

Media Release

17 December 2024

Investing in safer water for Wentworth Shire

Locals and holidaymakers in Wentworth, Buronga, Gol Gol, and Dareton are one step closer to locking in safer and more secure water thanks to \$472,000 in co-funding from the NSW Government and Wentworth Shire Council.

The investment will enable Council to identify the best options for upgrading critical infrastructure that delivers both drinking and non-drinking water to the four towns.

It's a significant move towards boosting water quality, reliability, and drought resilience for the region's 4,100 people and supporting the growth of outback tourism in an area where the Darling and Murray Rivers meet.

The new funding includes:

- \$161,250 from the NSW Government and \$53,750 from Council to deliver an options study and concept design for upgrading Wentworth's water treatment plant and raw water pump station
- \$192,750 from the NSW Government and \$64,250 from Council to deliver an options study and concept design for upgrading Gol Gol's water treatment plant and the raw water pump station supplying Dareton and Namatjira

Currently, Wentworth relies on a single pump station to deliver both drinking and non-drinking water to its 1,100 residents and a growing number of visitors.

But the ageing infrastructure, which was operating at its peak during the early 1990s, is now in need of a major upgrade to meet modern water treatment standards and demands, particularly during dry conditions.

Meanwhile, in nearby Gol Gol, the water treatment plant services about 3,000 people in the town and in neighbouring Buronga, Dareton and the indigenous community of Namatjira.

But parts of the plant are in dire need of replacement or repair, and the infrastructure has reached its capacity so will be unable to meet the towns' water needs as they grow.

The raw water pump station delivering non-drinking water also requires an urgent upgrade.

The new funding will allow Council to launch detailed investigations across four schemes to find solutions and develop early planning works, including environmental reviews, geotechnical investigations, site surveys, and concept designs.

Options will aim to enhance water treatment process reliability, efficiency, and automation, reduce operating costs, and extend the life of major equipment.

The development work is due to be completed by June 2025.

The investment is the latest from the NSW Government's Safe and Secure Water Program which supports more than \$1 billion worth of projects across the state, with over 260 projects in various stages of delivery.

NSW DCCEEW Executive Director of Development Lisa Hingerty said:

"This is about safeguarding water for Wentworth, Buronga, Gol Gol, Dareton and Namatjira, and it's vital we get the ball rolling on long-overdue infrastructure upgrades.

"This investment will help Council examine all the challenges for these five communities and find the best remedies to ensure water infrastructure is fit for the 21st century.

"We want to support the region into the future and as more and as more visitors come spend their holidays in Wentworth Shire. I'm delighted to see this work get going."

Wentworth Shire Mayor Daniel Linklater said:

"We are pleased to partner with the NSW Government to secure the future water supplies.

"The upgrade of pump stations and water treatment plants is essential to ensure the continued delivery of safe and reliable water to our residents and visitors.

"This much-needed infrastructure upgrade addresses our aging assets and represents a significant achievement in collaboration with the NSW Government, securing a sustainable future for our community.

"This funding is crucial for initiating preliminary assessments, which will enable us to develop and implement effective long-term solutions."

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