

MEDIA RELEASE

13 September 2021

Lakeland Irrigation Area Scheme Community Meeting

Lakeland Downs residents are warmly invited to attend the quarterly Lakeland Irrigation Area Scheme (LIAS) community meeting which will take place on September 20. The LIAS project is progressing a major dam which will more than triple Lakeland's irrigable area and provide water security for landholders.

Project proponents Regional Development Australia Tropical North Chair (RDATN) David Kempton and Principal Project Manager Snowy Mountains Engineering Corporation (SMEC) will provide an overview of the project, update attendees on the latest project developments and take part in a question and answer session.

RDATN Chair David Kempton said he was looking forward to the meeting.

'This is an exciting project which will underpin jobs and growth in southern Cape York. This project will benefit the Lakeland community by providing access to an affordable and reliable water supply. This will enable the expansion of agricultural activities, the potential to grow higher value and more diverse crops, and provide the security landholders need to invest in their businesses for the long – term,' he said.

'As well as building the local economy, we hope the dam will be completed at the same time as the final sealing works on the Peninsula Developmental Road, enabling agricultural products produced in southern Cape York to easily be transported to Weipa's deep-water port.

'We are currently working on the Detailed Business Case (DBC) for the federal government. The DBC, which is due for completion in September next year, will provide a comprehensive and technical analysis of the dam, transfer options and distribution system and enable the development of a focused funding package.'

SMEC Project Manager Brendan Short said a great deal of progress had taken place since the last LAIS community meeting which was held in Lakeland Downs in May.

'We know the preferred type of dam to be built, that we'll use a tunnel for transfer instead of a surface pipeline, we know the configuration of the irrigation supply network, and we are half – way through the reference design phase' he said.

'We're also pleased to be able to share information from the Department of Resources Lakeland soils report which identifies where the most productive soils are located so landholders can consider where they may want to irrigate in the future.'



About the LIAS

The proposed 200,000ML dam, situated on the Palmer River, will service, and expand the Lakeland agricultural area.

The water will be gravity fed to Lakeland through a 12km tunnel.

The tunnel will transfer the water to the distribution point where a network will take water directly to the farm gate under pressure.

Of the 8,000 ha of identified freehold agricultural area in Lakeland, only 1,370ha is under irrigation. The completion of the dam would render the full 8,000ha irrigable. Around 10,000 ha of additional good agricultural land lies adjacent to Lakeland which could also be serviced in the future.

If supported by the Australian government, construction could begin in 2023.

Event details

Date: 20 September 2021

Time: 12.00 – 1.30 pm

Location: Lakeland Town Hall

Light refreshments provided

For more information about the meeting please contact RDATN on (07) 4041 1729

ENDS

Media contacts:

RDATN Chair, David Kempton – 0407 964 332 | info@rdatropicalnorth.org.au

RDATN CEO, Sonja Johnson – 0493 080 143 | ceo@rdatropicalnorth.org.au

For more information about Regional Development Australia Tropical North, please visit the official website at rdatropicalnorth.org.au

