The Hon Lisa Neville MP

Minister for Water

Monday, 27 May 2019

SECURING VICTORIA’S WATER FOR COMMUNITIES AND FARMERS

Households, communities and farmers will have better water security through modern and efficient water management – reducing pressure on drinking water supplies and making Victoria’s catchments more sustainable.

The *Victorian Budget 2019/20* includes $12.1 million to support farmers and make better use of our water in the city, as the Andrews Labor Government plans for the water security challenges such as population growth and climate change.

Important local projects that have been identified through our Integrated Water Management Framework, such as stormwater harvesting and recycling water to irrigate parks and sporting grounds, will receive $6 million – supporting jobs, agriculture and community health and wellbeing.

These projects complement the Labor Government’s 125-gigalitre order for 2019-20 from the Desalination Plant to support the Victorian water grid and provide security of supply to millions of households and businesses.

A healthy Yarra River helps support a healthy Victoria – that’s why the Budget includes $5.1 million for projects identified in the Yarra River Strategic Plan, improving the health and liveability of the Yarra catchment and supporting Traditional Owners to be involved in waterway management.

This will also fund the ongoing delivery of the *Waterways of the West* program to improve the health of local waterways, rivers and catchments such as the Maribyrnong River, Werribee River and Moonee Ponds Creek.

The Budget also responds to continuing drought conditions across Victoria including $1 million for emergency water supply access – announced as part of our Drought Relief Package earlier this year.

Unlike the former Liberal Government, the Labor Government continues to invest all funds from the Environmental Contribution Levy back into the sustainable use and management of water.

This Budget builds on the Labor Government’s record $649 million investment in waterway health and infrastructure projects, which are expanding the water grid and modernising irrigation systems across regional and rural Victoria.

**Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Lisa Neville**

“Water is critical to our communities, our economy, and our environment. We’re making practical investments to support healthier waterways and liveable communities throughout Victoria.”

*“We need to plan for the future and act now to deal with the challenges of climate change and population growth. It’s about being smarter with our water and getting the most out of this precious resource.”*