

EnergyAustralia Lithgow Region Community Consultative Committee

FINAL Meeting Minutes - 18 July 2023

Attendees:

- Steve Marshall - EnergyAustralia
- Ben Eastwood - EnergyAustralia
- Ben McClements – EnergyAustralia
- Kane Hoskins – EnergyAustralia (Observer)
- Jarvis Lulham – EnergyAustralia (Observer)
- Michael de Vink - EnergyAustralia
- Geoff Gay – EnergyAustralia
- Peter Lee - EnergyAustralia
- Rob Setter – EnergyAustralia (Observer)
- Julie Favell
- Rob Cluff
- Jim Whitty
- Rob White
- Cr Cass Coleman
- Cr Maree Statham
- Jamie Giokaris

Not present:

- Alex Preema
- Aunty Helen Riley

Apologies:

- Mick Hanly

Chair:

- Brendan Blakeley

Notetaker:

- Samantha Barnett

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
1	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting began at 5:04 pm • The Chair welcomed all members and acknowledged country. • The Chair presented the agenda and noted an apology from Mick Hanly. 	
2	<p>Actions from Previous Meeting</p> <p><i>Update on EnergyAustralia's feral animal control programs</i> <i>See slide 6 of the presentation.</i></p> <p><u>Key points of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The design for the pig traps has been completed and they should be ready by the end of the month. • Controlled shoots are due to occur on the 9th/10th/11th of August. <p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Members reported an increase in pigs across the area.</i> • <i>Aerial shooting could make it easier to locate and track the pigs in rough country.</i> 	<p>Ben will provide additional information to Rob White when trapping is underway.</p> <p>EA Corporate to respond to question in</p>

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification was sought as to the location and size of the traps. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ben McClements noted that an experienced contractor has been appointed and advice was also sought from Local Land Services. The traps would be in areas where there is evidence of pig activity. Smaller traps that hold 3-4 pigs were seen as more suitable however they would require more frequent monitoring on a daily basis. <p><i>Update on Blue Green Algae (BGA) at Lake Lyell</i> See slide 7 of the presentation.</p> <p><u>Key points of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A video by WaterNSW about monitoring algal blooms was presented • A table from the WaterNSW Annual Water Quality Monitoring Report 2021-22 was presented. It showed the above threshold algal levels in the upper and lower Cox River compared to other locations across NSW. The table indicated Lake Lyell and the Coxs River were midrange for algal occurrences above the BGA threshold. <p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification was sought on how upper and lower reaches were defined. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Steve responded that the locations were determined by WaterNSW • There was a query about a previous question on notice as to whether EnergyAustralia has ruled out using Mt Piper for generation of power from waste when coal-fired operations cease given the station is within the area identified by the NSW Government. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Steve noted there was no change from the last meeting. EnergyAustralia has decided not to proceed with the Energy from Waste proposal of a few years back. Given the closure is over 15 years away EnergyAustralia is not in a position to talk about future uses at this point. <p>Addendum: <u>The CCC member has requested that EnergyAustralia corporate provide a more detailed response to the following question at the next meeting. It is understood that EnergyAustralia has stated it will not be involved in Energy from Waste Projects while Mt Piper is in operation. However, the question remains if Mt Piper went into “caretaker mode”, given it is in a precinct the NSW Government has identified as able to accommodate Energy from Waste generation, would EnergyAustralia consider leasing part of the Mt Piper site to an Energy from Waste operator?</u></p>	addendum to this section.
3	<p>Site Safety See Slides 8, 9, and 10 of the presentation.</p> <p><u>Key points of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had been 1 restrictive duties injury this month and 1 lost time injury last month • The total injury frequency rate target is 4.78, and the target rate is 4.73 	
4	<p>Water Management See slide 12 of the presentation.</p> <p><u>Key points of presentation</u></p>	Provide an aerial plan showing land

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oberon Dam is at 100% • Total Active Storage is at 96.3% with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lake Lyell at 99.6 - Lake Wallace at 105.3% - Thompson Creek Dam at 91.6% • The Water Treatment Facility is operating reliably. <p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are the storages so high because Mount Piper was not using as much water as predicted?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The station is taking water from the water recycling facility, but the high dam levels are mainly due to the high rainfall at the end of 2022. Presently daily use of water from the treatment facility is 0.3 Megalitre and 0.8 Megalitre over summer. • <i>Are there any environmental releases occurring at the moment?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ These are undertaken in accordance with our water licence, but currently more than the minimum is being released as Lake Lyell is spilling. • <i>A CCC member inquired as to the size of the area of land where Mt Piper operates.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It was agreed that a plan showing the station-related land would be provided at the next meeting. • Addendum: The Chair suggests that this includes EnergyAustralia's land around Lake Lyell 	<p>around Mt Piper and the ash repositories that EA owns. Including Lake Lyell</p>
5	<p>Market Update</p> <p><i>No notes were taken due to the commercially sensitive nature of the information.</i></p> <p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Two members raised concerns about the ability of renewables to provide affordable and secure baseload electricity.</i> • <i>Is any coal being brought in from Clarence mine?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mt Piper is taking fines from Clarence to help increase the energy content of the overall coal supply. 	
6	<p>People</p> <p>See slide 18 of the presentation.</p> <p><u>Key points of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the last meeting, there have been several new hires such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Liaison Officer (for the project hub) - Graduate Environment Officer - Fixed Term Purchasing Officer covering leave • Further planned hires include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - QA Officer - Planning and Scheduling Leader - Workshop Team Leader - Reliability Engineer - Boiler Engineer 	
7	<p>Pine Dale Mine and Enhance Place</p> <p>See slide 20 of the slide presentation.</p> <p><u>Key points of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no non-compliances at the Pine Dale Mine. • There were no community complaints recorded for Pine Dale Mine. 	

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was rehabilitation maintenance performed on a small area of topsoil. • The application to relinquish Mining Lease 1520, 1442, and 1458 has been approved and will be formalised by the Department in the next few months. 	
	<p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has any of this land been allocated to native rehabilitation.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There has been land allocated for Native Vegetation close to the mining area, but a lot of the surrounding area has been reinstated as pasture as this is what the landowner wanted. There is a Bursaria on the northern side of the mining area. • <i>Has there been any monitoring of the rehabilitated area post bushfires.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monitoring has stopped as mining has now stopped, and the land is no longer impacted by mining activities. • <i>Is there a requirement to monitor the land as further future mining is intended.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If mining were ever to restart, then the need for new studies and monitoring would be required to be developed. 	
8	<p>Ash Repositories</p>	
	<p>No notes were taken due to the commercially sensitive nature of the information.</p>	
	<p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A concern was noted about ongoing leaching of water from the ash repository into local waterways.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Capping the repository was the best way of stopping surface water from percolating through the ash repository and leaching into groundwater. GHD has been assisting EA with the design of the Mt Piper Ash Repository. Steve reminded CCC members that the interception project was deemed not feasible due to the high iron levels in the groundwater which meant it was not possible to treat the water through the Mt Piper Water Treatment System. The best way to reduce leaching is to stop water from entering the ash repository altogether. It is hoped that capping will be completed in late 2024. 	
9	<p>Community Update</p>	
	<p>See slides 24 -29 of the presentation.</p>	
	<p><u>Key points of presentation</u></p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 applications for community grants were received in round 1 2023, and 4 of them were successful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coerwull Public School – Supply of fitness equipment. - Mitchell Conservatorium – Free guitar lessons for youth in need. - Mountains Youth Services – Training youth to help identify peers experiencing mental health issues. - Portland Touch Football Association – Construction of community BBQ Area. • On May 29, Mt Piper celebrated National Reconciliation Week with a Smoking Ceremony, followed by a flag-raising ceremony • EnergyAustralia supported the following events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lithgow Chamber Business Expo 	

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Anzac Day Wreath laying at Portland - Lithglow - Portland Foundation Twilight Markets - Portland Central School – Healthy Harold, Life Education Van • EnergyAustralia will also support these upcoming events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Daffodils at Rydal - Halloween • Staff at Mt Piper have raised funds for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Variety Bash - Jeans for Genes Day - Biggest Morning Tea - Tania Hegglett – A former employee and a local who is fighting cancer. • Mt Piper has been working with Nannas Touch Community Connections Lithgow Inc Soup Kitchen which will open in a few weeks. A press release for the opening will be in local media. 	
	<i>Workplace Giving</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A video on workplace giving was played • Since 2018, EA has given over \$2M • Can Assist (Lithgow) has received over \$33 000 	
	<i>CCC Member discussion</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Mayor noted gratitude for the donations provided to Can Assist and passed on thanks from the families who had been supported by the organisation.</i> 	
10	Project Update: Mt Piper Battery Energy Storage	
	See pages 31- 32 of the presentation.	
	<u>Key points of presentation</u>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SEARs were issued by DPE on 23/12/22 • EIS studies are still being completed and are scheduled to be exhibited in 2024. • The area proposed has already been cleared for Mt Piper, so the expected social and environmental impact is minimal. • The area has been previously mined so geotechnical investigation and soil testing will be required. • Lithgow Council is assessing the application for development consent for subsurface investigations. • An Archaeological survey of the site was completed on 27/04/23. • The procurement process for batteries has been initiated. 	
	<i>CCC Member discussion</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How big are the batteries?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The battery is comprised of a series of container-sized modules all linked up. With the Tesla battery in SA four modules are needed to store a megawatt of power. The site area proposed for Mt Piper is around 40 hectares. • <i>Do the batteries require a lot of maintenance?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A fair bit of maintenance will be required as the containers need to be regularly monitored and checked for dust. 	

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<p>Project in Focus: Pumped Hydro See slides 34-43 of the presentation.</p> <p><u>Key points of presentation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EnergyAustralia is continuing through the feasibility phase of the pumped hydro storage facility. This process is due to conclude at the end of 2024. • There are Geotech Reports from the first round of investigations with the technical specialists and will be used to inform the detailed concept design. • There is a DA modification before Council to place additional monitoring bores within the investigation area to assist in building a detailed groundwater model across the area of interest. We are also looking to place four more bores within the existing geotechnical disturbance footprint. • Scoping report is presently being revised to respond to some sections put forward by DPE. • We are hoping once this is done that DPE will issue the SEARs. Our program is targeting us to receive the SEARS in August. With the EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) taking around a year to be prepared. • EnergyAustralia will consult with the local community throughout the planning processes. In addition, the EIS will be placed on exhibition for public comment as well. • Public participation will be consistent with DPE requirements. The NSW public has a right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be notified of development applications. - Comment on development applications. - Appeal a decision in court. • EnergyAustralia recently went to 244 houses around the Pumped Hydro investigation area to discuss the project. They spoke to 80% of residents. Around ½ wanted to have conversations. The conversations ranged from around 20 minutes to 1 1/2 hours. • The modification to Geotechnical Investigation Program was submitted on 12/04/23 and is still awaiting council recommendation. • ACCIONA McConnell Dowell has been working on the early engineering design since February. • An update on the initial concept design is coming soon and is expected to be positive in terms of the visual impacts. <p><u>CCC Member discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are social impacts being looked at in the EIS? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There will be studies done to determine the social impact. We are also proposing to do some workshops with local tourism and recreational organisations over the next few months • <i>When will a more detailed concept be released?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ EnergyAustralia is working on that at the moment. The full concept design will hopefully be ready later this year. We believe the revised concept design will respond to a number of issues that have been raised to date. • <i>Will all study results be included in the EIS?</i> 	<p>Update to be provided to CCC when Scoping Report and SEARs are publicly available</p>

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Yes, a wide range of study reports will be included in the EIS. The SEARs will outline the studies that will be required and the issues the studies will need to address and the information that will need to be provided. ● <i>Just how likely is it that community feedback will influence project design?</i> ○ 100% likely. Community feedback has already had an impact on the revised concept design. ● <i>A CCC member asked what the right to appeal a decision in court would entail.</i> ○ It was answered that if the community feels strong enough, they can appeal a decision on planning grounds in the Land and Environment Court. ● <i>A CCC member asked if the right to be notified meant they had to sign up for notification on the site.</i> ○ The Department will directly notify people within an area they determine. People can also register to receive updates on major projects and applications on the Department’s website. Alerts Planning Portal - Department of Planning and Environment (nsw.gov.au) ● <i>More information was requested about the turbines and the area of the project.</i> ● Currently, the exact number is unknown as we are still in the early phases of design. There are likely to be multiple turbines. The area of the project hasn’t changed. ● <i>A CCC member asked about the construction process and the large amount of space that would be needed to complete the construction.</i> ○ The construction process will require roads, construction, storage, and laydown areas. These will all be outlined in a Construction Environmental Management Plan. ● <i>A CCC member showed a photo of the area for construction from the EnergyAustralia website and expressed concern that the entrance would be opposite Thomas Mitchell Drive.</i> ○ When the design and locations of the station, storage dam, etc have been finalised we will be able to look at what infrastructure is required to temporarily support construction. ● <i>Are more changes likely to be made to the concept design?</i> ○ The EIS will “test” the concept design if changes need to be made to reduce impacts or if there are improvements that are possible then it could change. It will be an iterative process; we are in the early stages of the project and we will need to test and adapt solutions as we move through. We haven’t yet even determined whether the station will be in a cavern or in an above-ground location by the edge of the lake. ● <i>Will there be a cut-off level to make sure that Lake Lyell is not drained.</i> ○ For pumped hydro to work we need to maintain the lake within a certain range. The intake pipe will be set at a certain level. If in drought the water goes down below that level then operations would need to temporarily cease until the storage level increases. 	

Item	Discussion Point	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How much of the Farmers Creek arm of the lake will be dredged. There are concerns about how this will impact platypus habitat.</i> ○ Some dredging of the arm of the lake leading to Farmers Creek will need to take place. Farmers Creek is not on EnergyAustralia's land and the creek itself will not be dredged. Initial indications are that the dredged area in the arm will be around 250 metres long. The impact on platypus will be assessed as part of the EIS process and monitoring would need to be put in place. • <i>A CCC member calculated that at the rate of generation, they would be pumping out an Olympic swimming pool every 16.5 seconds.</i> 	
11	<p data-bbox="339 602 587 629">General Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is it possible to sell the salt from the dehydrated brine?</i> • EnergyAustralia has someone who is always looking out for new markets for waste materials. There is currently no market or buyers for the salts at this time. • <i>Where is the NuRoc proposal up to?</i> • NuRoc is a couple of months away from commissioning their plant and commencing operations. • <i>The LEC has participated in a new program to control Indian Mynahs and asked if EnergyAustralia would be interested in being part of the project.</i> • Ben confirmed EA would be interested and noted he would be the best EA contact in the first instance for Julie to discuss this opportunity further. 	<p data-bbox="1259 602 1430 775">EA to provide and an update on NuRoc for the next meeting.</p> <p data-bbox="1259 819 1430 987">Julie to contact EA to progress Indian Mynah program</p>
12	<p data-bbox="339 1189 480 1216">Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next meeting is scheduled for the 5th of December. • The chair thanked members for their contribution to the CCC and closed the meeting at 6:41. 	

EnergyAustralia Lithgow Region

Community Consultative Committee

18 July 2023

Steve Marshall – Head of Mt Piper



EnergyAustralia
LIGHT THE WAY

Acknowledgement of Country

I would like to acknowledge
the Wiradjuri people as the
Traditional Owners of the land
on which we meet today, and
pay my respects to their
Elders past, present and
future



Artwork by Wiradjuri Elder and Mingingan Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation
representative Aunty Sharon Riley

Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Acknowledgement of Country
3. Actions from Previous Meeting
4. Site Update from EnergyAustralia
5. Project Update – Battery Storage
6. Project in Focus - Pumped Hydro
7. General Discussion
8. Meeting Close



Welcome and Introductions

Actions from Previous Meeting

Actions from Previous Meeting

Feral animals –Lake Lyell – Discuss feral pig trapping program at next CCC meeting – what is the plan?

- *Pest management action plan has been developed as a result of Baseline Pest Species Report.*
- *Trap design has been completed. Construction of the traps will be completed once materials arrive, which is anticipated by end of July. Once construction of traps are completed, we will work closely with Local Lands Council on placement and monitoring. Considering using camera technology to monitor traps.*
- *3 night controlled shooting exercise has been organised utilising a specialised vendor. To be carried out on 9th, 10th and 11th August. This will be mainly targeting pigs, dogs and foxes.*

Actions from Previous Meeting

Discuss frequency of blue-green algae alerts at Lake Lyell at next meeting- Ben

WaterNSW is responsible for testing and notifying about blue-green algal blooms in the river systems and storages that it manages. Video link: [How WaterNSW manages algal blooms - YouTube](#)

WaterNSW's role in algae management

- Co-ordinate and support Regional Algal Co-ordinating Committees (RACCs).
- Contribute to the State Algal Advisory Group (SAAG)
- Contribute to the Regional Algal Management Guidelines
- Manage algal communications including hotline, media enquiries, website and briefings to Minister
- Monitor rivers and storages to service those aspects of the RACC's reporting requirements, in accordance with the RACC Guidelines and WaterNSW Service Provision Deed

WaterNSW Annual Water Quality Monitoring Report 2021-22 link: [Monitoring and reporting - WaterNSW](#)

EnergyAustralia role in Algae Management

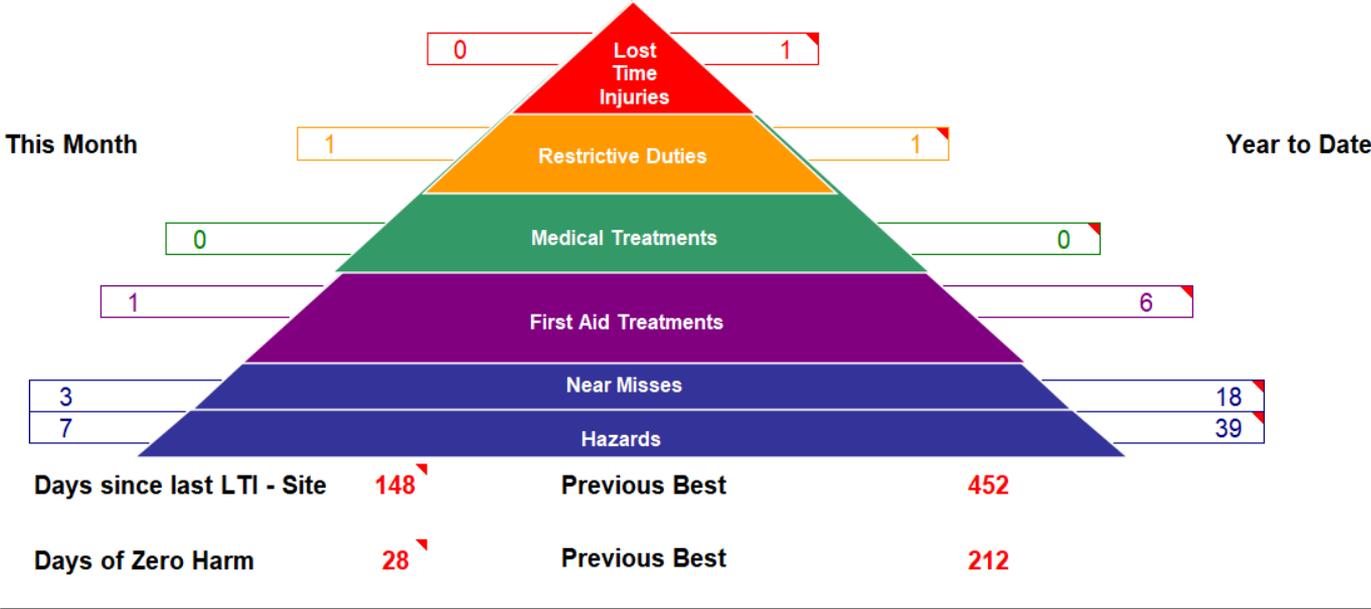
- Collecting and analysing water samples in the Upper Cox River Catchment and reporting results to regulators including Lithgow City Council and WaterNSW
- Participate as a stakeholder in the RACC co-ordinated by WaterNSW
- Support any response measures under the direction of WaterNSW

Site Safety

Site Safety – 2023

June 2023

EnergyAustralia NSW - Safety Performance

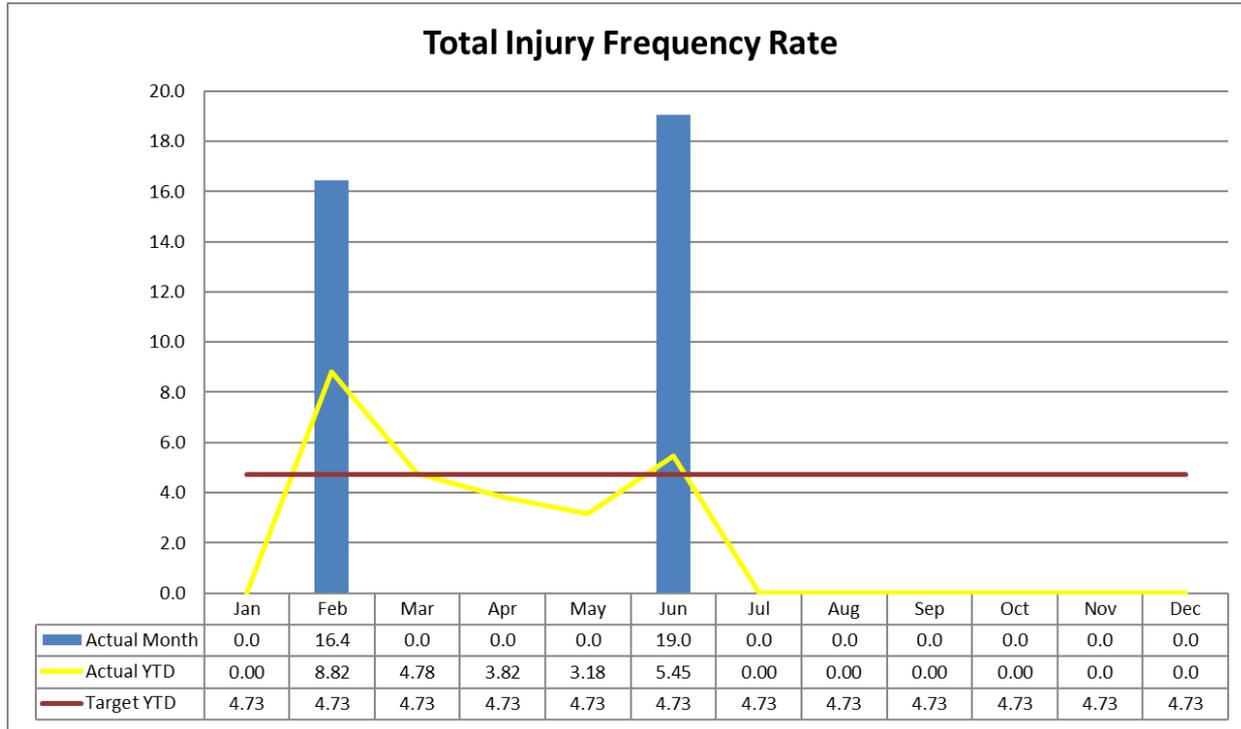


Site Safety 2023

YTD – TIFR (As of 31st March 2023)

Actual = 4.78

Target = 4.73



Water Management

Update on Water Management

- Oberon Dam level is at 100%
- Total Active Storage is at 96.3% with:
 - Lake Lyell at 99.6%
 - Lake Wallace at 105.3%
 - Thompsons Creek Dam at 91.6%
- No alert for blue-green algae at Lake Lyell
- Riparian release from TCR is ongoing, assist level management



Market Update

Operation in the Market

Operations (Site) Update

Operations update – June



Operations update – June



People

- Community Liaison Officer – The Project Hub
- Fixed term Purchasing Officer to cover leave
- Graduate Environment Officer
- In Progress;
 - QA Officer
 - Planning and Scheduling Leader
 - Workshop Team Leader
 - Reliability Engineer
 - Boiler Engineer

Pine Dale Mine and Enhance Place

Pine Dale Mine and Enhance Place

- No non compliances at the Pine Dale Mine
- No community complaints recorded for Pine Dale Mine
- Monthly reports as required under the Pine Dale EPL have been uploaded onto the EnergyAustralia website
- A small area of rehabilitation maintenance has been completed with the addition of topdressing material and pasture seeding
- Continues in care and maintenance
- Future mining activities continue to be evaluated

Lease Relinquishment

- The application to relinquish Mining Lease 1520, 1442 and 1458 has been approved by DPE – Resource Regulator



Lamberts North Ash Placement Project

Lamberts North Ash Placement Project

April to July 2023

Community Update

Community

Community Grants – Round 1, 2023

- 11 applications received
- 4 applications successful:-
 - Coerwull Public School - Physical Fitness for Students – supply of fitness equipment
 - Mitchell Conservatorium – Chords of Connection – Free Guitar Lessons for Youth in Need
 - Mountains Youth Services (MYST) – Teen Mental Health First Aid Training – training of Year 7/8 and Year 10 students to provide the students with knowledge and skills to identify when their friends might be going through a difficult time and how to approach and support their peers who are experiencing mental health issues.
 - Portland Touch Football Association – Construction of Community BBQ Area – Saville Park

Community

National Reconciliation Week

On 29 May we celebrated National Reconciliation Week with a Smoking Ceremony performed by Aunty Sharon from the Wiradjuri clan, followed by a flag raising ceremony and morning tea.



Community

Supported Events:

- Lithgow Chamber Business Expo
- Anzac Day Wreath Laying at Portland
- Lithglow
- Portland Foundations Twilight Markets
- Portland Central School – Healthy Harold, Life Education Van

Upcoming Events:

- Daffodils at Rydal
- Halloween



Community

Fundraising:

Staff at Mt Piper have generously raised funds for:

- Variety Bash
- Jeans for Genes Day
- Biggest Morning Tea
- Tania Hegglett – former employee and local lady fighting Cancer. Donations of merchandise for auction and \$2,243.95 raised through a donation box placed at our coffee van on 13 July & \$4\$ matching by EnergyAustralia

Community

Nanna's Touch Community Connections Lithgow Inc Soup Kitchen



Happy to say that this kicks off in a few weeks.

It was identified that a “social kitchen – a place to connect with wellbeing activities” was needed in our community. So, the Nanna's Touch group have set out to fill that need. They have access to a hall with a fitted kitchen, and volunteers who are ready to support a project that provides food security, creates community connection and is an opportunity to increase social capital.

The Soup Kitchen will provide a weekly sit-down meal with refreshments for those doing it tough, along with a take home hamper of dry staples and fresh produce.

A press release and news story will be in local media for the opening , so keep an eye out for that.

Community

Workplace Giving

- Since 2018 – over \$2M
- Can Assist (Lithgow) has received over \$33,000 since 2018
- Video of Workplace Giving - [EA Workplace Giving Video 2023 Final No Captions.mp4](#)
[\(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Project Update

Mt Piper Battery Energy Storage

Project Update

- Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARS) issued by DPE on 23 December 2022.
- EIS studies are underway. Scheduled to exhibit EIS in 2024.
- Due to development site proposed and studies completed to date, we expect social and environmental impacts in the area to be minimal.
- Three small clusters of vulnerable species (gums) identified near southern and western boundaries of project area. EPBC referral being prepared as a consequence.

Project Update (Cont.)

- Subsurface investigations of site proposed for H2 2023.
- Subsurface activities will include geotechnical investigations, contamination testing and soil testing.
- Application for development consent for subsurface investigations currently being assessed by Lithgow Council. Application has been called in for debate by Council.
- Archaeological survey of site carried out on 27 April 2023 with Mingaan Aboriginal Corporation and Bathurst Aboriginal Land Council.
- Procurement process for battery units initiated.

Project in Focus: Pumped Hydro

Key aspects for discussion:

- 'Deep dive' - the planning process that Lake Lyell will go through
- What is an EIS?
- Options for public participation
- Project design update
- Community consultation



Approvals process and timeframe

- Lake Lyell is continuing through its **feasibility** phase
- This is a two year process – due to conclude Q4, 2023
- Critical investigation & assessment phase
 - informs project planning & preparation of a Development Approval application
- Key focus – *understanding environmental, technical, commercial and social constraints*
- Process can't be compressed
 - seeking to deliver quality over time scale
 - seeking to deliver a sustainable project outcome
- Project planning & engineering running can run in parallel to an extend – however always led by feasibility investigations and technical/environmental studies
- Consultation with community and stakeholders a key factor throughout this process



Lake Lyell PHES – Approvals Pathway

- Lake Lyell PHES considered a State Significant Development (SSD)
- SSD projects provided with *specific* planning route given their complexity, social value & level of capital investment
- Examples of SSD include energy generating facilities, education facilities, hospitals

NSW Planning Department lead authority for assessing all SSDs

- In their consideration Dept Planning may look at:
 - existing strategic plans & policies (including state, regional, local)
 - feedback & comments from local councils
 - specialised advice from federal / state government agencies
 - public submissions
 - the public interest

The Minister evaluates the merits of the project, having regard to economic, environmental & social impacts, issues raised during consultation, & principles of ecologically sustainable development

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

- EA must prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as part of its Development Approval Application
- EIS is the most thorough environmental assessment required in NSW
- EIS must contain certain information, including:
 - Detailed project description
 - a general description of the environment likely to be affected by the development
 - Outline of efforts to avoid or mitigate impacts
 - an analysis of any feasible alternatives
- Outcomes of current/ongoing feasibility & technical studies will be included in the Project's EIS and Development Application
- All documents publicly exhibited and community feedback invited
- Expected date for Exhibition – end 2024

SEARS

- The Secretary of the Department may also set environmental assessment requirements that the proponent must address in the EIS (known as SEARs)
- EnergyAustralia has prepared a Scoping Report that introduces the project & requests the planning of a Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) commence
- SEARs still in development by Planning – once complete, will also be publicly Exhibited
- Lake Lyell PHES SEARS expected to outline specific matters EA must address including any consultation requirements
- Technical /environmental studies can commence prior to release of SEARS – more on this next slide

EIS Studies

- Over the next 12 months, EA will be undertaking targeted technical & environmental studies to finalise feasibility phase and prepare for *project planning phase*.
- Studies will be extensive & conducted by specialists in each of the technical fields
- Planned studies will include:
 - Terrestrial Biodiversity
 - Aquatic Ecology (Including platypus study)
 - Aboriginal Heritage
 - Historic Heritage
 - Social Impact
 - Surface Water
 - Groundwater
 - Landscape and Visual Impact
 - Bushfire
 - Economics
 - Land, Soil and Erosion
 - Contamination
 - Waste
 - Noise and Vibration
 - Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas
 - Climate Risk
 - Health Risk

Questions?

- When will a more detailed concept energy be released?
- Will all study results be included in the EIS?
- Just how likely is it that community feedback will influence project design?

Opportunities for public participation

The NSW public has the right to participate in development decisions. This may include:

- ***The right to be notified of development applications***
- ***The right to comment on development applications***
- ***The right to appeal a decision in court***

Important to note that EA's own engagement process continues to provide additional opportunities for community to provide feedback

Feedback collected & shared with development work streams

Diverse channels in place to provide multiple avenues for stakeholders to get involved

Role of the CCC:

- Formal channel for engagement, consultation on key issues
- Forum for raising issues & questions – seeking factual information
- Members encouraged to use information to build *good awareness* amongst their own networks

Project design update

Hydrological investigations

- Modification to Geotechnical Investigation Program (DA070/22) – still awaiting Council recommendation
- Submitted on 12 April 2023

Engineering design

- ACCIONA McConnell Dowell progressing with early engineering design – next step beyond concept design
- Community feedback and initial geological testing – key inputs
- Expecting an update to initial concept design which is expected to be a positive for visual impacts in coming months. Will share this with the CCC
- Safety, sustainability & community interest key considerations of design process

Community consultation

- Important workstream for Lake Lyell PHES project
- Recent doorknocking activities – over 244 houses visited to provide information on the project
- Plans underway to open Lithgow shopfront
- Project newsletter #2
- Regular Facebook & website updates
- Business & tourism outreach activities planned
- Specific comms around release of SEARS
- Further drop in / events in warmer months

What we've heard:

Interest in project 'giving back' to the community

Need to mobilise local supply chain / workers

Concerns with future use of Lake Lyell

Would like more info on planning process – will it be fair?

Interest in training and future employment opportunities

Need this project to happen to provide Lithgow with 'a future'

Support the transition to cleaner energy

Concerns with visual amenity

Want to understand more about how project will manage biodiversity

Thank you



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