

Media release

Monday, 29 March 2021

For immediate release

Revised future water supply on public exhibition from 1 April

Activating existing groundwater sources fulltime in Alstonville and utilising underground aquifers in Tyagarah now form the centrepiece of Rous County Council's revised draft *Future Water Project 2060*.

Rous' revised strategic direction also recommends implementing more innovative water saving measures and finding ways to overcome the barriers to using purified recycled water for drinking purposes in NSW.

Ballina Shire, Byron Shire, Lismore City and Richmond Valley residents will be able to provide feedback when the revised draft *Future Water Project 2060* goes on public exhibition for eight weeks from **Thursday, 1 April 2021** until **Friday, 28 May 2021**.

"Our revised approach provides a suitable alternative following the decision last year not to proceed with further investigations into the Dunoon Dam," Rous County Council's Chairperson Keith Williams said.

"Despite this refocus, the critical water security challenges facing our regional supply from forecast population growth and changing climate conditions still remain.

"Transforming the local government owned bores around Alstonville into a primary water source is a priority, especially as it will ensure we can keep up with forecast demand from 2024.

"The revised future water project sets out a staged approach under which additional groundwater sources are gradually brought online, while at the same time enhanced demand management initiatives and potential purified recycled water schemes are identified," Chairperson Williams said.

Some of the key water supply security actions covered by the revised draft *Future Water Project 2060* include:

- Securing the upgrade of the existing Marom Creek Water Treatment Plant to permanently supply the Wollongbar and Alstonville communities in addition to Wardell etc., and redevelop existing groundwater bores within the Alstonville aquifer to provide drought resilience.
- Investigating two new potential schemes for eventually utilising groundwater from the Tyagarah area as a primary supply.
- Rolling out smart water metering for all of Rous' 2,000 direct retail customers.

- Instigating a four-year plan to further address water loss from the Rous supply network.
- Pioneering the use of purified recycled water by building a pilot treatment plant and direct potable reuse scheme to supply the Perradenya Estate near Lismore.
- Investigating indirect potable reuse schemes

General Manager Phillip Rudd said Rous would like to hear from as many residents as possible over the next two months.

“We’re always looking to improve engagement with communities across our entire service area, especially in relation to critical regional issues such as water security and the use of new water sources,” Mr Rudd added.

Residents can visit the project’s dedicated webpage at www.rous.nsw.gov.au/futurewater to find out more and provide any feedback from Thursday, 1 April 2021.

END

For further information, please contact Phillip Rudd, General Manager, on (02) 6623 3800.

About Rous County Council

Rous County Council (RCC) is a multipurpose county council delivering bulk water, weed biosecurity and flood mitigation services to the Northern Rivers of NSW. RCC’s constituent councils are Lismore, Ballina, Byron and Richmond Valley:

- **Bulk water:** The regional water supply authority. It provides water in bulk from its principal supply sources at Rocky Creek Dam and Emigrant Creek Dam servicing around 100,000 people.
- **Weed biosecurity:** The local control authority for weed biosecurity. Operations cover an area of more than a million hectares including Kyogle and Tweed shires, which are serviced by agreement with those councils.
- **Flood mitigation:** The flood mitigation authority across the local government areas of Ballina, Lismore and Richmond Valley.

RCC also operates Richmond Water Laboratories in Lismore, providing professional sampling and analytical testing services for water and soil to NSW councils, private industry and the public. The laboratory is National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) accredited.

www.rous.nsw.gov.au / www.waterlab.com.au