

Monday 25 September 2023

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE
SOUTHERN WIMMERA AND NORTHEAST PYRENEES WATER SUPPLY PROJECT

Southern Wimmera and Northeast Pyrenees Pipeline moves another step forward

GMMWater, in partnership with Pyrenees Shire Council, has been investigating the feasibility of extending the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline to provide water to rural properties in parts of the Pyrenees, Northern Grampians and Central Goldfields Shires. Pyrenees Shire Council secured \$300,000 from the Victorian Government for a feasibility study and business case.

Following a strong show of support from landholders across the almost 354,000 hectare area, the feasibility study has recently been finalised and the project found to be technically viable.

The study considered options to provide a reliable rural water supply, utilising existing water infrastructure where possible, and indication of the level of interest.

Having been found to be feasible the project is now moving forward to a business case, which is anticipated to be completed by early 2024.

A piped water supply could provide significant environmental, social and economic benefits to the region, improving access to water for drought affected communities and expanding Victoria's water grid. The focus is on supplying non-potable water (non-drinking water) to increase the productivity of agricultural and viticultural sectors and to maintain urban green spaces.

"We're proud to be partnering with GMMWater, with support from Central Highlands Water, Central Goldfields and Northern Grampians Shire Councils, to move this major infrastructure project forward," said Pyrenees Shire Council Mayor Cr Ron Eason. "The delivery of a more sustainable water supply has the potential to bring important economic and community benefits for the region, improving the viability of agriculture and driving new investment and jobs, as well as delivering better environmental flows."

"History has proven that a reliable water supply is a key foundation of building any community. Reliable water gives options to landholders to diversify, better manage stock with the use of containment areas in dry times, more efficient spray and washdown facilities," said Graham Nesbit, a farmer and VFF Water Council member. "Heading into this current El Nino event, I know personally how reassuring it is to have a clean reliable water supply for our stock, via the South West Loddon Pipeline Project."

Public information sessions and drop in events to bring communities up to date with the project and to become informed about what this means for them are planned across Northern Grampians, Pyrenees and Central Goldfields Shires October.

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Landholders with an interest in water connections are being encouraged to lodge expressions of interest with details about this process and the project background being available at <https://gwmwater.org.au/swnep-study>

GWMWater is committed to the ongoing improvement of services and infrastructure in our region. Investment in rural pipelines provides opportunities for future generations.

