Stuart Murray Canal (SMC) Upgrade Works

Community Information Session
Nagambie - Thurs 28 April 2016
GMW project team representative

Scott Wikman
Manager Dams Operations - Central
About the upgrade
The project

- This winter GMW will undertake upgrade works on the Stuart Murray Canal (SMC).
- The upgrade works will strengthen the subway and increase the offtake structure’s stability; ensuring the long term reliable and safe supply of water to customers.
- They will be undertaken during the 2016 irrigation shutdown period.
- Scheduled to begin in early May and conclude in early August.
- Total cost of $1.9 million.
Please note that all project works are subject to weather conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 May 2016</td>
<td>Project start</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 May 2016</td>
<td>Subway replacement begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 May 2016</td>
<td>Bridge upgrades begin</td>
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<td>15 May 2016</td>
<td>SMC offtake upgrade begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 August 2016</td>
<td>All works conclude</td>
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What will be included

• Replacement of a 100-year-old drainage subway with one that meets modern design standards, is safer and more reliable; ensuring GMW’s ability to supply water to customers in the Central Goulburn irrigation area through to Rochester and Pyramid Hill.

• Upgrade of the canal offtake and decommissioning of the vertical drive gates to protect the water stored in the weir pool and Lake Nagambie.

• Maintenance on eight bridges crossing the canal to increase safety and stability.
Potential impact on residents and visitors
Increased traffic

• Residents may notice an increase in trucks and machinery in the area during the works, and experience minor traffic delays.

• A partial road closure will reduce traffic to one lane in some parts of the *Goulburn Weir – Murchison Road* from **10 – 30 May 2016**.

• The bridge maintenance program will upgrade eight bridges along the canal from Goulburn Weir through to Waranga. While maintenance is undertaken, each bridge will have a partial road closure and residents may experience minor traffic delays.
The upgrade will stabilise the aging offtake structure and decommission its vertical drive gates ensuring the protection of water stored in the weir pool and Lake Nagambie.

For safety purposes the structure and its walkover, as well as the adjoining car park will be closed to the public during the project.

A sign explaining the closure and the reasons for it has been displayed on-site.
Both the subway replacement and the offtake upgrade and vertical drive gate rationalisation projects require the dewatering of the Stuart Murray Canal.

To maximise our ability to capture water while the SMC is dewatered, GMW plans to temporarily lower Lake Nagambie’s water level by up to one metre during the works and refill it afterwards.

GMW has worked with local government and community organisations to ensure minimal impact to the environment, tourism and recreation during the project.
Recreational access

- Lowering the weir pool and Lake Nagambie by up to one metre to harvest water may result in areas of the lakes being temporarily unnavigable to boat traffic.
- In addition, boat ramps in shallower areas of the lakes may become temporarily inaccessible.
- While the works period is traditionally a quiet time for recreational anglers, it is directly during the Murray Spiny Crayfish season that opens on 1 June and runs to the end of August.
• GMW is working with Fisheries Victoria, Victorian Recreational Fishing, and local angling clubs to inform recreational users of the potential access issues.
• Signs explaining the lowering and the reason for it have been posted at the main boat ramps.
• We advise vessel operators to be mindful of exposed logs and floating debris, exposed boat ramps and changing water conditions.
Water storage, supply and quality
Water harvesting

• The upgrade works will require the dewatering of the SMC.
• To maximise the ability to capture water while the SMC is dewatered, GMW intends to lower the level of the weir pool and the Lake Nagambie by up to one metre.
• We are working with local government, agencies, and community organisations to ensure minimal impact to the environment, tourism and recreation during the project.
• The way water is released from the weir pool will remain unchanged during and after the upgrade.
• The upgrade will decommission the SMC offtake’s ten vertical cast steel drive gates that are not required for current or future supply.
• Future supply will be delivered using the offtake’s four radial gates.
Water quality

- The quality of the water in the weir pool and Lake Nagambie will remain unchanged during and after the upgrade.
- The reservoir stores raw water for irrigation purposes. It is not a potable water supply.
Environment
The SMC subway replacement requires the removal of 15 trees from GMW and Greater Shepparton City Council land near the subway.

The new subway has been located 72 metres upstream from the existing subway to avoid a culturally significant scar tree and reduce the need for excessive native vegetation removal.

GMW applied and received approval for the removal of trees from Greater Shepparton City Council.
GMW also advised local Landcare Groups of the removal of the trees.
GMW has developed a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) due to the presence of the scar tree.
The Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation has accepted the CHMP and GMW will continue to liaise of the Corporation throughout the project.
Animal habitats

- The Lake Nagambie are home to a range of native aquatic animals including the Murray Spiny Crayfish.
- The nearby Tahbilk Lagoon is home to the threatened Tandanus Catfish.
- GMW is working with Fisheries Victoria and the GBCMA to minimise the impact of the lowering on native animals.
Animal habitats (cont.)

• This includes:
  – Isolating the Tahbilk Lagoon to ensure that any lowering doesn’t affect the lagoon’s water levels.
  – Increased numbers of Fisheries Officers on hand during the works to ensure that native fish and crayfish in smaller areas aren’t exploited.
Further information
Further information

For more information about the SMC upgrade:
• phone our Customer Service Centre on 1800 013 357
• email us at reception@gmwater.com.au
• visit our website www.gmwater.com.au/stuartmurraycanal
Questions
Thank You