



MEDIA RELEASE

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Approved by: Cr Kevin Beatty, Chair of Central NSW Joint Organisation, Mayor of Cabonne Council

Widespread disappointment with the Wyangala Dam decision

“The communities of Central NSW are understandably more than disappointed by the announcement today that the raising of the wall at Wyangala Dam will not proceed,” said Cr Kevin Beatty, Mayor of Cabonne and Chair of Central NSW Joint Organisation of Councils.

“The Lachlan Valley has the most insecure water supply of any catchment in NSW. At the same time the flooding down the Lachlan has been extreme over the past decade. We know the Wyangala project will improve outcomes for our communities from drought and flood,” said Cr Kevin Beatty.

“This region has known since its national award-winning work in 2009 that more storage is needed to secure towns and other productive water users in Central NSW,” said Cr Kevin Beatty.

“Concurrent with the announcement, the Business Case for raising the wall at Wyangala has been provided. It is good that the NSW Government has at last provided the Business Case as it provides an insight into the assumptions being made. Perhaps the most insightful of these is that during times of drought towns ‘never run out of water.’ This advice is at odds with the lived experience of the millennial drought where both Forbes and Cowra were given day zero advice on cease to flow. What does this mean? It means the benefit of avoiding the costs of closing towns was not included in the cost benefit analysis. We know this benefit changed the Benefit Cost Ratio significantly when modelled in Bathurst – this is extremely unfortunate and something we must overcome in any strategic work going forward,” said Cr Kevin Beatty.

“This region agrees with the Business Case recommendation that an expansion of the regional water grid is required, we have known this since 2009,” said Cr Kevin Beatty.

“We also know that a multi-source supply is needed and quite frankly a 50 year plan for the Lachlan should have been on the table a decade ago. This plan needs to offer hope to our communities that solutions will be implemented beyond the electoral cycle,” said Cr Kevin Beatty.

“We know that there will be more severe storms and drought due to climate change and that increased storage for the Lachlan will be needed at some point in time. In the mean time, this region will continue to work with the NSW Government on all options for improved water security, however we seek to do business differently so that the actual costs and benefits are calculated,” said Cr Kevin Beatty.

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