

Meeting Minutes

Meeting name	Borumba pumped hydro project - stakeholder reference group regular meeting
Location	Gympie RSL Poppies Room, 217 Mary Street, Gympie; and Online [Microsoft Teams]
Date and time	Thursday 7 September 2023, 9am – 12pm
Attendees	<p>Environment group members:</p> <p>David Arthur (Wide Bay-Burnett Environment Council), Nigel Parratt (proxy for Dave Copeman, Queensland Conservation Council, online), Ian Mackay (Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee and Conondale Range Conservation Association), Glenda Pickersgill (Save the Mary River Coordinating Group, <i>joined meeting 10:45am</i>).</p> <p>Business representative members:</p> <p>Janelle Parker (Mary Valley Chamber of Commerce), Petra Van Beek (Gympie Chamber of Commerce, online), Graeme Elphinstone (Gympie District Beef Liaison Group), Luke Barden (Plumbing and Pipe Trades Employees Union), Sotera Trevaskis (Wide Bay-Burnett Regional Development Australia).</p> <p>Community members:</p> <p>Carolyn Harris (adjoining landholder), Don MacAulay (Mary Valley Fishing Club), Ian Stehbens (local community member), Bruce Horsfall (Lake Borumba Fish Stocking Association), Senior Constable Bill Greer (Imbil Rural Watch), Gary Rozynski (local irrigator).</p> <p>Project representatives:</p> <p>Leah McKenzie, Travis Graham, Julie Spencer, Nirvana Searle, Michael Price, Rebecca Grady, Georgia Southern, Lynda Williams.</p> <p>Independent facilitator:</p> <p>Leisa Prowse.</p>
Apologies	<p>Environment group members:</p> <p>Narelle McCarthy (Sunshine Coast Environmental Council).</p> <p>Business representative members:</p> <p>Dan O'Regan (HQPlantations Pty Ltd).</p>

Minutes

Minutes and Actions	
Acknowledgement of Country, introductions, and housekeeping	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JS opened the meeting and introduced the meeting's independent facilitator Leisa Prowse (LP) • Queensland Hydro representatives and SRG members introduction themselves. • LP spoke to the group's terms of engagement which include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treating other members and their opinions with respect - Sharing your thoughts professionally, respectfully and in a civil manner - Committing to frank, honest and transparent discussion and feedback - Being curious - Listening to each other, with one conversation occurring at a time - Being succinct - Saying what you need to say, please do not leave the room with things left unsaid - Advocating for the solutions that you feel strongly about • LP asked members if there were any new conflicts of interest. None were declared. • JS noted that there is confidential information contained within the presentation. 	

Project Update

- LM explained exploratory works have commenced, including detailed geological investigations. This work will include drilling bore holes - example of what a drill rig would look like on site where shared.
- Queensland Hydro are preparing for tenders to go out for the Temporary Workers Accommodation Camps (TWACs) and further tenders for the exploratory works are being prepared for release to the market.
- TG advised that the exploratory works are primarily geotechnical investigations which include vertical boreholes and water monitoring bores, and horizontal shaft to the proposed powerhouse cavern because is roughly 400-500 metres below ground.
- TG explained these horizontal shafts are required as there is only a limited number of vertical boreholes that can be drilled at that deep economically.
- TG spoke to examples of the drill rigs that will be on site and anticipates there will be 4-6 drill rigs at one time.
- TG explained that to enable the exploratory works, the project must undertake supporting works which includes:
 - TWACs
 - Road upgrades
 - New access roads and tracks through the project site
 - Temporary water supply infrastructure
- TG explained typically the supporting works must be completed first before the main technical investigations are undertaken.
- LM advised that there has been a drill rig in the camping area downstream from the current dam. The drill rigs have 6-foot fencing around them so that people can't access the equipment and it is a compact small site, which is rehabilitated once work is complete.
- TG clarified that this drilling has been undertaken as part of the initial geotechnical drilling package. This initial package, which began in July 2023, is separate to the exploratory works package and did not require state or commonwealth approval. These works are being undertaken in existing cleared areas with little to no impacts. This was approximately six initial boreholes with more to come.
- TG spoke to the program timeline and noted that the graphic presented provided a summary of the key items from the schedule.
- TG noted exploratory works run from now until the end of 2025.
- Walkers Top Road support works will upgrade the track to provide safer road access. These upgrades will better connect the lower reservoir area to the upper reservoir area. Without this upgrade, it would take a number of hours to traverse from the lower site to the upper site.
- LM noted the support works are required to be undertaken prior to taking the SRG on a site tour to improve safety. Queensland Hydro will aim to take members on a site tour may be possible in Q4 2023 or Q1 2024, once the upgrades are complete.
- TG advised there are two packages of works being undertaken in conjunction with Gympie Regional Council (GRC) and Somerset Regional Council (SRC). These packages are outside Queensland Hydro areas and are within the public road corridors on Bella Creek Road and Yielo Road.
- The aim is to have works on Bella Creek Road completed by the end of 2023. GRC are currently carrying out flood reconstruction works not related to the project. Once these works are complete, Queensland Hydro expect the project related upgrades will be able to start.
- Supporting works on Bella Creek Road are not a full improvement at this time, this initial work will assist the project with access requirements for other support works. There will be further improvements once a more holistic view can be taken on what is required.
- Yielo Road will undergo some minor improvement works to bypass some residents and some waterway crossings will be improved. This will take place in early 2024.
- TG spoke to the temporary camps package. Tenders having gone to market and due to close Q3/4 2023. Queensland Hydro will look to award the contract before the end of 2023, and aim to start work from Q1/2 2024. This contract needs to be awarded soon so there is enough lead time for the contractors can begin to fabricate the components.
- TG spoke to the temporary water package, which will supply water around the site. This will be a pumped pipeline with water tanks to store water. This is a design and construct package which will be delivered Q1/2 2024.
- **Question from SRG:** Has the initial geotechnical drilling has commenced near the foundations for the lower dam wall?
 TG advised initial drilling has taken place where environmental approvals aren't required. The remainder of the drilling for this will take place during the exploratory works due to the environmental considerations for drilling

into the creek banks. Approximately three bore holes have been drilled in the proposed lower reservoir site in pre-disturbed areas that do not require environmental approvals.

- TG spoke to the four temporary bridges and tracks/roads that would be built between Q2/3 2024. The initial borehole tracks would also be built around the same time.
- TG summarised the delivery of the support works and advised that most of this work would really kick off from Q1/2 2024.
- TG spoke to the initial geotechnical investigations which consists of approximately 45 boreholes in the initial package of work. They vary from 20 metres which are the water monitoring boreholes to 150 metres. This depends on what is found. The aim is to drill down to the foundation of some of the dam structures and go past that to make sure that the drilling hits something solid.
- TG reaffirmed that this drilling is only taking place in pre-disturbed areas. Once the exploratory works environmental approval is obtained, anticipated to be in roughly Q4 2023, then the geotechnical investigation will be expanded. This will include thousands of lineal metres and hundreds of holes.
- TG spoke to the number of boreholes being drilled during this phase. There will be roughly 25 water monitoring bores and 25 geotechnical bores. The water monitoring bores feed into the EIS and the geotechnical bore holes feed into the designs of bridges and roads etc.
- TG spoke to the main geotechnical drilling which includes the deep holes of approximately 450 metres and more shallow holes of approximately 100 metres or less.
- TG spoke to the available and upcoming tenders.
- TG advised that the temporary accommodation camps package went out on 1 September 2023. The civil construction works are targeted towards release in Q3/4 2023. These works include roads, tracks, council roads and internal tracks.
- TG spoke to the supply of temporary bridge components. These bridges are designed to be temporary because they will be flooded once the lower dam is built, and the reservoir rises. It would not be economical to build permanent bridges now as it would be a much larger task as they would be elevated 20-30 metres in the air, requiring significant earthworks. The project is taking a minimalistic approach by using smaller bridges, that can be disassembled. These bridges could be temporary 'Bailey Bridges' which is typically used by the military. It comes in stick form which arrives in containers that can be bolted together without the use of a large crane. This is suitable because large cranes will not be able to get to site due to restricted access. The supply of the bridges will be a specific tender package which will go out in Q3/4 2023 and is aimed at companies that specialise in the design of these bridges. The installation can be undertaken by a regular civil contractor who will build the concrete substructure, assemble and launch the bridge, and build the adjoining roads. The internal earthworks, roadworks and bridges package will go out in Q3/4 2023.

- **Question from SRG:** How much of the exploratory drilling and main drilling will have to occur within the serpentinite layers?

TG advised that Queensland Hydro doesn't know where it is so the project team will be keeping an eye out for serpentinite.

SRG member commented that they believe the serpentinite is not found in either dam site. Only a bit on Bella Creek Road which is what Council is tending to right now.

- **Question from SRG:** what are the plans for the deviation once Kingham Creek is inundated? There are currently three crossings, one concrete, two splash crossings. When will the deviation be constructed because there will need to be a bridge across the new arm of the lake?

TG advised that there will be a bypass constructed for the two current bed-level crossings across Kingham Creek. The aim is for construction to take place in early 2024.

SRG member asked if this would be a permanent route? Will eliminate the two crossings?

TG advised that the route would follow where the permanent road will be. LM advised that the route will be above the inundation level. Confirmed the two crossings would be closed.

LM advised this plan reduces environmental impacts and increases value-for money by constructing the new route along the permanent alignment.

- **SRG comment:** Council have placed gravel and large rock at the splash crossings with the aim to control the creek. The dry crossing is dry most of the time when the creek is flowing. But the gravel is coarse because it's at the end of the steep gradient before it reaches the flat area. The water in Kingham Creek is flowing through the gravel all the time so if the project starts to concrete there may be issues. Member is concerned the Council is putting rocks in the splash crossings.

TG advised that this was taken into account which is why the project chose to bypass the crossings as the preferred option. LM advised the concerns would be passed onto Council.

- TG advised that the drilling will confirm the geology of where the powerhouse will be constructed. Geologists have raised issues of where faults might be and where the boundaries might be for different types of material and the project is trying to confirm this information. This will inform the placement of the cavern.
- **SRG comment:** correction on earlier comment about the location of serpentinite. Member believes serpentinite is also found along Borgan Road. The local lease holders have had that area bulldozed recently which exposed the serpentinite. Member noted that the project would be using Borgan Road. Advised that serpentine is very slippery when wet and the section of bitumen on Bella Creek Road is covering serpentinite. The other issue is that it is a naturally occurring asbestos.
LM advised that the plan would be to seal the roads where possible.
- TG spoke to the timing of the underground works. The exploratory works expression of interest will come out Q3/4 2023. It is a long procurement process through to the Q1/2 2024. This is because it will be an interactive process with the contractors. The project does not have any geotechnical information so there will be workshops with potential contractors to come up with methodology and identify issues and strategies.
- LM advised this will be a two-stage process.
- TG expanded on the two-stage process and explained that there will be an initial expression of interest to shortlist the contractors and then an interactive tendering phase.
- TG spoke to the geotechnical works which is split into two packages, geotechnical drilling, and technical and management services. The technical and management services package will supervise and monitor the drillers, and also conduct all the in-situ testing, take samples and conduct laboratory testing, and generate reports which are passed onto different design consultants.
- TG spoke to the surveying package. This will go to market in roughly Q4 2023 which will expand the survey control network. There is nothing in the field at the moment, so the project requires survey monuments to triangulate and tie into the satellite rigs etc.
- TG spoke to the site field services packages. This includes a number of packages that will be ongoing works such as vegetation management, water haulage and stock fencing.
- TG spoke to tender evaluation criteria. Queensland Hydro are following the Queensland Government procurement policy and best practice principles. Within that are criteria around training and apprenticeships and local benefit. All of the tenders within the exploratory works will be assessed using this criterion. Queensland Hydro aim to involve as much local content as reasonably possible.
- LB provided comment that these best practice principles also looks at supporting women in construction and supporting older workers in their transition into retirement.
- LM advised that Queensland Hydro has obtained a lease at the old medical centre for a community information centre and an office building for Queensland Hydro and are investigating re-establishing healthcare services in Imbil.

Planning and approvals process

- NS spoke to the targeted project schedule and the exploratory works. The aim is to provide an update and overview of where the project is up to. There was an update on the works regulation in the extraordinary SRG meeting.
- NS advised that the project determined that some of the exploratory works were in locations that did not have a large impact and did not require environmental approvals and could be progressed following self-assessment. Those are the geotechnical drilling works that are currently being undertaken.
- NS advised that a large portion of the exploratory works are relevant to Commonwealth assessments which were included in the EPBC Act referral that was submitted in February 2023. That referral was assessed by the Commonwealth, and they determined that those works are a controlled action to be assessed through a preliminary documentation process. The project is following that process and in parallel are speaking with the various State agencies about what State approvals are required for other aspects of the work.
- NS advised that the project is in the process of preparing that information for the preliminary documentation process. Targeting submission in September 2023.
- NS spoke to the State approvals for the initial geotechnical investigation. There is a water permit for the driller to take a small amount of water from Lake Borumba, which is a contingency in case they need more than they expect. The project has prepared permit application for a 'take of water' for the water drilling program. The permit is being reviewed by the project at the moment and it will go through the standard State assessment referral agency (SARA) process. The project is also preparing an application for a permit for native vegetation clearing. Neither of these applications have been submitted yet.
- NS spoke to main works approvals. The project is still in the initial stages of the approval process. The coordinated project application has been submitted to the Office of the Coordinator General (OCG). The aim is to

receive a coordinated project declaration. The OCG have provided the project with some comments on the application and the project is currently reviewing the comments.

- NS noted that the EPBC Act referral for the main works is close to being submitted but it is in the final stages of drafting.
- NS provided the application number for the exploratory works controlled action determination which is publicly available on the EPBC portal. As noted, the Commonwealth determined that the exploratory works would be assessed by preliminary documentation and any decision will occur after public consultation on the documentation. Once the project submits all of the documentation, it is likely that the Commonwealth will provide comments for the project to address. Once these comments are addressed to the Commonwealth's satisfaction, the documentation will be released for public comment and then a decision will be made.
- NS spoke to the EPBC Act chart that is standard on the Commonwealth website to describe the process and avenue the project exploratory works are being assessed under.
- NS spoke to the changes that the project has made to the exploratory works since the EPBC Act referral was made. Since the referral, the project team has been focusing on avoiding and minimising the impact on the environment as much as possible. The project initially proposed two options for the exploratory tunnel and portal pad. Following further investigations by Queensland Hydro, the portal pad was moved as it was initially positioned in a threatened ecological community. Through the various discussion processes, a further option was identified for the portal pad location. The EPBC Act referral subsequently contained both options.
- NS advised that a multicriteria analysis was undertaken to select a preferred option. Upon further investigation, it was found that the design could be improved to better suit the requirements and to utilise more of the pre-cleared area, reducing the environmental impacts further.
- LM noted that this option would take advantage of the cleared areas.
- NS noted that by moving the portal location, the access route needed to be altered. The project chose a route that would pass through more cleared space but included more creek crossings, which will be via bridges. This altered the location of the spoil disposal area to better align with the updated pad locations and staging areas. Overall, this option reduces the cut/fill operations and vegetation removal as much as possible.
- **SRG comment:** Member provided a guide to where local landmarks are on the maps.
- NS advised that these designs are still being worked on but these changes have reduced clearing footprint by approximately 20 hectares and has not changed the significant residual impacts on the species that were previously identified.
- **Question from SRG:** three drainage lines near the worksite were mentioned, is there plans in place to minimise the impacts of the drainage?

NS advised that the project area has moved away from the three drainage lines because they presented a risk. The pads will be designed to divert the stormwater around the pads. The rainfall that falls directly on the pads will be captured and treated but there will be diversions in place for the runoff. There was a preliminary erosion and sediment control plan and preliminary environment management plan (along with other plans) that were submitted with the EPBC referral, but the project is revising these plans in light of the changes.

- NS spoke to the reduction of impacts on the environment. The project has reduced the extent of clearing works within remnant vegetation, sensitive areas, habitat for threatened species and Lowland Rainforest of Subtropical Australia. There will be some impact on the Lowland Rainforest of Subtropical Australia which is unavoidable because it is in the footprint of the lower reservoir site where further geological investigation is required.
- **Question from SRG:** Is the detailed analytical report publicly available and where is the detailed business case? If not, why?
- NS advised that the detailed analytical report is not publicly available.
- LM advised that the project has done a detailed analytical report in lieu of a detailed business case.

there is not a public version of the detailed analytical report. That it is an internal government document.

- **SRG comment:** detailed business cases are normally publicly available and it is odd that the detailed analytical report is not publicly available.

LM advised the feedback would be taken on board.

- **SRG comment:** these documents are not always made publicly available.
- **SRG comment:** in most cases the documents are made public. It would be useful to make it publicly available to indicate that it is economically viable.

LM noted that the detailed analytical report went to the government in March 2023 and that is what was used to inform the final investment decision of \$6 billion by the government. Queensland Hydro would ask the department about releasing the detailed analytical report.

- **ACTION:** Queensland Hydro to continue discussions with the State Government about the SRG request to release the detailed analytical report to the public.

- NS spoke to the EPBC potential impacts assessment for the exploratory works. Overall there have been no changes to the species that are likely to be significantly impacted by the project. These species include thesium australe, koala, greater glider, grey-headed flying-fox, long-nosed potoroo, spotted-tail quoll, glossy-black cockatoo.
- NS noted that most of these impacts from the exploratory works are associated with foraging and roosting habitat rather than a direct impact on the species themselves. On the basis of that, the project has determined that an offset strategy is required to mitigate these impacts. The project is building upon the initial strategy submitted with the EPBC Act referral.
- NS spoke to the additional ecological surveys. There have been additional surveys to verify presence and extent of threatened ecological communities, assess the habitats for Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES), assess the presence of weeds (Giant Rats Tail Grass common to abundant in the grasslands around Yabba Creek and Sandy Creek confluence) and assess presence of the subtropical eucalypt floodplain forest. The subtropical eucalypt floodplain forest has been listed as a new ecological community.
- NS spoke to the mitigation measures and erosion and sediment control. Those are the management plans that formed part of the initial EPBC Act referral. The project is working to improve these plans. The project is developing monitoring works with a focus on water quality. Workers have been out doing surveys of water quality and the project is investigating installing monitoring stations. The project will also undertake air monitoring, and noise and vibration monitoring. This information will inform the EIS and will also provide a baseline across the site. The aim is to have this information before drill rigs come to site.
- NS spoke to the ongoing activities, which includes continuing to secure the relevant state approvals to support the works. Anything for the state approvals is being prioritised in relation to the schedule to the works. The focus is on water use and vegetation clearing, these will be the first items that go through the typical assessment processes.
- NS spoke to the cultural heritage surveys and presence of monitors during the works. The project team have been working with Kabi Kabi. Any works that occur have cultural heritage monitors on site. Before works begin, cultural heritage monitors undertake a survey.
- NS spoke to pre-clearance surveys and contaminated land assessments. At any point where clearing works is undertaken there will be ecologists / fauna spotter-catchers on site. Contaminated land assessments have been completed on lots found on the environmental management register. The results have come back and there is nothing of not as yet from those results.
- **Question from SRG:** you identified that giant rats tail grass has infested the land, does that fall under the contaminated land assessment? How is the spread of the weed going to be managed?
NS advised that clearing the giant rats tail grass clearing/management doesn't sit under the contaminated land investigation, but it does sit under the environmental management plan. The project has a biosecurity and land management plan. The contaminated land investigation is comprised of hand augured soil samples – so this is about contamination of the soil. For the biosecurity and weed management, the project has hygiene requirements for vehicles coming on and off site. The project is investigating weed washdown locations.
- **Question from SRG:** is documented in the presentation or if it is still to come?
NS advised that this is still to come. There is a high level biosecurity plan and a construction environmental management plan and there is some detail in the EPBC Act referral.
- MP spoke to the approvals for main works and the processes in place from the OCG and Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). The initial advice statemen (IAS) and EPBC Act referral won't be discussed in depth as they are going through the process for evaluation by the relevant departments.
- MP noted that the outcomes of the IAS and EPBC Act referral would probably be released before the next SRG meeting so asked that the members think about how they would like to be informed of the outcome.
- MP spoke to the main works approval pathway. The IAS is a scoping document that allows the OCG to determine whether the work will be accepted as a coordinated project. Generally that is on the basis of the financial value of the project, the scale of the infrastructure and the complexity around approvals. For this project, the complexity around approvals is quite significant due to the national parks, waterway barriers, the EPBC referral and clearing permits etc.
- MP noted that with regard to EIS, the project team hopes that the draft terms of reference (ToR) will be released to the public by the OCG within the next month. That will be open to the public for comment on what they believe should be included in the ToR.
- MP spoke to the approvals flowchart which is found on the OCG website. The green boxes mark where there is opportunity for public comment and the blue is where internal processes will be open.
- MP noted that the first time the public will be able to comment on the EIS is when the draft is released.

- MP spoke to what the OCG website will look like when the EIS is released for public comment. The OCG will release the project overview and will provide access to the documentation. The controlled action documentation may come further down the track. The State and Commonwealth may decide that it won't be a coordinated project through the existing bilateral agreement, which means a second EIS would need to be undertaken.
- MP noted that the OCG website will release the map for main works project area, as Queensland Hydro will provide the OCG with a GIS layer, which will be publicly available.
- MP spoke to the EPBC Act referral process and advised that the project must be referred due to the nationally threatened species and ecological communities are impacted by these works. Once the referral goes to the department, there is a chance that the department could reject the project at this stage. This is unlikely but it has happened in the past. Queensland Hydro is not trying to pre-empt the department, however, have provided a suggested pathway via the controlled action path under the bilateral agreement between the Commonwealth and the State. The bilateral agreement is an agreement between the Queensland and Australian governments to undertake an EIS process under the State Development and Public Works Planning Act 1971. Once that controlled action decision is made it will be publicly available, similar to what is available for the exploratory works however, the referral won't be as detailed as the exploratory works referral with the management plans and the offset strategy etc.
- MP spoke to the upcoming works that will commence between the September SRG meeting and the November SRG meeting. This will include:
 - Terrestrial ecology surveys including specialist surveys for key species.
 - Aquatic ecology (continuation). The project will engage a specialist.
 - Soil sampling. This will look at erosion risks and sedimentation, which is a key factor due to the fluctuation of the reservoir levels.
 - Contaminated land assessment, e.g. assessing some of the old mines which contain minerals that could be hazardous.
 - Water quality monitoring
 - Landscape and visual amenity
 - Groundwater monitoring. Assessing what the impact will be from a drill down point of view.
- **SRG comment:** there was a gold mine on the bank of Sandy Creek. Advised that the gold wasn't processed there, just mined.
- **Question from SRG:** is ground water monitoring quality and quantity? Does quality include analysis?
MP advised that it will be both. We will look at quality but also look at the levels.
MP advised that that work is currently going through the procurement phase. The exploratory works currently has some parameters, but the project team will work through with the consultant when they come on board. Once the project team and consultant decide on parameters, they will consult with the department to seek support.
- NS advised that initial samples have been taken from the ground water on the SEQ land.
- **Question from SRG:** is the water quality monitoring just to establish a baseline or will the monitoring continue across the project?
MP advised that the monitoring will both establish a baseline and will be a rolling process across all of the phases. Design the monitoring in a way will be a continuous program.
- **SRG comment:** language should reflect this.
MP advised that the project team needs to wait for the specialist to come on board to confirm but this is the aim.
- MP spoke to the Indigenous impact assessment which is not typically part of an EIS. This is being undertaken by Kabi Kabi with support from Griffith University. It will be part of the project's EIS documentation and will sit separately from the social impact assessment. Kabi Kabi are undertaking this process with the technical data provided by the project. The EIS ToR is very specific with what can and can't be included in the documentation. As an Indigenous impact assessment is not included, this is something the project team will need to work through with the OCG.
- **Question from SRG:** is there a native title determination of the site?
MP advised that this is ongoing at this stage. The idea was that a determination would be made in October 2023. There has been a challenge in one area but the tribunal has split the determination to allow another area to progress and the area that has been subject to a challenge can go through the relevant processes.
- **Question from SRG:** when the geotechnical drilling is undertaken, does it pick up the level of sediment that is on the base of the current dam?
- TG advised that the drilling is currently downstream of the dam. Everything that is found is logged.
- LM advised that there is a profile of the borehole to identify what the levels are.

- **Question from SRG:** is there drilling in the current base of the dam as well as below the dam?
LM advised drilling is not taking place at the current dam, only at the sites of the foundation for the new dams.
- **Question from SRG:** is the project going to pump the water up and down and stir up the sediment that is in the base of the current dam?
MP advised that this is being considered as part of the hydro assessments, geomorphology and water assessments.
- **SRG comment:** SRG member commented that when the sediment is disturbed affects the quality of the water. This disturbance changes the biological oxygenation in the water and this effects the aquatic species.
NS advised that the project has specialist companies engaged who specialise in water quality modelling and sediment transfer modelling so there will be a suite of modelling done on the hydrology, water quality, and sediment movement. There has been some preliminary bathymetry (using sounding and radar of the lakebed) and testing done at the lake but there will be further detailed assessment and modelling specifically looking at the issues the SRG has raised.
- TG advised that the current dam can not draw water off at different levels. It is the aim that the new dam will have this ability as it is more modern.
- **SRG comment:** the project team should attend to assess the water quality after a storm.
NS advised that event-based sampling has not yet been undertaken however, the water quality monitoring that has been discussed is going to provide this data to the project team.
MP advised that one of the consultants currently working on the project has extensive experience in this area and has flagged this as an area of importance. This is being seriously considered as a key challenge for the project.
- **Question from SRG:** will this information will be publicly available?
MP advised that the project team will know more once the expert consultants have been brought on board.
- **Question from SRG:** where was the photo of the lung fish taken?
MP couldn't confirm where the photo was taken. The photo was taken as part of the Hydrobiology report which would have documented where the lung fish was caught.
- MP advised the next steps for the next few months is to get the EPBC Act referral finalised and validated, EIS commencement, consultation with stakeholders and exploratory works.
- **Question from SRG:** this seems like a tight timeframe for 6 weeks?
MP advised that this is a general timeline with some items that will be undertaken but and not completed.
- **Question from SRG:** by increasing the size of the lower reservoir and the concrete structures, will the greenhouse gas emissions be factored into the analysis for the EIS process and the other processes?
MP advised this will be factored into the EIS process.
- **SRG comment:** the current Borumba Dam is already a 'gassy dam' and there has been ongoing greenhouse gas monitoring of the dam. By increasing the size of the lower dam is going to increase methane emission. Member believes this is a critical factor.
MP agreed and this issue has already been identified.
- **Question from SRG:** with regard to water quality, how are you going to manage acid sulphate soils within the increased inundation zone?
MP noted that there have been no acid sulphate soils identified at this stage.
- NS advised with regard to greenhouse gas emissions relating to increasing the reservoir size, early consideration is being undertaken understand how vegetation at the reservoirs would be managed as part of the project and how that relates to greenhouse gas emissions. Specialists need to come on board to look further into this issue.
- **Question from SRG:** in raising the lake, and adding 20m of height, will there be pre-clearing of this additional height?
MP advised this will be a discussion with the project team to understand risks, costs, logistics, ecology, and access.
- **Question from SRG (asked by independent facilitator):** a few SRG members have asked 'when will we see that' in relation to documents prepared by Queensland Hydro. When Queensland Hydro have draft documents prepared for submission, is it expected that this group will see all of these documents before submission?
MP advised that these documents will not be provided to the SRG prior to submission to the OCG as part of the EIS. These documents will be available for public comment as part of the OCG process. There may be opportunity for workshops on particular excerpts of the submissions, but this will be guided by the project team and SRG members.

- **Question from SRG:** have you secured offsets for the loss of national park?

MP advised the offset strategy is driven with the idea that the main works doesn't go ahead. There is enough land there for the exploratory works, but it is too early to estimate this for the main works. Based off 'worse case', there is enough land available in the region, but it will take multiple solutions. There are changes in commonwealth policy that factor into these offset solutions.

Stakeholder Engagement

- JS spoke to Industry and community engagement. The project hosted three industry briefings and a couple of community members attend the one in Gympie. The sessions took place in Brisbane, Caloundra and Gympie. If members would like to look at presentation, they are all on the Queensland Hydro website.
- JS spoke to the stakeholder enquiries. There were a number of events held across the SRC and GRC areas. The most popular discussion themes were procurement, ecology and biodiversity and general project overview.
- BG confirmed the most popular theme was supplier information and ecology and biodiversity and the stakeholder engagement team are looking at the best way to get back to the community with updates.
- JS spoke to community benefits. Over the last few years the project team have heard a lot of feedback asking 'what does this project mean for my community'. There are two types of benefits:
 - project benefits: things that must be done to complete the project but have a lasting benefit to the community. Eg. a road upgrade could be done as a requirement of the project but it has a dual benefit to community as well. Project benefits have enduring benefits and legacy.
 - community benefits: support from Queensland Hydro such as grant funding and sponsorship. Queensland Hydro already have some scholarships up and running.
- SRG members discussed possible community benefit ideas, including:
 - public services, health care, mental health, emergency services
 - improved recreation and tourism
 - upskilling of the workforce
 - integrated catchment management
 - Botanical Garden to be run by a consortium of local groups
 - Land be preserved
 - weather monitoring and providing improved local observations to the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM).
- **SRG comment:** Snowy Hydro 2.0 has had issues and believes the project didn't do their research correctly. Believes the Borumba project is proceeding too quickly and would like to see that Queensland Hydro take learnings from the failures at Snowy Hydro 2.0. It would show the community that there have been considerations made from these learnings.

LM advised that learnings have been taken from Snowy Hydro and from projects all around the world. Noted the desire for those learnings to be made clear to the community. Advised that the Queensland Hydro team visited Snowy Hydro 2.0 to see their project in early 2023.

TG noted that the perception of the project timeline is important.
- **SRG comment:** suggest the project put regular updates into the local papers to keep the community informed. BG advised that community members can sign up for project email updates on the Queensland Hydro website but took the suggestion of newspaper updates on board.

Next steps

- LP asked the SRG members to provide their key takeaways from the meeting, which were:
 - Queensland Hydro has signed a lease for a building in Imbil which will be an information centre and office.
 - considering potential community benefits and framing how this might be delivered. There are links to the social impact process.
 - there is a long way to go in the approvals and planning.
 - Queensland Hydro are willing to change positions based on findings. For example, the change in the position of the portals to minimise environmental impacts.
 - there will be an opportunity to comment on key matters as part of the EIS preparation and formal public notification process.
 - Queensland Hydro are considering and discussing key matters and the SRG feels heard.
 - Job opportunities
 - The project is a once in a generation opportunity for the region which will provide skills and opportunities for young people.

- **Question from SRG:** will there be an update on when the SRG would have a site tour.
LM advised that this tour will take place once the relevant supporting works and safety requirements are completed and worked through, which is anticipated in Q4 2023/Q1 2024.
- BG spoke to the identified sub-groups to be investigated:
 - Roads and transport
 - Community benefits
 - Recreation
- MP asked if the SRG members would find benefit in another extraordinary SRG meeting when the EPBC Act referral comes back? JS advised that an extraordinary SRG meeting would be an online meeting due to the short notice.
SRG provided support for calling an extraordinary meeting to update on the EPBC Act referral when it is finalised.
- **Question from SRG:** will mobile phone reception be improved as part of the project?
TG advised that there will be upgrades.
- **Question from SRG:** when will Queensland Hydro be able to give guarantee and assurance that the community will be able to use the recreation facilities at the Lake as they are now? Suggested that Queensland Hydro provide a public statement about this
LM advised that there will be access but Queensland Hydro are investigating alternative routes to get to the boat ramp and there may be some timeframes when there could be closures at the dam to facilitate safety. LM committed to looking into making a public statement regarding this matter.
- **Question from SRG:** will the hydrological modelling will be released? If yes, when?
BG advised the updated Water Plan (Mary Basin) sits with the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water and Queensland Hydro are continuing to provide feedback that stakeholders wish to see those plans to this Department.
- **SRG comment:** thankful for the in-person consultation of the SRG meetings. Noted that the way the Borumba Project team conduct the SRG meetings is the best way.
- **SRG comment:** there has been a request for MRCC delegates for a site visit but noted that the group will have to wait for the safety works to be completed.

Meeting closed 12:03pm
