

Indigenous Land Use Agreement with Darumbal Aboriginal People Corporation registered for Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline

A milestone has been reached with the official registration of an Indigenous Land Use Agreement (ILUA) between Gladstone Area Water Board (GAWB) and the Darumbal People in Central Queensland as part of the state's \$983 million pipeline project.

GAWB and DPAC marked this significant milestone last week at a ceremony and morning tea held at the DPAC headquarters in Allenstown, near Rockhampton.

The Fitzroy to Gladstone Pipeline (FGP) ILUA was registered with the Native Title Tribunal on 16 May 2024 - marking a significant step in the project and for the Darumbal Peoples Aboriginal Corporation (DPAC), the Traditional Owners of the region.

The DPAC are the Traditional Custodians of the Rockhampton and Capricorn Coast area. Their traditional boundaries are the Styx River to the north, Raglan Creek to the south, Westwood and bottom of the Mt Morgan range to the west.

The FGP project area from the Lower Fitzroy River to Raglan Creek is within the outer boundaries of the DPAC Native Title determination area. DPAC have a Native Title determination over the bed and banks of the Lower Fitzroy River, and the beds and banks of creeks along the FGP route.

The ILUA has been two years in the making.

Gladstone Area Water Board Chief Executive Officer Darren Barlow said the first meeting in April in 2022 was the beginning of many to achieve the ILUA.

"Following the first meeting representatives from GAWB attended a Cultural Immersion Day that same year in June which was a great opportunity to better understand the Darumbal people and country," Mr Barlow said.

"This milestone signifies the strong relationship between GAWB and the Darumbal people and highlights the great deal of respect we have for each other," he said.

The 117km pipeline will run from the Fitzroy River near Rockhampton and connect to Gladstone Area Water Board's existing water network at Yarwun.

Since the project started, it has created upward of 400 jobs and supported 21 trainees, including supporting the local workforce with more than 25,000 hours for First Nations Australians workforce participation.

Mr Malcolm Mann, Business Development Manager Darumbal Enterprises Pty Ltd said, on behalf of the Darumbal People Aboriginal Corporation, we acknowledge those who have gone before us today. Everything that has been achieved today is through their hard work and commitment to the resilience of our people.

"As we continue to uphold our custodial obligations to our country and our People, we recognise that we have achieved many milestones, said Mr Mann.

"This is another and something that we all can be proud of, the registration of an Indigenous Land Use Agreement with the Gladstone Area Water Board.

"I want to acknowledge the relationship, the leadership and openness of GAWB to understand and work with us through this process, which has not been easy, it has been complex and intense in parts.

"I am also grateful that GAWB came out on country with our Elders to gain an understanding of the significance of Country particularly in relation to water, as part of this process of negotiation.

"I also want recognise GAWB's flexibility to work with us through current and ongoing benefits as part of this agreement such as employment.

"The Darumbal People look forward to working with GAWB through the construction and operation of the Fitzroy Gladstone Pipeline, he said."

Gladstone Area Water Board, as a Queensland Government Bulk Water Supply Authority, delivers safe and reliable water services which promote economic development and enhances the lifestyle of regional Queensland. Gladstone Area Water Board owns and operates Awoonga Dam on the Boyne River, along with a network of delivery pipelines, water treatment plants and other bulk water distribution infrastructure.

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