

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 1382

asked on Wednesday, 17 October 2018

MR J MCDONALD ASKED THE MINISTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES, MINES AND ENERGY (HON DR A LYNHAM)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister support the position of the Lockyer Water Users Forum to ensure sustainability and sufficiency of water in the proposed Water Resource Plan for Central Lockyer?

ANSWER:

On 5 November 2018, I released the draft amendment of the Water Plan (Moreton) 2007 to include the Central Lockyer Valley Water Supply Scheme. The amendment will establish clearly specified water entitlements, along with transparent and flexible water management arrangements.

The release of the draft amendment plan follows a three-year period of consultation to develop the draft. Officers from the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy have engaged actively with stakeholders including extensive one-on-one meetings on properties. The draft plan reflects the knowledge gained through these discussions.

The release of the water plan starts an extensive public consultation phase, which includes inviting submissions from stakeholders, including representative groups, such as the Lockyer Water Users Forum.

I understand the importance of getting this right and I have provided extra time and opportunity for landholders to talk one-on-one with officers in the department during the current submission stage.

Members of the community are invited to visit the consultation drop-in centre located at the Gatton Research Centre from 12noon to 7pm on 20, 21, 27 and 28 November 2018 to discuss the draft amendments. A formal submission on the proposed changes to the Moreton water plan can be made by visiting <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/industries/mining-energy-water/water/catchments-planning/water-plan-areas/moreton>. The submission period closes at 5pm on 18 January 2019.

The draft amendment plan is compliant with my obligations as Minister under the *Water Act 2000* to advance the sustainable management of water resources in Queensland. Like the Lockyer Water Users Forum, I too am committed to ensuring that the management of the water resources in the Central Lockyer Valley Water Supply Scheme is sustainable.

The amendments have been developed in consultation with key stakeholder groups and entitlement holders to ensure the economic and social value of the region's agricultural industry is secured and, therefore, has taken into account the sufficiency of water resource availability for the region. To support this work, the best available science, including historical water use and an independent socio-economic assessment, have been utilised.

Additionally, and in parallel with the plan amendment, the department is working with Building Queensland, local governments, the Queensland Farmers' Federation, Seqwater and local growers to evaluate the viability of additional water supply options through the preparation of a strategic business case.

The strategic business case will identify a short list of the most viable water supply options which will be a key input into more detailed investigation to be led by the Lockyer Valley Regional Council. I wish to congratulate the council on its recent success in securing \$1.4 million from the Queensland Government through the Maturing the Infrastructure Pipeline Program Phase 2 administered by the Department of State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning to fund the more detailed work.

It is my intention to have the water planning process finalised next year to ensure a sustainable water management framework is in place to support economic development, investment and jobs for the Lockyer Valley and surrounding region.