

Yanco Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting 20, November 2022 – Independent facilitator's update

The Yanco Stakeholder Advisory Group (YSAG) met online in November 2022 (Meeting 20 of the YSAG).

Brad Hollis (Director Southern Projects) provided an update of progress with the NSW SDLAM Acceleration Program, which includes the Yanco Creek Modernisation Project.

- NSW remains committed to delivering as much as possible of the Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism (SDLAM) program by 2024. NSW needs more time to deliver all of its SDLAM commitments to provide stronger Basin Plan outcomes, improve river health and provide economic stimulus to our regions.
- Commonwealth Funding milestone 3 that was due on 1 November 2022 was delivered on time and in full.
- Principal Project Manager Matt Kendall will be moving to a new role (Safe and Secure Water Program) within Water Infrastructure NSW at the end of the year.
- Matt Barden will be taking on the role of Yanco Modernisation project manager

YSAG thanked Matt Kendall for his significant contribution to the Yanco Creek Modernisation project over the last two years. YSAG was encouraged that given new project manager Matt Barden's previous time in the role during the options evaluation phase of the project that this will provide a smooth transition.

Water Infrastructure NSW and the 3Rivers Partnership (GHD and Jacobs) provided a status report and update on the project implementation, including the completion of the Commonwealth Funding Milestone.

Water Infrastructure NSW has signed a funding agreement with WaterNSW to deliver an upgrade to an existing and up to four new hydrometric flow stations. WaterNSW will undertake site suitability testing at the proposed new sites over about a 12-month period before a decision is made to proceed with permanent new infrastructure. YSAG discussed issues relating to the cost benefit of the option of adding a series of water quality instruments to some or all of these flow measurement sites.

Concept designs for the project have been endorsed by the Yanco Design Focus Group (DFG), subject to some further conditions which will be progressed in the detailed design phase. The remaining Part 3 – Wilson Anabranche concept design was only recently finalised and will be put to DFG for endorsement soon. The detailed design phase of the project has now commenced and will progress detailed aspects of project engineering design.

YSAG discussed the recent round of community information sessions held in September. This included five general community sessions and two sessions with Registered Aboriginal Parties. The project team remains open to ideas regarding how best to engage with the local community as the project progresses.

Extensive flooding within the Yanco Creek System is delaying a broad range of field investigations such as topographic, environmental, cultural and geotechnical (soil) surveys. These investigations will recommence as soon as conditions permit.

An Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scoping report for the four Billabong Creek Environmental Water Regulators was recently submitted and has been published on the [Department of Planning and Environment – Planning website](#) - [view here](#). The report includes a summary of the potential benefits and impacts of the proposed works, the planning approval pathway and required community consultation. It also seeks the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) that will inform the scope for preparation of the EIS.

YSAG looked at an updated version of the Draft Yanco Creek System Operations Plan and there will be a dedicated workshop in the New Year to discuss this in greater detail.

YSAG wishes everyone a safe and happy end to 2022. YSAG will meet next in February 2023.