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\$30M FOR PRELIMINARY INTERCONNECTION WORKS

Preliminary works on the \$400 million project to connect Adelaide's northern and southern water supply networks has been approved by the State Government.

Following initial investigations, SA Water is now to develop options for upgrading existing water mains and infrastructure – rather than installing a large diameter pipe to connect the systems – to minimise costs and impacts on the community.

Minister for Water Security Karlene Maywald says the State Government jointly announced a \$403 million north-south interconnection project in 2007 and now, with the expansion of the Adelaide Desalination Project to a 100-gigalitre capacity, the Network Water Security Program has been brought forward.

“The Network Water Security Program project will allow water from our reservoirs, the River Murray and the Adelaide Desalination Plant to be used flexibly across the entire metropolitan area.

“Adelaide's water distribution system is roughly split at the River Torrens into a northern and southern system, which does not currently have the capability for large volume intra-system transfer and that is what this project will achieve.

“At 50 gigalitres, the Adelaide Desalination Plant was able to be integrated into the Happy Valley water supply system without the need to interconnect the northern and southern systems. However, the recent capacity doubling of the plant means we need to connect the two systems to ensure we can optimise use of the 100GL capacity over 12 months.

“During initial investigations SA Water looked at constructing a large diameter pipeline to connect the Hope Valley Reservoir in the Adelaide's north to the Happy Valley Reservoir in the south. However, we believe the project can be delivered without causing the community major disruption.

“Hydraulic modelling performed recently by SA Water engineers suggests that connecting the northern and southern water supply networks could be completed through the construction of smaller pipelines and additional booster pumping stations. There will be a requirement to expand some of our storage capacity and these sorts of issues will now be worked through.

“The preliminary works includes site assessments, existing infrastructure investigations, hydraulic modelling, project team set-up, design and development of engineering works, bulk water modelling, power supply investigations, water quality research and environmental impact assessments.

“There's a lot of work to do on this project before construction can begin and we are aiming for design completion and financial approvals in mid-2011. It is anticipated this project will deliver the necessary additional distribution requirements to allow full use of water from the expanded Adelaide desalination plant when it comes online in 2012.”