

Pike Implementation Program Reference (PIP RC) Committee Meeting 40 – 31/1/2014 Natural Resources Centre Boardroom, Berri

RRP early works project progress – Sarah Price (DEWNR) (by phone):

Sarah advised that the tender for the Deep Creek Regulator replacement project has been called through an open tender process and the closing date has been extended to 25 February 2014. Seven companies attended the mandatory site briefing. As this is an open tender process, local companies are able to bid for the work which was not possible during the previous tender process through SA Water panel contractors. If bids are within budget, the contract is hoped to be awarded in April with works usually starting within 2-4 weeks afterwards. There is a 100 ML/day water flow to the top of the Pike system (Mundic Creek) guaranteed during construction.

Salinity and the Pike – Judith Kirk (DEWNR) (by phone):

The salinity policy team is completing South Australia's input into the annual independent audit of the basin salinity management strategy. Once approved by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, these reports will be available to the public mid 2014. They are also involved in a basin-wide review of salinity to determine future risk within the context of the Basin Plan and the additional water to be recovered. Bruce Hewett asked about funding for the SIS scheme and more testing on the floodplain. Brad Hollis mentioned that the highland scheme funding should be secured through the South Australia Riverland Floodplains Integrated Infrastructure Program (SAARFIIP) but funding for floodplain bores may need to come from elsewhere. Judith explained that she deals with salinity issues at a higher level with Dan Croucher being more localized in focus. The PIP RC agreed for Dan to be invited to provide an update at the next meeting.

Floodplain Update – Brad Hollis (DEWNR):

Brad explained the staged approach in more detail. Stage 1 consists of: Firstly, removing Bank H and Snake Creek Crossing (went to tender in Dec; received a complying tender); upgrading Banks B and C (to go to tender in Feb and could be awarded in April/May) Secondly, removing Bank G and Coombs Bridge (must be completed last since local traffic requires alternative access once Mundic Creek Road is closed). All further works are to be completed pending further funding. Leroy Sims asked what would happen if the first stage was completed and further funding wasn't secured. Brad acknowledged the concern and replied that risk is unlikely as funding should be available. Construction to modify pumps and sumps has gone to tender as of yesterday. No further fish monitoring will be conducted until the first stage of construction has been completed.

PIP Communications Update- Elizabeth Lescheid (Renmark-Paringa Council/RBLAP)/Kathryn Mroczek (DEWNR):

The Pike Information Day held at the Pike River Villas function centre on 26 October was a great success with about 80 people attending the day. Many of these were community members and some had never attended a PIP event before. This indicates evidence of continuing strong community interest in the project. Paul Day emphasized that from a council point of view 80 people attending a community event of this kind was really good result and congratulated Elizabeth on her efforts. Bruce thanked Elizabeth on behalf of the Pike River Land Management Group (PRLMG) for her hard work and expressed his approval for the choice of venue. Mike Fuller added thanks to Brad for conducting such good tours and the PRLMG for their work on the BBQ. All agreed that a similar event could be run once construction was completed. Elizabeth explained that updated PIP factsheets are now available for pick up at the Renmark Paringa Council flyer display. Bruce requested an electronic copy of the PIP factsheet for posting on the PRLMG website. Kathryn presented draft signs and all were impressed with the creative layout. She will gather further comments/input and circulate a final draft for committee endorsement out of session.

Endorsement of Pike Extraction Limit Final Report- Paul Day (Renmark-Paringa Council)

Paul explained that the Pike Extraction Limit Final Report submitted by Australian Water Environments in November was circulated to everyone but he received no comments. Bruce advised that the PRLMG did not believe the report changed much from the previous version and that the group still doesn't support it. A discussion followed and the committee decided the report shouldn't be forwarded to the River Murray Advisory Council for inclusion in the next Water Allocation Plan. Elizabeth queried this as a lot of money and effort has gone into producing this report. Leroy explained it doesn't address the original intention to provide an extraction limit the community would be happy with. Brad added the report does not represent a complete piece of work for which an extraction limit could be determined. Mike suggested it provides a basis for further investigation regarding extraction limits and that a framework for decision making needs to be created specifically for the Pike system. Mike summarised that the PIP RC acknowledges that this project has now been finalised. He also suggested that a presentation regarding the policy relating to extraction limits be made at the next meeting and will follow up regarding this with the relevant personnel.

Endorsement of proposed changes to Memorandum of Understanding – (All)

Bruce explained that the PRLMG changed details are in relation to things no longer relevant. He expressed the need to better define the area covered by the MOU. All agreed that the current SIS zone is an adequate description. Elizabeth added that Renmark to the Border Local Action Planning (RBLAP) changes are also related to works no longer done by LAPS and are also related to RBLAP becoming a Section 41 Committee of Renmark-Paringa Council. Paul explained that Council would like to move away from using the title RBLAP. Elizabeth informed that the proposed changes had been endorsed by the RBLAP Committee and this had most likely been moved by Council at a subsequent meeting. Paul and Elizabeth will look into this issue more out of session. Sandy Gunter pointed out that the government section was presented as if separate departments still existed. Mike agreed to amalgamate the government section. Elizabeth asked if Sandy and Kat were happy with combined roles and they replied that it could stay as is. All agreed it would be best to avoid recording names against positions as this would help increase the longevity of the document. Elizabeth will collate all updated details into one document and provide this to the committee for endorsement at the next meeting

Other business and next meeting:

Jack Gibb (RBLAP/Renmark-Paringa Council) sent an email expressing concern over two issues: 1. Carp harvesting structure to be incorporated into the inlet design. 2. Cattle still present on the floodplain. The cattle issue was to be discussed with Phil Strachan. Unfortunately Phil was unable to attend the meeting. Mike undertook to follow up regarding the cattle issue out of session. The carp issue has been addressed in the Carp Management Plan-to be provided to Jack. Brad is happy to discuss it further with him.

Mike will follow up regarding a land management report from Phil out of session.

Kathryn informed that the Riverine Recovery Program had just approved another year of funding for Elizabeth's role.

Elizabeth mentioned that Rebecca Muller is no longer available to take minutes so she is now doing it but this may not be ideal. Mike mentioned he may be able to provide a business support person to attend the next meeting if required

Next meeting: April 11, 10-12:00, Natural Resource Centre Boardroom, Wade St, Berri.

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