

Waratah community update

March 2022

In our last community update we provided detail of the work underway on the decommissioning of the Waratah Dam.

At that time the latest drone footage showed extensive natural growth following the initial lowering of the water level in the reservoir in 2017 for safety reasons.

With the waterway returning to its natural state, we slowly lowered the level of the reservoir to make the dam safe.

This process was managed carefully, and with the reservoir playing no part in the town's water supply, there were no impacts on our ability to supply treated drinking water.

As advised in the last update, the work to remove the dam will take place from March of this year.

The first step will be to excavate a channel in the embankment, with the removed material being used to fill in the lowered spillway and remediate the surrounding area.

There will be limited material removed from the site, which will minimise vehicle movements on the road to the dam. The site around the dam will be closed to public while work is underway.

We will be installing barriers upstream and downstream of the dam site to catch silt. These will remain in place for around 12 months.

The excavation work may lead to temporary discolouration of the water. This will be closely monitored and should not impact the town's treated water.

In the event the water does temporarily become discoloured we have made provisions to cart water should supply need to be supplemented until the water clears.

The embankment removal project is expected to take around five weeks. Once complete, we will consult with the Waratah-Wynyard Council and property owners ahead of the installation of interpretive signage.

This signage will be installed on northern abutment site which will remain in place. It will document the story of the building of the original dam in 1910, to its collapse in 1975 and subsequent building of a new dam.

The natural rehabilitation which has commenced will be monitored and managed for around three years to ensure the site is returning to its natural state.

Weed management is an important aspect of this rehabilitation, and the river and the new riverbanks will be monitored during this time.

This aim of this work is to encourage the re-establishment of the natural flora that was submerged by the dam's reservoir. Where needed, the river channel will be lined with rock to prevent erosion and sedimentation.

We are also working closely with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania and the Waratah Wynyard Council on the refurbishment of the town's weir.

Technical and historical information about the dam is available at our website:

<https://www.taswater.com.au/ourprojects/waratahdam>

If you would like any additional information about this project, please get in touch.

<https://www.taswater.com.au/about-us/contact-us>

