

TILLEGRA DAM PROPOSAL



Proposed Tillegra Dam (graphical interpretation)

In November 2006 the Premier of New South Wales announced a plan to build a new dam in the Upper Williams Valley - Tillegra Dam. The dam is part of a \$342 million plan to secure the water future of the Lower Hunter and the Central Coast for at least the next 60 years.

Other components of the plan included:

- o A \$25 million recycled water plant to provide 3 billion litres of treated effluent each year for use by industry*
- o New pumps at Balickera to enhance system capacity so that Hunter Water can capture additional flood flows from the Williams River, and*
- o Increasing the capacity of the existing pipeline link between the Hunter and the Central Coast.*

The dam proposal is subject to approval by the NSW Minister for Planning, under the requirements of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act.

About the dam

From as far back as the early 1950s Hunter Water has been looking at Tillegra as the site for a major water storage, and has been buying land in the area for over 20 years. At the time of the Government's announcement in November 2006 Hunter Water owned, or was in negotiations for, almost half of the land required for the inundation area of the dam. At November 2007 Hunter Water owned around 72% of the land required.

Originally the dam was to have been built by the late 1980s. However, strong demand management practices in the Lower Hunter along with other initiatives have helped to defer the need for the dam – until now.

Building Tillegra Dam secures the water future for the Lower Hunter and means that another source of water will not be required for consumers for at least the next 60 years.

When completed, the dam will hold 450 billion litres of water. The estimated cost of the dam is around \$300 million.

Included in the dam proposal is a hydro-power generation plant which will generate around 3,000 megawatt hours of energy each year. Hunter Water is also proposing to plant 1.5 million trees as carbon offsets.

What studies and investigations is Hunter Water doing?

Site investigations (including geological, geotechnical, seismology and hydrology investigations) and design of the dam are currently underway. Hunter Water has

also appointed an independent panel of experts to overview the investigation and design phases of the proposed dam.

Work is also well underway to enable the proposal to be considered under the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act. This work includes preparation of the Preliminary Environmental Assessment and Application, a comprehensive Environmental Assessment Report, and a number of supporting specialised investigations to assess the potential social, economic and environmental impacts of the proposal.

Hunter Water expects to submit the Environmental Assessment Report for consideration by the Department of Planning and the Minister for Planning around mid-2008. The Department of Planning will subsequently place the Report on public exhibition to provide interested members of the community with an opportunity to comment formally on the proposal.

How long before water is available from the dam?

Subject to receiving the necessary approvals, the first water from the dam is expected to be available in 2013.

Why do we need a new water source?

The Lower Hunter has good supplies of water under average conditions but is very vulnerable to long droughts where storages can plummet from 100% full to 40% in only 18 months. This rapid depletion of storages means that – without increased storage – major drought contingency measures to meet the community's needs during a long term drought are almost impossible to implement due to long lead times for approval, design and construction.

The Lower Hunter's vulnerability to drought, together with growing evidence of the variability of our climate and predictions of significant increases in population over the next 25 years, means steps need to be taken now to secure the water future for the region.

Tillegra Dam meets these needs. It will provide significantly improved drought security for people of the Lower Hunter, bringing the region in line with other major urban centres in Australia.

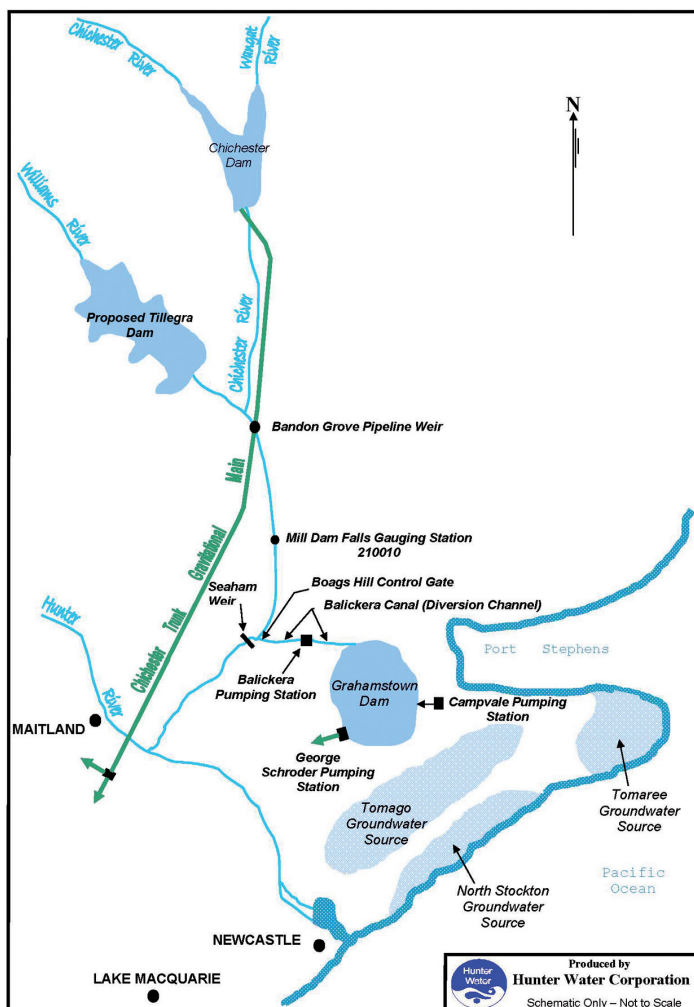
What about water conservation?

Hunter Water's customers have a strong record of water conservation, having embraced the user pays pricing system and other water efficiency initiatives for many years. They still have one of the lowest household water consumption levels in the nation.

This focus on water efficiency will not diminish into the future, with work on "third pipe" recycling systems in residential subdivisions, a major recycling plant for industry on Kooragang Island, and support for other residential demand management programs continuing.

Hunter Water will also maintain a focus on appropriate pricing signals to ensure people value water and use it wisely.

Current programs on leak detection and control and pressure management within the water supply pipe network will also continue.



Water Supply Network - Lower Hunter Region

For further information

o Newsletter

Phone 4979 9430 or email sue.nicholas@hunterwater.com.au to receive a regular e-newsletter

o Website

www.hunterwater.com.au

o Visit

Munni House, on Salisbury Road, any Wednesday between 9am & 12 noon to talk to Hunter Water staff about the proposed dam