



MEDIA RELEASE

Glory, glory to Chaffey Dam as upgrade complete

13 May 2016

The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources and Member for New England Barnaby Joyce has heralded today's official completion of the much-anticipated expansion of Chaffey Dam to increase its permanent storage capacity to 100 gegalitres as a momentous occasion for the Tamworth region.

Minister Joyce was joined by NSW Minister Primary Industries Lands and Water Niall Blair, Member for Tamworth Kevin Anderson and Tamworth Regional Council Mayor Col Murray.

"When I came to New England, Chaffey Dam was underfunded, unapproved and unbuilt. Since I have been here, we have got it funded, approved and now built," Minister Joyce said.

"This upgrade project will help ensure the future water security of Tamworth and the Peel Valley and it is a point of personal pride to see this project signed, sealed and delivered within three years, after I made a commitment to the project during the 2013 election campaign.

"It goes to show that when a personal commitment meets the actual ability to deliver, things get done – and done quickly.

"Despite the cynicism in some circles about politicians, this project is evidence that effective teamwork between all three levels of government brings the best benefits for the community – in this case, the Tamworth area and Peel Valley irrigators.

"Not only will the upgrade secure long-term water supplies for Tamworth, it will underpin the future productivity and prosperity of the region by supplying reliable water to growers.

"Having just announced a new \$2 billion National Water Infrastructure Loans Facility to help state and territory governments build water infrastructure, I think we can all look to the Chaffey Dam upgrade as a great example of how it should be done.

"It's vitally important that our water infrastructure, in terms of storage and irrigation capacity, keeps pace with the needs of the nation, including farmers, industry, mining and regional communities and the cities.

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Hon **Barnaby Joyce** MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

“If the efficiency, commitment and cooperation between governments in building water infrastructure displayed here is replicated across the nation, then we can look forward to great success in getting water infrastructure where it is needed, as quickly as possible, right across the nation.”

Minister Blair said this project drew on local resources and workforce – which was an important part of delivering a local project by local people.

“Improved water security on this scale represents a huge investment in the Tamworth community, as well as the business prospects of water users, including irrigators, who play such an important role in the local economy,” Mr Blair said.

“But the long term appeal of a larger and more secure water supply will be hugely attractive to potential investors, visitors and those city dwellers looking for quality of life in regional communities like Tamworth.”

Mr Anderson said the enhanced water security represents both short term and long term benefit to the Tamworth region.

“I made the commitment when we went to the 2011 election to build this vital piece of infrastructure and today I stand proudly with the NSW Government knowing we delivered what others could only ever speak of.

“The project created local jobs, used local firms and materials and gave a welcome injection into our local economy, and when we see that sort of investment we see a noticeable boost to local business confidence.”

Minister Joyce said the Australian Government had invested \$18 million in the upgrade project, which has increased the permanent storage capacity of the dam from 62 gegalitres to 100 gegalitres, as well as ensuring the dam complies with the necessary safety standards for extreme floods.

“This project, alongside our \$2 billion National Water Infrastructure Loan Facility, is a clear demonstration of the Coalition Government’s commitment to meeting the infrastructure needs of regional Australia,” he said.

“It also builds on the \$500 million National Water Infrastructure Development Fund announced in the Agricultural Competitiveness White paper, which is already identifying projects that will deliver opportunities for growth and development in our rural industries and communities.”

The \$50 million Chaffey Dam project was funded by the Australian Government's National Water Security Plan for Cities and Towns (\$18.145 million), the NSW Government (\$27.668 million) and Tamworth Regional Council (\$3.968 million).

Chaffey Dam features the larger of only two morning glory spillways in Australia, so named because the spillway is a similar shape to the flower. Rather than spilling over the dam, high waters spill into the giant concrete egg-shaped funnel.

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