

**Northern Water Supply Project
Stakeholder Reference Group Meeting
11.00am – 1.00pm Wednesday 15 February 2023
Via MS Teams**

Meeting Presentation – Appendix A

Attendees – Appendix B

1. Welcome and introductions – Josephine Telfer (JT)

Josephine Telfer welcomed all attendees to the meeting and gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

JT will circulate a list of SRG members following this meeting for members to confirm their details, nominate any additional members that should be invited, and to provide the details of the organisation(s) each individual represents. Conflicts of interest will be managed offline through this process.

JT introduced Jamboard, an online whiteboard, which will be used for some items during this meeting. Members were encouraged to use Jamboard to share what they were hoping to get out of this meeting.

2. Review of meeting notes from previous meeting

The notes from the SRG Meeting held on 14 December 2022 were accepted.

3. Review actions from previous meeting

1. *SRG members to encourage members of their respective stakeholder groups to complete the [YourSAy survey](#) by the end of January 2023 (participation requires registration at the YourSAy page).*

Completed. Note, the survey is open until 28 February 2023.

2. *Josephine Telfer to circulate the Membership Discussion questions to SRG members to provide feedback.*

Completed.

3. *SRG members to advise Josephine Telfer of the names of anyone that should be invited to join the SRG.*

There were no additional members advised.

4. *SRG members to contact Josephine Telfer if they wish to obtain the contact details for any of the project team, including JBS&G and Jacobs.*

There were no requests received.

4. Project Update – Mike Morgan

- The process for the development of the Business Case will be closed in the coming weeks in order to finalise the submission to Government.
- Deloitte has provided a report on the economic impact of the Northern Water Project in the region and far north of the State. Economic models focusing on project activities and jobs indicate that \$6billion will be injected into the region's economy to 2050 as well as 4,000 new ongoing jobs, peaking at around 7,000 FTE by 2050.

A working group, the Project Participation Group (PPG), has been established as part of an agreement between the SA Government and participants (key water users) for collaboration and coordination around communications and information sharing. It is not a decision-making group, and, while the SA Government commits to consulting with participants through this forum, it has

reserved the right in its “absolute discretion” to make decisions relating to the project and the Business Case.

Members of the PPG include the following (note, some of the new members are still in the process of being formally admitted):

Original members	New Members
SA Water	Amp Energy
BHP	Origin Energy
OZ Minerals	Fortescue Future Industries

5. Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA) Update – Alecia Wright (AW)

- A workshop was held in late January to finalise the MCA criteria and weightings and to score each of the three selected sites against the criteria. The workshop participants were:

Project team	Marine Life Society South Australia
Conservation Council SA	Whyalla Business and Tourism
Marine Net Fishers Association	Landscapes SA
PIRSA	RDA Far North
Whyalla City Council	

- The initial score results are shown below with Mullaquana scoring the highest against the MCA criteria followed by Point Lowly and then Crag Point.
- The outcomes of the scoring were tested by placing a higher weight on sustainability and environment criteria and then on financial criteria (and lowering the weighting of the other criteria). Community sentiment was also considered by consolidating the community’s feedback on the criteria received via YourSAy. Mullaquana scored highest on all three additional scenarios.

	Point Lowly	Crag Point	Mullaquana
	Score		
Workshop weighting = rounded weightings	2.51	2.44	3.47
Sensitivity scenario 1 = sustainability emphasis	2.51	2.36	3.52
Sensitivity scenario 2 = financial emphasis	2.63	2.61	3.35
Community sentiment	2.49	2.38	3.52

MCA results will form part of the Business Case which will be presented to Cabinet to determine whether and to what extent the project will be funded, as well as the selection of one site on which to conduct further studies. Cabinet will also take into account things such as environmental work, engineering, stakeholder engagement and feedback in their deliberations. The Business Case will be submitted at the end of March with a decision expected by the middle of the year.

SRG members and the wider community will have an opportunity to provide feedback on the MCA results and to ask questions regarding the MCA process.

Questions

From a financial perspective, Mullaquana was the most expensive site at approx. \$500m more than the base case. How did Mullaquana still score highest with an emphasis on financial criteria?

- The total project cost is being considered separately to the MCA process.

- The financial factors considered as part of the MCA included things such as differences in the costs of construction, additional work to obtain approvals, delays and social licence. These costs were higher for Point Lowly and Crag Point.
- In the financial emphasis scenario the financial factors were given a higher weighting. The other criteria were given a lower weighting, not excluded.
- The workshop participants also considered Mullaquana the preferred site against factors impacting other things such as community, tourism, environment and fishing groups (particularly when compared to Point Lowly).

When the Business Case is submitted, is Cabinet deciding whether to fund the next stage of the assessment process or the whole project?

- The project is currently funded only to the completion of the Business Case.
- Cabinet's decision following submission of the Business Case is to fund further work until mid-2024 including (but not limited to) environmental impact studies and assessment, hydrodynamic modelling, and procurement processes to get a better understanding of costs and other procurement factors.

What will happen if Cabinet decides not to proceed with the project?

- It is difficult to say now how things may play out if Cabinet decides not to proceed.
- There will still be a demand and urgent need for more sustainable water sources for the community and a range of industries, that may have to look for their own solutions if an alternative regional solution is not immediately identified.

6. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Update – Alecia Wright

- JBS&G and Jacobs have been engaged to lead the work on the EIA.
- Some work on an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has commenced pending confirmation via the Development Approval process that the project will be deemed a "major project" requiring an EIS. As some elements of this work have long lead times, these need to commence now in order to meet the schedule deadlines for the EIS (assuming it will be required).
- JBS&G and Jacobs are currently working on the scope of the EIS which includes the following technical scopes:
 - Benthic habitat, ecology and plankton
 - Water quality modelling – entrainment and plume dispersion
 - Ecotoxicology
 - Geotech/sediment
 - Underwater noise and vibration
 - Terrestrial ecology
 - Surface and groundwater
 - Air quality
 - Greenhouse gas/sustainability/climate change
 - Coastal processes
- While there will be direct consultation and one-on-one work with specific groups on these, SRG members will be invited via email to ask questions and express interest in having input into reviewing the technical scopes.
- The EIS will also contain economic and financial scopes.
- It was noted that the Conservation Council would like to see "Water conservation benefits" included as a technical scope including analysis on the reductions on draw from the River Murray and Great Artesian Basin.

EIA General Update

- Geotechnical work (onshore and marine) will commence in August 2023 (assuming the project proceeds) with a risk/gap workshop to be held with a consultant in late February.

- Development Approval (DA) and Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) submissions may be made prior to or during the Business Case submission depending on progress.
- A presentation will be made to the Native Vegetation Council in April.
- Discussions continue regarding native title and cultural heritage with Kokatha and Barngala.
- Discussions have commenced with the Department for Infrastructure and Transport regarding land acquisition with the next step to engage with Crown Lands and Pastoral Unit.

Questions

Will the reports that inform the EIS be available to SRG members?

- Most reports become technical papers within an EIS so these are rarely released prior to finalising the draft of the EIS. AW will consider this and advise.
- The native vegetation report may be made available.

Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SIA) – Early Findings – Stephanie Hensgen

- An initial SIA has been conducted on all three sites with a more detailed assessment to be conducted of the selected site in due course.
- The purpose of the SIA:
 - To help inform the Business Case.
 - Identifies potential impacts, including benefits.
 - Based on desktop research and outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement to date.
 - Will guide the full Environmental Impact Assessment's Socio-Economic Impact Assessment.
 - Includes an analysis of the existing environment, the potential impacts and benefits, and strategies to mitigate impacts and enhance benefits.
- The SIA findings to date (below) are in line with the impacts of drought as outlined in "Understanding the Social Impacts of Drought", Lester, Flatau and Kyron, 2022.

Key Potential Impacts

- Environmental impacts including traffic, noise, lighting and amenity:
 - These are usually more intense during construction and can be well controlled.
 - The impact will vary depending on proximity to site and sensitivity.
- Housing availability, affordability and quality:
 - This is a national issue and not exclusive to the region however the region will have the added complexity of a sudden working population. This results in the need for a large amount of accommodation for short periods, as well as a displacement effect on lower socio-economic groups.
 - Also has an impact on tourism as workers may fill caravan parks and other visitor accommodation; however, workers should also not be discouraged from staying in the region due to the economic benefits.
- Access to water:
 - This will mitigate the impacts of drought as well as provide a flow on effect to the community, eg enhanced greening, improvements in water quality and pressure enabling more businesses to come to the region.
- Employment and skills:
 - Key consideration is the employment of local people as the region has a higher than average unemployment rate and will help to develop skills which can be transferred to other opportunities in future.
 - Projects usually consider this late in the piece so it is important to look at this now.
- Demand on and redirection of social services, especially health services:
 - The region has higher rates of long term social services and health issues so there may be some displacement initially; however there is also an opportunity with the additional demand to attract private health services and doctors to the region.

- Sense of place and community:
 - This is difficult to measure but important to health and wellbeing, and needs to be considered when placing and displacing infrastructure.
 - Localities under threat tend to have higher levels of sense of place and identity (case study - Iron Knob), and this is likely to become more prevalent in the region, eg connections with Point Lowly, shack settlements, Woomera, Roxby, Andamooka, places with rural outback identity.

Questions

Is research being funded to inform the social impact studies/brief as you have described? Will the data being used to inform the SIA on skills, housing and transport be available? There is certainly stress on housing, but the results of a study on, for example, the level of available accommodation for workers, would vary depending on the timing of the study and the stage of a project, and may give a false impression.

- This part of the process is in its early stages - information has been drawn in part from national data and a lot is anecdotal from real estate agents in the region, although a housing survey in the region has been conducted. Regional information is also available via real estate sales websites and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- The aim initially is to understand the status quo and identify knowledge gaps, and to seek feedback in specific areas. SRG members with experience in this area are welcome to be part of that process.
- It was noted that some research had been funded by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet following the closure of the power station on social needs assessment and impacts, but the results were not made available to the public, hence the question regarding funding.

Members were invited to provide feedback to the following question via Jamboard or via email to JT following the meeting.

What local community benefit/impacts do you think could easily be missed or not well understood that you would like to see highlighted in the SIA?

- Port Augusta and Whyalla housing.
- Loss of access to fishing grounds.
- Impact on biomass of different species as Upper Spencer Gulf is a major breeding area. The water column contains the larvae of a number of species which will be killed during filtration.
- Housing and immediate accommodation, including discussion on the impact of mine shutdowns on local accommodation and limited amount of housing for rent.
- Transport constraints – businesses use online meeting tools due to transport constraints and costs.
- Investment in USG may provide opportunity and employment for people who have skills but work away in the mines.

7. Stakeholder Engagement Update and Input – Josephine Telfer

7.1 SRG Terms of Reference (TOR)

Based on feedback from members, the following changes have been made to the SRG TOR and the final version will be circulated to members shortly.

- Purpose
 - Clarified role as a consultative group with an advisory role.
- Objectives
 - Consolidated Objective 1 and 2.
 - New Objective added “Support accountable and transparent processes”.

- Management
 - Meeting notes sent out and posted online within 7 working days (added posted online and changed from 10 working days).
 - Added paragraph requesting correspondence to the group to be managed by NWS team.
- Responsibilities
 - Added NWS team responsibility “Communicate how input from the SRG has been incorporated into the project”.
- (Informing) decision making
 - Re-wrote section on decision making to emphasis consultative framework and that no decisions are to be made.
 - Also referred to other organisation decision making roles.
- Media
 - Updated to improve clarity.
- Disclaimer
 - New section.

A section on membership will also be added including the process for becoming a member. A membership list will also form part of the TOR as an addendum and be updated as required. There is no intention at this stage to limit the number of members; however, consideration will be given with any new members to maintaining balanced membership from a representation perspective, and in order to retain the interactive and collegial nature of meetings and feedback processes.

Members were encouraged to suggest agenda items for future meetings including any topics or issues on which members would like more detailed information.

7.2 Since We Last Met

The following activities have been completed by the stakeholder engagement team since the last meeting:

- YourSAy
 - Promotion through YourSAy channels including Facebook and emails
 - Over 1000 views
 - Launched site selection information and survey - 80 survey responses (only a small number were not supportive of any desalination plant located in the gulf due to brine management; however, solutions for this are still being explored and concerns will inform the environmental studies)
 - 5 new newsfeed articles published
- Local Promotion
 - Distribution of hard copy materials to Whyalla City Council, Port Augusta Council and Roxby Council
 - Paid advertisement in Whyalla News, and The Transcontinental newspapers
- Supported Stakeholder groups to share project information on social media

7.3 Looking Ahead

Next steps for the stakeholder engagement team include:

- SRG Final Terms of Reference to be circulated
- Release MCA outcomes and mini survey
- Continuing updates on YourSAy
- Formal engagement period closes 28 February 2023
- Finalising Stakeholder Engagement Plan for next stage
- Finalising Stakeholder Engagement Report for Business Case and public

7.3 Engagement Strategies – Members used Jamboard to provide feedback on the following questions.

1. *What engagement methods does your community/organisation prefer?*
 - Whyalla residents tend to like a variety of options (some happy to engage online, others like face to face). Most importantly, it needs to be visible and well promoted.
 - Face to face opportunities, pop ups in shopping centre.
 - Face to face with fishers/associations.
 - Social media for majority of Roxby residents, however, there is requirement for hard copy briefs for those that don't utilise social media.
 - Multiple media – Facebook, local media.
 - Facebook is prevalent.
 - Radio and local TV is also well received.
 - Face to face struggles for attendance, especially if the project is not confirmed. There have been many false starts and announcements that have not progressed.
 - MSNFA/Charter – YourSAy, Facebook, hard copy briefs (electronic).
2. *What are some opportunities for face to face engagement with your community?*
 - Attend group/association meetings in terms of reaching various stakeholders which are not necessarily located around the site area.
 - Targeted face to face based on different stakeholders. Attending community meetings, using members of the SRG to support this work by being present.
 - Targeted face to face – online.
 - Westland presence, 'drop in' at the library.
3. *What online spaces do your community generally use?*
 - Council's Facebook page reaches more than 50% of Whyalla community (over 15), so is the most prevalent. Good to have a variety of posts (not just a flyer).
 - Minimal online promotion for our fishers – email/text/face to face best.
 - Whyalla Fishing page on Facebook well received by the local community.

8. Other Business

8.1 David Noonan Submission

A submission received from David Noonan – “Decisions to protect GAB waters & Springs and to replace or reduce BHP water extraction” (20 Nov 2022) – was tabled and is attached to these minutes (Appendix C).

8.2 Sustainable Development Forum (SDF) Update

The membership of the SDF will be finalised in the coming weeks, with the first meeting to be convened in early April. The current SDF members include:

- SACOME
- Marine Fishers Association
- Spencer Gulf & West Coast Prawn Fishermen's Association Inc.
- Whyalla City Council
- Conservation Council of South Australia
- Adelaide University
- Peter Treloar as independent chair
- Department for Energy and Mining

8.3 Questions

In response to questions from members, the following points were noted:

- There are no site visits planned at this stage for SRG members; however a visit to the selected site may be an option in future depending on the outcome of the Business Case.

- A media release or similar will be considered if the project is approved with a focus on the Business Case and outcomes.

MEETING ACTIONS

1. SRG members to provide any further feedback on the question below to JT - josephine.telfer2@sa.gov.au.
What local community benefit/impacts do you think could easily be missed or not well understood that you would like to see highlighted in the SIA?
2. Ongoing action: SRG members to provide feedback to JT on potential agenda items or deep dive topics for SRG meetings.
3. AW to consider whether reports that inform the EIS can be shared with the SRG.

Next Meeting

The SRG will aim to meet approximately every two months with every third meeting to be held in Whyalla if possible. The next meeting will be held on **Thursday 4 May 2023 in Whyalla** (time and venue TBC). Meeting closed at 1.05pm.

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Northern Water Supply

Sustainable water to unlock wealth in South Australia

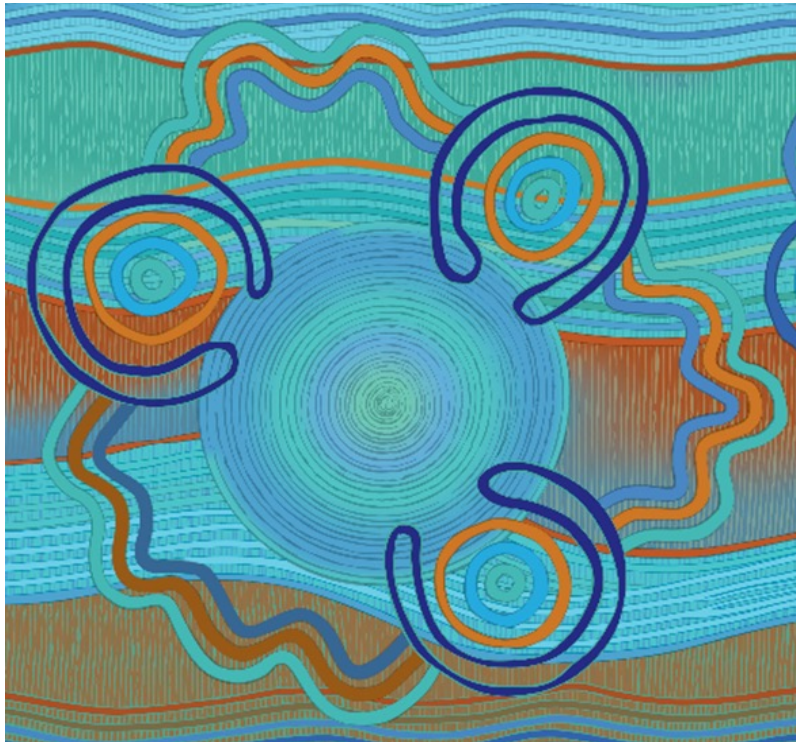
Stakeholder Reference Group

15 February 2023



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Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are present. We also acknowledge the project is located on the traditional land of the Kokatha and Barngarla people.

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Agenda

	Topic	Presenter
1	Welcome and introductions	Josephine
2	Review of meeting notes from previous meeting	Josephine
3	Review Actions from last meeting	Josephine
4	Project Update	Mike
5	MCA Update	Alecia
6	EIA Update – including early SIA findings	Alecia/Steph
7	Stakeholder Engagement Update and Input	Josephine
8	Other Business	Josephine
9	Next Meeting: Thursday 4 May 2023	
10	Close	

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House keeping

- Conflict of interest declaration
- Turn off distractions
- Introducing JamBoard [JamBoard link](#)
- Comments and questions use the Teams chat box or raise hands
- Wrap up at 1:00pm with a stretch break at the mid point

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New Members

- Barbara Durham – Whyalla Business and Tourism
- Louise Foote – Global Maintenance USG
- Alan Hall – RecFish SA
- Pat Tripodi – Marine Fishers Association

Also

- Ryan Sutherland (Whyalla City Council)
- Nicole Summerville (Jacobs)

Note we have had some technical issues with meeting bookings being forwarded which we are seeking to rectify before the next SRG meeting



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Previous meeting notes

- Any questions or concerns arising from notes from previous meeting



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Actions from Previous meeting

- SRG members to encourage members of their respective stakeholder groups to complete the [YourSAy survey](#) by the end of January 2023 (participation requires registration at the YourSAy page).
- Josephine Telfer to circulate the Membership Discussion questions to SRG members to provide feedback.
- SRG members to advise Josephine Telfer of the names of anyone that should be invited to join the SRG - josephine.telfer2@sa.gov.au.
- SRG members to contact Josephine Telfer if they wish to obtain the contact details for any of the project team, including JBS&G and Jacobs.





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Project Update

Mike Morgan

MCA workshop 2 complete
Jobs and costing early indicators
Working group membership expansion

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Project Participation group

Established in Feb 2022.

Agreement between SA Gov and “Participants” for collaboration and coordination around communications and information sharing.

Is NOT a decision making group.

SA Government commits to consulting with Participants, but reserves the right in its “absolute discretion” to make decisions relating to the NWS and the Business Case.

Original members

- SA Water
- BHP
- OZ Minerals

New Members

- Amp Energy
- Origin Energy
- Fortescue Future Industries





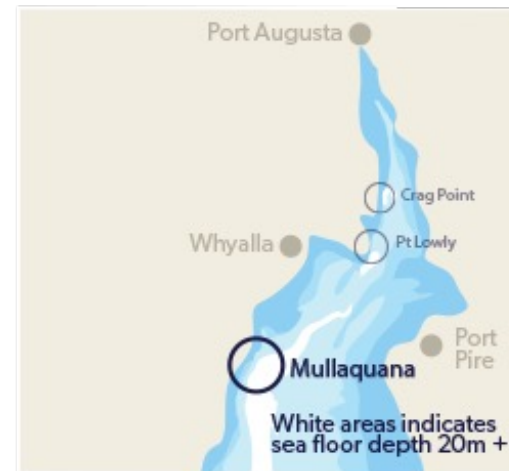
MCA update

Alecia Wright

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MCA outcome

BUSINESS CASE SITE OPTIONS CONSIDERED



Information and data on this figure is an artist impression and is not to be used as a detailed design

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MCA Outcome

	Point Lowly	Crag Point	Mullaquana
Scenario	Score		
Agreed Workshop Weightings	2.51	2.44	3.47
Sensitivity scenario 1 – Sustainability	2.51	2.36	3.52
Sensitivity scenario 2 – Financial	2.63	2.61	3.35
Sensitivity scenario 3 - Community Sentiment	2.49	2.38	3.52

Participants

- Project team
- Conservation Council of SA
- Marine Net Fishers Association
- PIRSA
- Whyalla City Council
- Marine Life Society South Australia
- Whyalla Business and Tourism
- Landscapes SA
- RDA Far North





EIA update

Alecia Wright

- How much input do you want to have in reviewing technical scopes?
- How would you see this happening?



Technical Scopes

- Benthic Habitat, Ecology and Plankton
- Water Quality Modelling – entrainment and plume dispersion
- Ecotoxicology
- Geotech / Sediment
- Underwater noise and vibration
- Terrestrial Ecology
- Surface and Groundwater
- Air Quality
- Greenhouse Gas / Sustainability / Climate Change
- Coastal Processes



General Update

- Geotechnical work (onshore and marine) commencing August 2023
- Risk / gap workshop late February
- Possible submission of DA and EPBC Referral pre/during Business Case
- Presenting to Native Vegetation Council in April
- Ongoing Native Title and Cultural Heritage discussions with Kokatha and Barngarla
- Land Acquisition discussions commenced with DIT – next step to involve Crown Lands and Pastoral Unit



Socio-Economic Impact Assessment – Early findings

Stephanie Hensgen

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Socio-Economic Impact Assessment (SIA) Purpose

- To help inform the Business Case
- Identifies potential impacts, including benefits
- Based on desktop research and outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement to date
- Will guide the full Environmental Impact Statement's Socio-Economic Impact Assessment
- Includes an analysis of the existing environment, the potential impacts and benefits, and strategies to mitigate impacts and enhance benefits

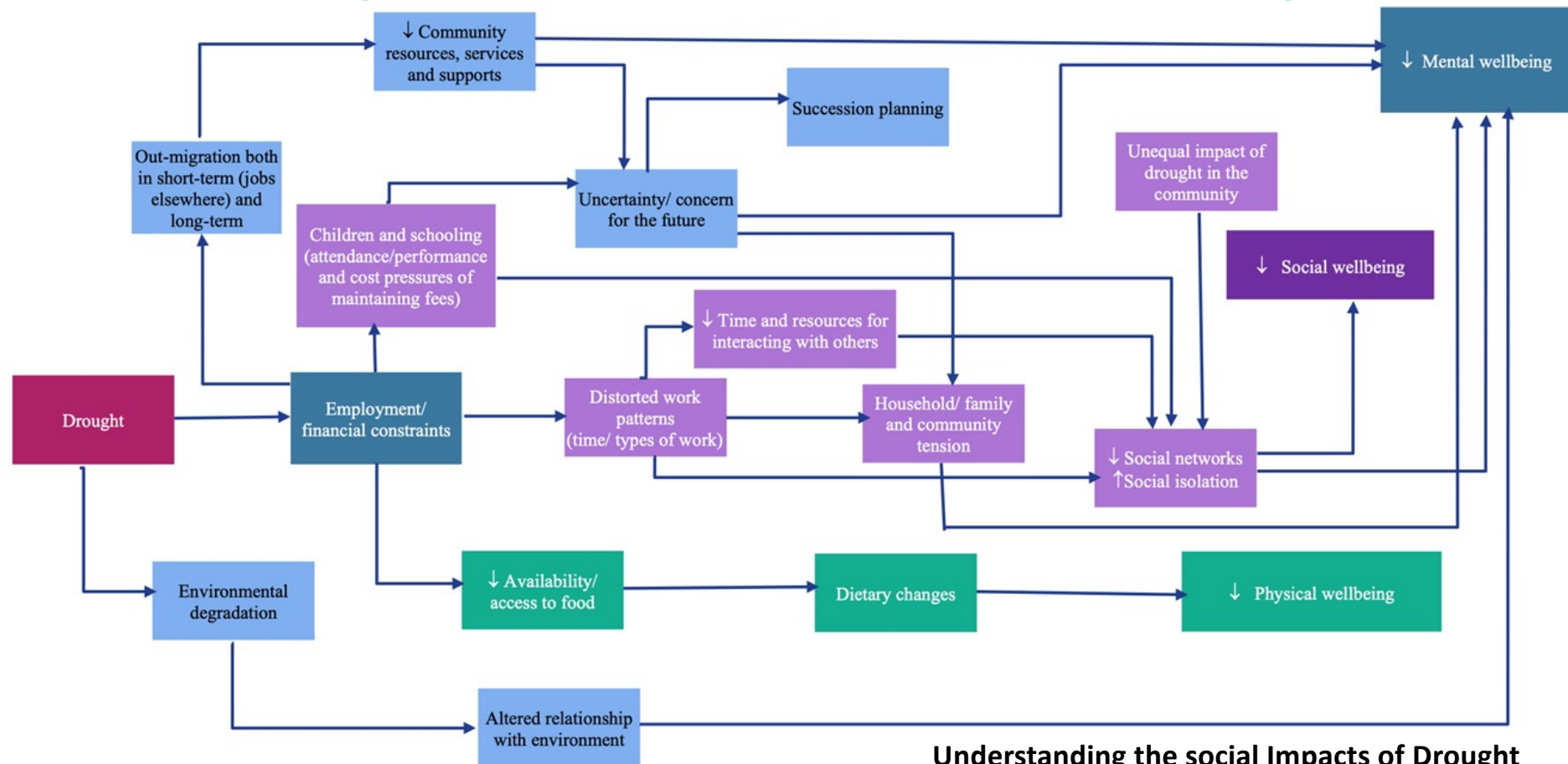
Analyse the existing environment

Identify impacts and benefits

Identify strategies to mitigate impacts and enhance benefits



SIA Findings to date – impact of drought



Understanding the social Impacts of Drought

Lester, Flatau and Kyron, 2022



- Environmental impacts including traffic, noise, lighting and amenity
- Housing availability, affordability and quality
- Access to water
- Employment and skills
- Demand on and redirection of social services, especially health services
- Sense of place and community



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SIA input question

- What local community benefit/impacts do you think could easily be missed or not well understood that you would like to see highlighted in the SIA?
- *Go to your JamBoard link to add comments*



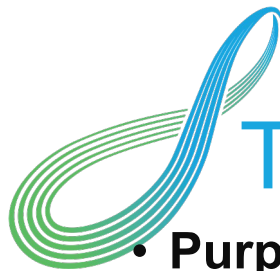


STRETCH BREAK



SRG and Stakeholder engagement

Josephine Telfer



TOR changes

- **Purpose**

- Clarified role as a consultative group with an advisory role.

- **Objectives**

- Consolidated objective 1 and 2
- New objective added “Support accountable and transparent processes”

- **Management**

- Meeting notes sent out and posted online within 7 working days (added posted online and changed from 10 working days)
- Added paragraph requesting correspondence to the group to be managed by NWS team

- **Responsibilities**

- Added NWS team responsibility
“Communicate how input from the SRG has been incorporated into the project.”

- **(Informing) decision making**

- Re-wrote section on decision making to emphasis consultative framework and that no decisions are to be made
- Also referred to other organisation decision making roles.

- **Media**

- Updated to improve clarity

- **Disclaimer**

- New section



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TOR – updated Purpose statement

The purpose of the Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) is to provide an information conduit between the Northern Water Supply project team and stakeholder groups, some of which may also represent parts of the wider community.

The SRG forms one part of an integrated stakeholder and community engagement strategy.

In particular, the SRG aims to facilitate dialogue, discussion and information sharing about the Northern Water Supply project between project team members and key stakeholders about a range of interests.

The SRG will bring together stakeholders with a range of perspectives to discuss the Northern Water Supply project. Due to the nature of the group it is expected that there will be different perspectives on many issues and potential for competing views.

The SRG is an advisory group only and is not a decision-making group. As such the group will not be required to make any decisions by vote, by consensus, or by any other means.



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Future agenda items

- What items would you like us to cover in future SRG meetings
- *Go to your JamBoard link to add comments*





Stakeholder engagement

Josephine Telfer

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Since we last met

- YourSAy (since we last met)
 - Promotion through YourSAy channels including facebook and emails
 - over 1000 views
 - 80 survey responses
 - Launched site selection information and survey
 - 5 new newsfeed articles published
- Local Promotion
 - Distribution of hard copy materials to Whyalla City Council, Port Augusta Council and Roxby Council
 - Paid advertisement in Whyalla News, and The Transcontinental newspapers
- Supported Stakeholder groups to share project information on social media



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Looking ahead!

- SRG Final Terms of Reference to be circulated
- Release MCA outcomes and mini survey
- Continuing updates on YourSAy
- Formal engagement period closes 28 February 2023
- Finalising Stakeholder Engagement Plan for next stage
- Finalising Stakeholder engagement report for BC and public

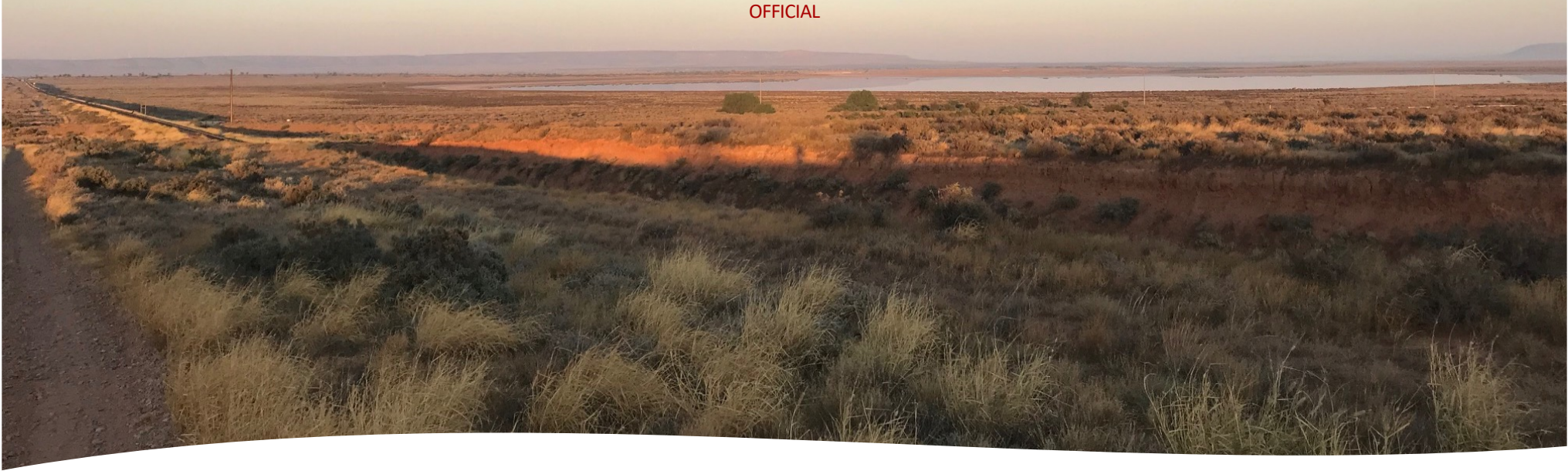
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Engagement Strategies

- What engagement methods does your community prefer?
- What are some opportunities for face-to-face engagement with your community?
- What online spaces do your community generally use?

Go to your JamBoard link to add comments

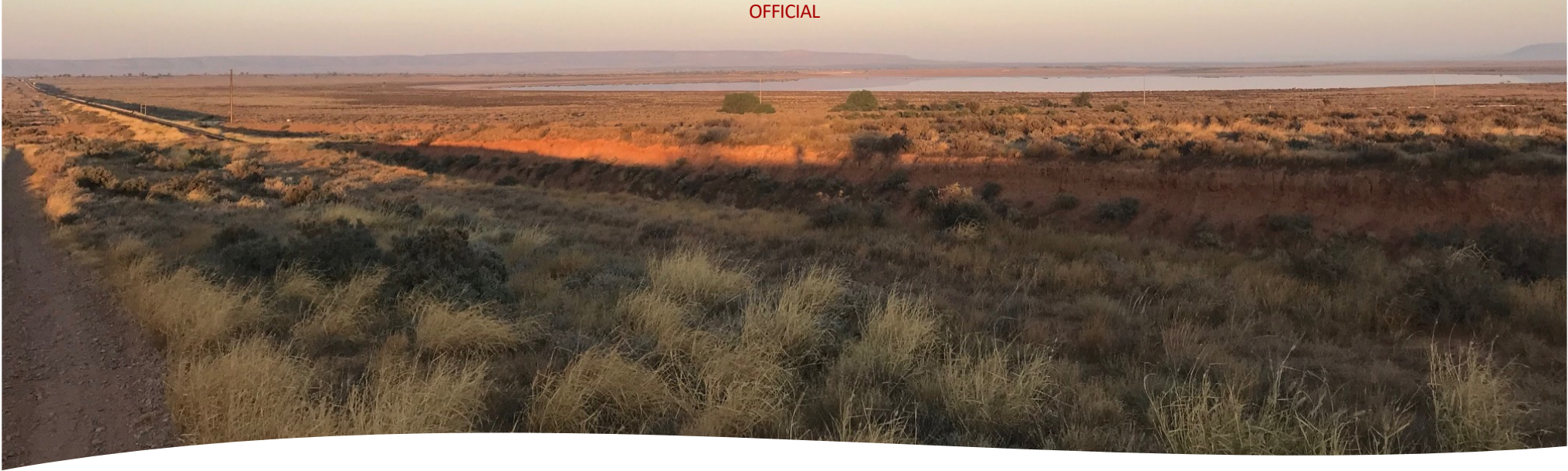


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Other Business

Josephine Telfer

- Submission received from David Noonan to be tabled and distributed with the minutes
- Sustainable Development Forum Update



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Next meeting

Josephine Telfer

4 May 2023 – potentially in Whyalla

Note April meeting delayed to avoid Easter and School holidays

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Northern Water Supply Project

northernwatersupply.sa.gov.au



APPENDIX B

Northern Water Supply Project SRG Meeting Attendees 15 February 2023

Stakeholders

David Noonan	Conservation Council of SA
Barry Fryar	Department for Environment and Water (DEW) - Crown Lands SA
Mick Cresshull	PIRSA - Fisheries and Aquaculture/Whyalla Business and Tourism
Karren Hollomby	PIRSA - Fisheries and Aquaculture
Neil MacDonald	Marine Scale Net Fisherman's Association
Sonja Morrison	Roxby Council
Sean Kelly	Whyalla City Council
Ryan Sutherland	Whyalla City Council
Kelly Pyke-Tape	Spencer Gulf and West Coast Prawn Fishermen's Association (Online)
Joe Calvert	Outback Communities Authority
John Banks	City of Port Augusta
Roy Blight	Roxby Council
Ryan Viney	RDA Eyre Peninsula
Shane Roberts	PIRSA
Annabel Jones	PIRSA
Barbara Derham	Whyalla Business and Tourism
Simone Beaty	Whyalla Business and Tourism and Elders Insurance
Louise Foote	Global Maintenance USG
Alan Hall	RecFish SA
Aaron Smith	Aridlands Landscape Board
Craig Wilkins	Conservation SA
Matt Nelson	Environment Protection Agency
Alli Carter	

Project Team and Consultants

Josephine Telfer	Joined Thinking	Facilitator and Stakeholder Engagement Lead, NWS
Alecia Wright	InfrastructureSA	Manager Land Approvals and Land Access, NWS
Mike Morgan	InfrastructureSA	Project Director, NWS
Lauren Gardner	InfrastructureSA	
Steph Hensgen	Joined Thinking	Stakeholder Engagement Advisor
Sarah-Jane Arnold	Rise & Scribe	Records Management
Rob Tokley	Jacobs	
Nicole Sommerville	Jacobs	

Apologies

Wendy Campana	Spencer Gulf Cities
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APPENDIX C

Decisions to protect GAB waters & Springs and to replace or reduce BHP water extraction:

Briefing by David Noonan, Independent Environment Campaigner, 20 Nov 2022

BHP expansion plans for Olympic Dam as a regional processing hub for copper-uranium ores and the associated Oak Dam project are dependent on an alternative water supply for mining operations.

Decisions to continue or expand extraction of GAB waters for mining in north SA are not acceptable.

The SA Government's [Northern Water Supply Project](#) recognises the GAB is not a sustainable water supply option for the future and flags expected funding decisions by the 2nd quarter in 2023.

“Ensuring a secure and sustainable water supply for the future:

For our northern regional areas to thrive, we need a secure water supply. Taking more water from the River Murray or Great Artesian Basin is not an environmentally sustainable option.”

The Chief Scientist, Department for Energy and Mining, stated to a project workshop on 26 Oct 2022 that there will be ‘savings’ from the GAB for the benefit of the Springs (if the project goes ahead).

Minister for Climate, Environment and Water Susan Close MP has stated (letter to DN, 18 July 2022):

“... I agree with you that the real opportunity to achieve significant beneficial environmental and cultural outcomes is to replace, or at least significantly reduce, Olympic Dam's current extractions from the GAB with a new, sustainable water supply. ... Obviously this proposal will only proceed if it is able to pass the rigorous environmental and cultural assessments that will need to be undertaken as part of the overall assessment process.

I understand that the Northern Water Supply project business case being developed by Infrastructure SA is currently expected to be completed early in 2023. Subject to the outcome of the required assessments, it is my view that this project represents the most effective approach to achieving the environmental outcomes that we both desire.”

BHP's ‘social license’ to operate is dependent on public interest decisions to protect GAB waters and to protect the unique and fragile Mound Springs, a listed “Endangered Ecological Community” under the Federal EPBC Act, of fundamental ongoing cultural and spiritual value to Aboriginal People.

Protecting the integrity of GAB waters and the cultural and ecological values of the Springs is a national issue, see: "[Olympic Dam busters: BHP fight over outback water rights](#)" The Weekend Australian (Business p.1) & "[Why BHP is facing a minefield](#)" The Advertiser (p.30) on 05 March 2022.

Both articles cite: “Mr Noonan wants to hear a formal commitment about alternative water sources”

Further, see “[Mining giant sucking life out of SA's vanishing Springs](#)” The Advertiser (30 June 2021), and [SA's disappearing mound springs raise questions for miner BHP](#) The Age & SMH (23 Nov 2020).

Formal [Input](#) and [Recommendation's](#) on Olympic Dam and a [Briefing](#) on GAB Springs to the Federal Environment Minister by Joint National and State Environment Groups (Dec 2019) declare that to protect the GAB waters and Springs requires clear and urgent public interest commitments:

- To close BHP Wellfield A water extraction operations - inappropriately located for max adverse impact within the geographic arc of GAB Mound Springs, as soon as possible.
- To phase out the larger scale BHP Wellfield B water extraction operations as a priority.

Conclusion: For a potentially sustainable future, SA and BHP must now decide to commit to do so.

Threats to the cultural and ecological values of the Kati Thanda springs remain real and significant:

Threats to iconic GAB Springs feature in a new international peer reviewed science book: ***“Threats to Springs in a Changing World. Science and Politics for Protection. Geophysical Monograph Series.”*** (In Press, Wiley/AGU, US), Part 1 Threats to Springs and their Values, Chapter 6.

Titled: ***“Springs of the South-Western Great Artesian Basin, Australia: Balancing Sustainable Use and Cultural and Environmental Values”*** by Assoc Prof Gavin M. Mudd and Prof Matthew J. Currell, Environmental Engineering, RMIT University.

A [Preview](#) of the book provides a brief summary of the main contribution of Ch.6, in presenting:

“... an analysis of the effects of artesian groundwater extraction for Australia’s largest mining operation on the culturally and ecologically significant Mound Springs of the south-western GAB (Australia’s largest interconnected aquifer system). They combine spring-flow and artesian bore water level measurements to illustrate the effect of mine water extraction on different springs in the unique Kati-Thanda complex.”

Abstract: *The Great Artesian Basin (GAB) is one of the world’s largest groundwater systems and supports a wide variety of springs, associated ecosystems and cultural values. ...*

In particular, the Olympic Dam mining project in South Australia has been extracting groundwater since 1983 from a wellfield located on the south-western margins of the GAB – an area containing a vast array of culturally significant, ecologically unique and sensitive springs, including iconic mound springs. The extraction rate has increased over time, leading to concerns about impacts on the springs and their associated values. There are plans to expand the mine that would potentially increase the extraction rate further. This chapter reviews the hydrogeological setting of the springs of the south-western GAB, their cultural and environmental values and synthesizes and analyses the available groundwater monitoring data associated with the wellfield. The case highlights the critical importance of detailed spatial and temporal hydrogeological monitoring, including both spring flow rates and groundwater level/pressure data, and the need to link monitoring and management of such sites to key cultural and environmental values.”

Summary and Conclusions:

“This chapter has presented the case of Wellfield A, which supplies water to the Olympic Dam mining project in central South Australia, and the impacts and risks to Kati Thanda springs. The springs are unique and irreplaceable cultural and ecological heritage but those in the vicinity of Wellfield A have clearly experienced significant impacts and some have gone extinct (Priscilla, Venables). This has been demonstrated through a detailed synthesis and assessment of monitoring data for Wellfield A, especially the lack of full recovery in levels or flows in many bores or springs following the reduction in extraction in the mid-1990s after the development of Wellfield B. The monitoring frequency has been substantially reduced since February 1999 for bores and 2002 for springs, whilst from 2015 reporting has reduced individual spring and bore monitoring data, making it impossible to assess in detail the state of individual springs or bores. A key finding of this chapter is the unique relationships between nearby artesian pressure levels and spring flows, arguably the first time such an analysis has been synthesized for the Kati Thanda springs and confirming the intuitive expectation that small reductions in pressure can lead to significant reductions in spring flows. The special case study highlights the critical importance of aligning monitoring closely with the science and determining compliance criteria accordingly – something which clearly needs to be improved in this case. Given the ever-present potential for a third GAB wellfield for Olympic Dam, as well as an expansion of extraction from Wellfield B and even potentially Wellfield A, it is clear that threats to the cultural and ecological values of the Kati Thanda springs remain real and significant.”