

Tuesday 19th May, 2009

HOWARD WELCOMES LAKE PIPE PROJECT

The State Member for Ballarat East, Geoff Howard MP, today welcomed the Premier's announcement that \$650,000 will be provided by the Brumby State Government to assist with restoring water to Lake Wendouree and providing irrigation water to Ballarat sporting grounds.

Not only will the pipeline see water flow from the Lihir Goldmine to Lake Wendouree, but also to irrigate City Oval, Trekardo Park, Redan Oval and other sporting venues along Pleasant Street. It will also be able to be used to irrigate trees on Sturt Street, a great use of the treated waste water from the goldmine.

Mr Howard worked hard lobbying Jacinta Allan, Minister for Regional and Rural Development to secure the funding and project for Ballarat.

Speaking in Parliament recently, Mr Howard called on the Brumby Labor Government to fund the proposed Lihir Gold Ltd Ballarat to Lake Wendouree Pipe Project to further enhance the Lake Water Supply Project.

Mr Howard said "The project, if constructed, would provide steady inflows to the lake and assist in allowing recreational aquatic activities to return over time. Since 1864 when the first reeds were cut from the lake bed with scythes Lake Wendouree has been a recreational hub in Ballarat. From bird watching to boat race the lake has provided all residents with a beautiful reserve in the heart of town."

The project will see water pumped from the Lihir Goldmine in South Ballarat to Lake Wendouree and follows discussion between Lihir Gold and Ballarat City Council about the possibility of using water pumped from the mine to Lake Wendouree.

Following appropriate treatment of the water it is proposed to pump it via a pipeline along Pleasant Street past Trekardo Park, the Redan Oval, City Oval and other sporting venues along the way allowing for these venues to be irrigated. The proposed pipeline would also allow for further irrigation of historic trees on Sturt Street and in the Botanical Gardens precinct.

"Lake Wendouree is a social hub for the people of Ballarat and a huge source of income for the City. That is why it is crucial that the Brumby Labor Government move to support this project to see it implemented. This infrastructure project would bring forward the opportunity to see the lake full, from the current 5 year plan to seeing the lake full within 3 years helping ensure a bright and vibrant future for the lake precinct and I ask the government to support it," Mr Howard said.

"I commend Lihir Gold and Ballarat City Council for working together on this innovative and practical project which could be of great benefit to many Ballarat residents."