

Proposed Temporary Weir Preliminary Access Works

SA Water is managing preliminary access road works beginning in February 2009 to provide access for construction vehicles should the temporary weir near Pomanda Island be required in the future.

Does this work mean that the temporary weir will be built?

The State Government does not want to build a temporary weir. However it is the responsibility of the State Government to plan for a worst case scenario.

The commencement of these preliminary access road works is not a decision to build the weir but is part of necessary preparations in case the drought continues and certain triggers are reached.

The State Government is continuing to work on various options and initiatives for securing South Australia's water supply in the hope that construction of a temporary weir can be prevented. A temporary weir at Pomanda is considered a last resort option to secure South Australia's water supply.

What is involved?

The preliminary access road works involves the upgrade to existing public roads and the construction of private roads on both the western and eastern abutments.

These preliminary works will be undertaken in two stages. The first stage will see the upgrade of the Nalpa Station Road and the upgrade of a private road through Nalpa Station. All approvals for this work have been obtained and the Rural City of Murray Bridge has been contracted by SA Water to undertake this work. Stage one works will commence in February 2009.

The second stage will include the construction of a causeway through the Pomanda Peninsula and the upgrade of an existing track to the eastern abutment. This second stage is still subject to necessary approvals and will not commence until all approvals have been obtained.

What triggers are being monitored?

In November 2008, the Murray Darling Basin Ministerial Council approved a Real Time Management Strategy to Avoid Acidification in the Lower Lakes. The strategy includes acidification triggers for alkalinity and water levels which if reached may require as a last resort the introduction of a minimum quantity of sea water into the lower lakes to manage the risk and avoid acidification.

Should such an action be considered necessary, a temporary weir will be needed to secure South Australia's water supply.

Good localised rainfall, reduced evaporation losses and increased freshwater inflows may delay these triggers and avoid the need for a temporary weir. The triggers will be closely monitored on an ongoing basis.

Why are the preliminary works required?

SA Water is undertaking the preliminary access road works in order to reduce the construction time for a temporary weir by up to three months should it need to be built. This work will enable the State Government to delay any decision regarding a temporary weir for as long as possible.

Further Information

Further information about the construction of the approach roads can be obtained from the SA Water website www.sawater.com.au or by phoning SA Water's project hotline 1800 812 362.