

## Minyip Drinking Water Supply Project

# Planning Permit Application Report for Native Vegetation Removal

Yarriambiack Shire Council

August 2013

#### 1. Planning Permit Application Details

Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water (GWMWater) has prepared this planning permit application for the removal of native vegetation associated with the construction of a drinking water pipeline between Murtoa and Minyip.

This report supports the application for a planning permit to Yarriambiack Shire Council and provides an overview of the proposal.

Table 1 below provides an overview of key information.

**Table 1** Planning Permit Application Details

Application Details			
Study Area	Pipeline from Wimmera Highway cnr Konings Rd to Minyip existing tanks at Johnstons Road		
Planning Permit Required for	Native Vegetation Removal		
Responsible Authority	Yarriambiack Shire Council		
Applicant	GWMWater		
Contact Person	Dean Robertson		
	GWMWater		
	PO Box 481		
	Horsham VIC 3402		
	(P) 03 5381 9823		
	(E) dean.robertson@gwmwater.org.au		

#### 2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Minyip is a regional township of approximately 480 people located in Western Victoria. The town is currently serviced with non-potable water from the Wimmera Mallee Pipeline network.

The town's lack of a drinking water supply has been of concern to the Department of Health since at least 2003. The GWMWater Board agreed to provide Minyip with a drinking water supply in 2012.

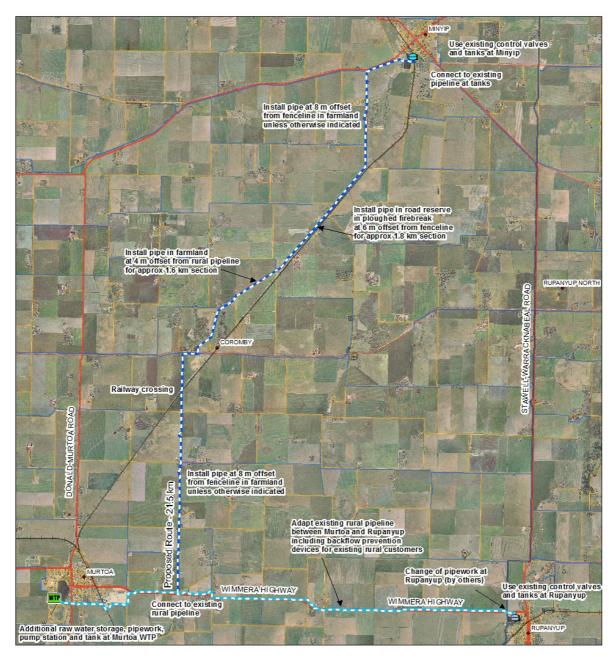
GWMWater has determined that the preferred option for providing drinking water to Minyip is to pipe the water 21 km from the existing water treatment plant at Murtoa.

#### **Project Area**

The proposed pipeline alignment, as shown in Figure 1, commences at the corner of the Wimmera Hwy and Konings Rd and heads north to existing water storage tanks at Minyip. The majority of the works occur within privately owned farm land, primarily used for cropping.

Please refer to Figure 1 for the Proposed Alignment Plan.

Figure 1- Proposed Alignment Plan.



## Minyip and Rupanyup Drinking Water Supply Projects EMP details 13 Aug 2013 - ADW



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#### Legend

Proposed Minyip Pipeline
Existing Rupanyup Pipeline



Rupanyup Tanks

#### 3. PROPOSED WORKS

#### **Pipeline**

Particulars of the works include:

Construction of a 150 mm diameter water PVC pipeline, 21 km in length;

- Minimum cover to top of pipe will be 800 mm and valves will generally be located at fence lines to avoid interference with farming activities in private property;
- The pipeline will generally be constructed by open trenching, although crossing of roads, railway and areas of environmental significance will be installed by sub-surface boring; and
- o Some native vegetation removal (mostly grasses) will also be required to facilitate the works.
- Please refer to Figure 2 for a diagram of the typical cross-section.

#### **Ancillary Works**

Particulars of the works include:

- Construction of 1 x 1.1 ML water storage tank at the Murtoa water treatment plant site
- Construction of a 10 ML open HDPE lined storage at the Murtoa water treatment plant site

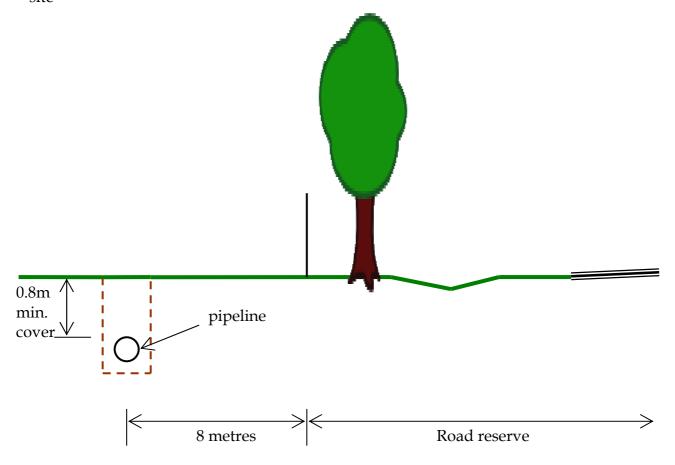


Figure 2 – Typical cross-section of the pipeline arrangement

#### 4. AFFECTED LANDOWNERS

A total of 12 private land owners are affected along the pipeline alignment. GWMWater is currently in consultation with all affected land owners regarding access arrangements, weed control, topsoil reinstatement and timing of works. In addition, each landowner will be asked to sign an agreement that will allow GWMWater to create a pipeline easement in exchange for compensation.

#### 5 PLANNING COMPLIANCE

The pipeline is subject to the provisions of the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme.

The proposed pipeline is defined as "minor utility installation' under the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme.

The Yarriambiack Planning Scheme defines a minor utility installation as, 'land used for a utility installation comprising any of the following:

#### a) Sewerage or water mains

It is considered the tank and storage at Murtoa are only required due to the new pipeline and are therefore considered ancillary to the main works. Accordingly, the tank and open storage can be defined as a minor utility installation.

A "minor utility installation" does not require a planning permit under the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme.

In accordance with Yarriambiack Planning Scheme, a permit is required to remove, destroy, or lop native vegetation. Therefore, a planning permit <u>is required</u> to remove native vegetation in this area.

#### 6 NATIVE VEGETATION ASSESSMENT

#### Appropriateness of the Native Vegetation Removal

The only matter associated with the proposed building and works which require planning approval relates to the removal and/ or lopping of native vegetation. Within this context it is also highlighted that the potential removal and/ or lopping of native vegetation has been limited as is practical to facilitate the proposed works associated with the pipeline.

The pipeline will primarily be constructed by open trenching. However, to avoid areas of environmental sensitivity sub-surface boring will be utilized in multiple locations. In addition, the location of the pipeline on private land has greatly reduced native vegetation impacts.

#### **Net Gain Assessment**

An extensive Flora and Fauna assessment was undertaken by Ecology Heritage Partners to locate the pipeline alignment in areas where there would be minimal impacts to native vegetation.

The impacts associated with the proposed pipeline are discussed in more detail within the Flora, Fauna and Net Gain Assessment provided in Appendix A.

Under the Net Gain Policy, attempts must be made to avoid and minimise native vegetation losses during the project development phase, prior to examining potential options to offset any proposed native vegetation losses.

Where avoidance is not possible, mitigation measures to minimise vegetation clearance should be implemented. Only after avoid and minimise steps have been undertaken should, offsetting be considered.

#### Avoiding and Minimising Impacts on Native Vegetation

One of the objectives of this project from the outset has been to avoid the removal of native vegetation. Mitigation measures have been undertaken to avoid the loss of native vegetation including, but not limited to:

- Investigating the ecological values that are present within the vicinity of the preferred alignment through three separate field investigations and refining the alignment to avoid areas of native vegetation as described below;
- Where possible, directional drilling under sections of the alignment where native vegetation is present;
- Micro alignment changes to avoid directly and indirectly impacting large trees within the road reserve and scattered trees; and
- Utilising cleared private land instead of the road reserve, which often contains remnant native vegetation.

#### Net Gain Targets

The total Net Gain target to offset the proposed native vegetation removal is 0.05 habitat hectares. See Table 2 below.

**Table 2** Net Gain Targets

EVC Name	Total Losses (Hha)	Gain Target (Hha)	Conservation Significance
803: Plains Woodland	0.01	0.02	High
826: Plains Savannah	0.02	0.03	High

#### **Further Actions**

The following additional actions in line with the recommendations of the Net Gain Report are being undertaken by GWMWater:

- FFG Act permit application has been submitted to DEPI
- Targeted surveys for Golden Sun Moth will be undertaken during spring 2013
- EPBC Act referral is being made to the Minister for Environment for potential impact on Golden Sun Moth and Growling Grass Frog

#### Offset

It is proposed that the Net Gain offsets for construction associated with the pipeline will be achieved through the protection of native vegetation or revegetation. The exact offset strategy is yet to be determined.

#### 7 CONCLUSION AND REQUEST

GWMWater has lodged this planning permit application for the removal of native vegetation associated with the construction of a 21 km water pipeline and associated works.

Whilst the proposed works do not trigger the requirement for planning approval, the associated removal and lopping of native vegetation does require such approval. With this permit trigger in mind, the project has been planned and designed to minimise the removal of native vegetation and to limit impacts where possible.

The proposed works for the transfer pipeline and associated storages will not detrimentally impact surrounding land uses and constitutes important works to upgrade the water quality currently provided to the township of Minyip, providing a significant benefit to the local community.

Considering the substantial consultation already undertaken with the affected landowners, it is requested that there be no public advertising period.

We therefore respectfully request that Council support the planning permit application to allow for the removal of native vegetation associated with the construction of the pipeline and associated works.

### Appendix A