has information about what we are doing to keep you informed, as well as the opportunities for local businesses and services to benefit from the project.

Environmental Impact Statement update

WaterNSW has had multiple teams of environmental and technical specialists carrying out field work since mid-2020. To prepare the project’s Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the team has to gather significant historic and current field data on a wide range of topics including biodiversity, ecology, heritage, transport, hydrology and flooding.

In addition to the status updates on some key reports, the EIS will address public safety, public access, impacts on utilities, impacts on Crown Lands and bushfire risk.

WaterNSW thanks landholders who have allowed our field teams to access their properties. The information gathered is vital to informing the project including the EIS, concept design and final business case. We appreciate your ongoing cooperation.

Specialist studies update



Terrestrial biodiversity
fieldwork to finish early 2021,
assessment underway



Aquatic ecology
fieldwork ongoing,
assessment underway



Aboriginal Cultural heritage
fieldwork continuing



Non-Aboriginal heritage
fieldwork is complete



Traffic and transport
assessment underway



Noise and vibration
modelling finished,
assessment underway



Air quality
modelling finished,
assessment underway



Health impacts
assessment underway



Contamination and soils
fieldwork finished,
assessment underway



Hydrology
fieldwork is complete,
modelling underway



Flood
fieldwork is complete,
modelling underway



Environmental Sustainable Development (ISCA)
assessment underway



Landscape and visual impact
assessment underway



Social impacts
fieldwork underway



Waste
assessment underway



Climate change risk and greenhouse gas
assessment underway

Our engagement so far

WaterNSW has been meeting with landholders and residents across Wyangala, Woodstock, Darbys Falls, Reids Flat and Bigga to provide an update on the project. We have held 10 community information sessions with about 60 people attending – these were done in small groups due to COVID-19 restrictions.

In addition to these sessions, WaterNSW held 13 online community information webinars in October and December for the broader NSW Central West communities, businesses and stakeholders.

These sessions follow on from engagement with stakeholders and impacted landholders which started in early 2020. Introductory letters and one-on-one meetings have been held with almost all of the potentially impacted landholders.

WaterNSW staff have been at each meeting to provide information on the project, understand landholder and stakeholder perspectives, answer questions and discuss the approval processes and next steps.

Key activities

2014

NSW Government funds a feasibility study into Cranky Rock Dam

Federal Government identifies new dam on Belubula River (Needles Gap) for feasibility investigations

Lachlan identified as priority catchment under NSW State Infrastructure Strategy

2015

Feasibility study phase 1 recommends a further study into build and non-build options

2016

Feasibility study – phase 2 investigations continue

2017

Feasibility study – phase 2 investigations continue

2018

Feasibility study (phase 2) completed

June

Wyangala Dam Wall Raising project identified in 20-year Infrastructure Options Study

NSW Government provides funding for project's final business case

2019

NSW Government lists project in Critical Needs (Water Supply) Act 2019

NSW and Commonwealth Governments announce funding for project

2020

Concept design started

Environment Impact Statement preparation and assessments started

Site investigations and environmental field studies started

Landholder engagement started

Community information sessions and webinars started



Upcoming activities

2021



Environmental field surveys and investigations continue



Landholder engagement continues



Community information sessions and webinars continue



Environmental Impact Statement public display for consultation



Final business case developed



Construction partner procurement



Detailed design starts



Construction of Water Treatment Plant at Wyangala starts



Construction planning for Holiday Parks finalised

Opportunities for local business

WaterNSW has launched a portal so businesses local to the Wyangala region can register their services. This information is already being used by the project team with hundreds of thousands of dollars already spent with local businesses.

So far more than 300 businesses have registered on the portal to provide products and services. All businesses will be provided to our project partners and contractors so they can locally source the services they require.

Maximising opportunities for businesses in these local communities is important to the NSW Government and WaterNSW. We are working closely with all local councils and Cowra Business Chamber and the broader business community to identify and assess local services.

All procurement for the project will require a focus on local businesses and services.

Registering your business is really easy and can be done by visiting www.waternsw.com.au/wyangalabusiness.



Frequently asked questions

Will there be new water licences made available?

This project aims to create greater security and reliability for existing water licences in the Lachlan Valley. There are no intentions for any new water licences to be provided following the raising of the dam wall.

Will the extra water be used for new or existing mining operations?

There are no intentions for any new water licences to be provided following the raising of the dam wall. This includes new and existing mining operations in Central West NSW.

Will tourism and recreation be affected?

WaterNSW knows the significant value the tourism industry and people visiting Wyangala Dam brings to the local economy. There will not be any limitations on accessing the lake during the construction and multiple access points to the lake will be maintained. There will be restrictions to accessing the actual dam structure (for example, no walking on the dam wall), construction staging areas and downstream of the dam structure once construction starts.

Managing community safety throughout construction will be front of mind at all times.

This project creates an opportunity to maximise benefits to the tourism and recreation needs through the development of new infrastructure in the redevelopment of the Wyangala Waters Holiday Park and Grabine Lakeside Holiday Park as part of the early works for the project.

Community assets will be relocated prior to finishing the dam. Relocation of these assets provides an opportunity to improve amenities for the future. For example:

- Boat ramps to accommodate higher water levels
- Car parks will be relocated and built at a higher level
- Toilet amenities will be relocated and built at a higher level
- Picnic spots will be available at a higher level

- BBQs and other amenities will be relocated or renewed at a higher level
- Existing infrastructure will be maintained wherever possible.

We're currently working very closely with Reflections Holiday Parks and the Councils on how best to improve the visitor experience for when the dam project is finished. We will also be working with local tourism groups and seeking broader community feedback as the project progresses.

Will Wyangala Waters and Grabine Lakeside Holiday Parks close during construction?

Both holiday parks will remain open throughout the project's construction work and the project team want to ensure holiday van owners and recreational users still have access to the lake and holiday parks. There may at times, be some changes to amenities and access, but the project team will work closely with the holiday parks' management, Reflections, to minimise impacts for holiday makers. Where vans and sites are impacted by the new full supply level, we will be engaging closely with Reflections and the affected van owners and site holders in the planning and staging to new locations in the holiday parks.

We will continue to collaborate with Reflections to keep van owners and casual recreational users updated as the project progresses and will have the final inundation mapping available by mid-2020.

The Reflections Holiday Parks at Wyangala Waters and Grabine Lakeside are open as per usual. Park guests, day visitors and lake users are welcome to come and enjoy the facilities and natural wide open spaces.



For bookings, please call Grabine Lakeside on (02) 4835 2345 or Wyangala Waters on (02) 6345 0877. Alternatively, visit www.reflectionsholidayparks.com.au

Stay up to date on project news

Thank you to everyone who joined us at our initial community information sessions and webinars. We will regularly be holding further sessions and webinars and providing further updates on the project as it progresses.

If you would like to receive information about the project directly from WaterNSW, please visit our website or send your name and contact details to wyangaladamproject@waternsw.com.au.



For general enquiries and to subscribe to project updates email wyangaladamproject@waternsw.com.au



To join the Community Facebook Group visit [WaterNSW – Wyangala Dam Wall Raising project](#)



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