

# Media release



## FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

**DATE: Tuesday, October 17, 2006**

### **BALLARAT'S FUTURE WATER SUPPLIES SECURED BY MAJOR BRACKS GOVERNMENT ACTION PLAN**

A new pipeline to the Goulburn River water system, groundwater and recycling initiatives are part of a \$204 million water package that will secure sustainable water supplies for Ballarat, Premier Steve Bracks announced today.

Speaking at Ballarat's White Swan Reservoir, Mr Bracks said the Ballarat water strategy was the result of an extensive 18 month consultation process with the community, industry, local government, and water and catchment management authorities.

Mr Bracks said the centrepiece was the 'Goldfields Superpipe' that would connect Ballarat to the Goulburn system via the Bendigo pipeline.

"The pipeline will connect Ballarat's White Swan Reservoir to Bendigo's Lake Eppalock, which is currently being connected to the Goulburn Murray system," he said.

"The 'Goldfields Superpipe' will provide water security for 50 years to our major regional cities of Ballarat and Bendigo.

"It is a visionary project that is vital if our key regional centres are to survive and thrive.

"Without the Goldfields Superpipe both Bendigo and Ballarat will dry up and run out of water if the low flows of recent years continue."

Mr Bracks said the Ballarat section of the pipeline would cost approximately \$180 million and be fast-tracked for completion by the end of 2008.

"The Bracks Government will contribute \$71 million towards the cost and Central Highlands Water \$19 million," he said.

"We are seeking a contribution from the Federal Government of \$90 million under the National Water Initiative based on a 50-50 share from State and Federal sources.

"The Superpipe will provide 10,000 megalitres (10 billion litres) initially for Ballarat, potentially increasing up to 18,000 megalitres in the future.

“Water will be purchased from willing sellers in the Goulburn System, which has an allocation of about one million megalitres – meaning that Ballarat would be accessing less than two per cent of the system.”

Mr Bracks said, as well as the ‘Goldfields Superpipe’, other actions for Ballarat included:

- Conservation and efficiency programs for homes and industry to save 2,500 megalitres by 2015 at a cost of \$6 million, for example our 3 Star showerheads program;
- Interconnect Cosgrave Reservoir – completed - to provide 290-450 megalitres;
- Interconnect Newlyn Reservoir by 2007 to provide 320-350 megalitres at a cost of \$1.9 million;
- Groundwater to be pumped from Cardigan Aquifer using a new bore in Ballarat by mid 2007, providing 1700 megalitres at a cost of \$9 million (planned for use until 2010); and
- Recycled water to be used to replace river water in Lake Wendouree and for industry by 2009 to provide 800 megalitres (with a further 200 per year by 2015) at a cost of \$7 million.

Water Minister John Thwaites said the package would increase Ballarat’s water supplies by at least 14,000 megalitres per year by 2015, meeting the challenges posed by population growth and climate change.

Mr Thwaites said on the basis of inflows to Ballarat’s water storages over the last 10 years, Greater Ballarat would require an extra 7,800 megalitres by 2015, 10,800 megalitres by 2030 and 16,800 megalitres by 2055.

“This winter, inflows to Ballarat’s reservoirs were only about 300 megalitres compared to normal inflows in this period of 14,800 megalitres,” he said.

“Unless Ballarat connects to the Goulburn system, it is likely to run out of water if the current low inflows continue.

“Overall the package released today will increase Ballarat’s water supplies by up to 25,000 megalitres per year by 2055.”

Mr Thwaites said importantly the strategy also delivered water in the short term, with connection to the Newlyn reservoir and Cardigan Aquifer next year, adding 2,600 megalitres.

The strategy also caters for the needs of the environment, returning 6,000 megalitres of environmental flows to the Moorabool River by 2015.

“The Moorabool River is one of the most stressed rivers in Victoria and we need to improve its water quality to protect its native flora and fauna.”

The Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy is part of the Government’s *Our Water Our Future* action plan to protect Victoria’s water for the next 50 years.

---

[Copyright](#) | [Disclaimer](#) | [Privacy](#)