



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

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FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL APPROVAL FOR WYARALONG DAM

Environment Minister Peter Garrett has today announced conditional federal environmental approval of the Wyaralong Dam in south-east Queensland.

On top of the environmental protection requirements placed on the project by the Queensland Coordinator-General, Mr Garrett said he had added extra conditions to ensure the commitments to protect matters of national environmental significance were implemented and monitored.

“In making my decision I have carefully considered the environmental impacts of the dam on those matters of national environmental significance that are listed and protected under the federal environmental legislation – the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act,” Mr Garrett said.

“Based on the information and advice I have received, and with the additional approval conditions I am imposing, I am confident that this project can proceed while still ensuring adequate protection for matters protected under the Act, including nationally listed threatened or migratory species and the ecological character of the internationally important Moreton Bay Ramsar wetlands.

“In particular, my additional conditions require the proponent to carry out extensive monitoring of the downstream environment, to ensure that the operation of the dam does not impact on the Moreton Bay wetlands.

“My responsibility under the EPBC Act is to make decisions about possible impacts on matters of national environmental significance as defined by the Act. Other environmental matters which may be affected by the dam are the responsibility of the Queensland Government.

“I have also taken into account the relevant economic and social matters and all comments received during the assessment process. I thank those organisations and individuals who took the time to provide submissions.”

Mr Garrett said he and his department had also received letters from landholders in the Wyaralong area during the assessment process, who had expressed concerns about the proposal.

“I am aware of the difficulties faced by those directly impacted by this project, and I urge the proponent and the Queensland Government to take all possible steps to avoid unnecessary disruption to the local residents and community,” he said.

Wyaralong Dam, which will link into Queensland's SEQ water grid, was assessed under bilateral agreement between the Queensland and the Australian Governments.