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MEDIA RELEASE

Clearing the way for pipeline progress

Most of the 70 kilometres of the Sugarloaf Pipeline project has now been cleared and graded in preparation for pipe laying.

Sugarloaf Pipeline Alliance spokesperson Denise Hurley said despite recent welcome rains, the project is maintaining steady progress and continued to be ahead of schedule.

Ms Hurley said clearing was a significant part of the project and required a lot of advance preparation.

Specialist ecological, environmental, cultural and construction assessments were required and considered in consultation with landowners as the Alliance worked to minimise the project's impact.

These assessments included 17 Environmental Management Plans (EMPs) covering all aspects of the construction zone including private properties, river crossings, tunnels, waterways the Toolangi State Forest and towns.

"They required approval before clearing and grading could be undertaken. The last EMP was finally approved at the crossing at the Yea River at Castella recently," Ms Hurley said.

Ms Hurley said pipe laying through the Yea River at Yea was now finished and reinstatement had begun. Strict environmental controls remain in place to protect water quality and the environment until reinstatement is finished.

Pipe laying is complete north of Yea except for minor waterway crossings and connection to the Goulburn River Pump Station.

Pipe is also being laid from the Toolangi State Forest south toward the Sugarloaf Reservoir.

Pipe laying work in the Yarra Glen area also included replacing old aqueduct pipe along the same right of way.

Tunnelling under an 830 metre section of the forest was completed last week and the Alliance is now preparing to lay pipe through the tunnel.

Reinstatement in the Toolangi State Forest has already begun and is also being carried out in the Glenburn area.

The Sugarloaf Pipeline Alliance continues to work with local landowners, residents and community groups to minimise the impact on the region.

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