



NORTH EAST WATER

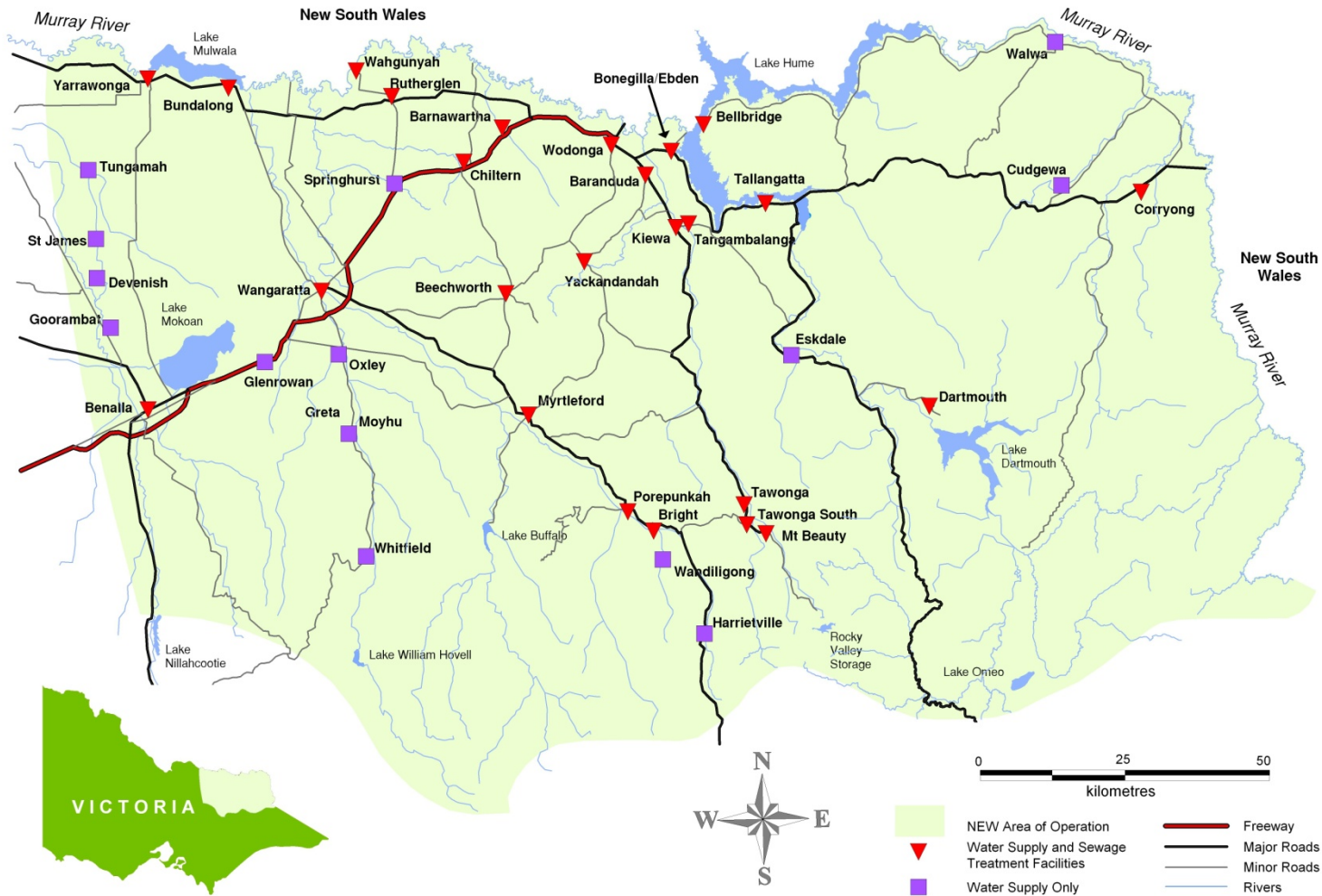
# Reflections on Community Engagement



# Chiltern – An Overview



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# Chiltern – Reflections



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- Even if engagement is risky from a reputation perspective, the rewards can be significant.
- High on the IAP2 empowerment scale.
- Discipline around the Charter is required, often!
- Know when to close the process.
- Celebrate success.
- Maintain a relationship as appropriate.

# Bright – An Overview



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North East Water used the existing Bright Reference Group to consider options to improve water security.

An extensive engagement process included:

- Review of options assessment criteria.
- Assessment outcomes.
- Identification of preferred site locations.

Mixed interpretations about where we were on IAP2 empowerment scale.

Did not achieve Reference Group support for the Corporation's site selection.

# Bright – Cause for reflections!



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**Minister for Water**

Ref: MBR019073  
File: WB.05.3007.2

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Ms Joanne Anderson  
Chair  
North East Water  
PO Box 863  
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- 2 SEP 2011

Dear Ms Anderson

*Joanne*

**BRIGHT OFF-STREAM STORAGE - SITE SELECTION**

Thank you for your letter dated 28 February 2011, enclosing North East Water's *Report on Site Options* for the Bright off-stream storage.

This report was requested in the context of the Victorian Coalition Government's pre-election commitments to invest an additional \$2 million to increase the proposed storage capacity, and to review the information on which the site choice was based.

As you are aware, a consultant was engaged to provide further review and advice in relation to the site selection process undertaken by North East Water.

Subsequent to the above, I am satisfied that the process undertaken by North East Water in determining the Freeburgh site has considered social, environmental and economic factors. Accordingly, work on this project may now continue in the normal course of affairs.

I note that the Bright and District Community has raised concerns about the community engagement process adopted by North East Water, particularly in relation to the project site selection. I request that North East Water undertake a review of its community engagement process to identify opportunities for future improvement.

Please advise the community and other project stakeholders of this outcome, and inform the Department of Sustainability & Environment of your planned communication activities.

# Bright – Reflections



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- Escalation mechanisms could have responded better to tensions around the decision.
- Successfully sought community input to the decision making process, i.e. Criteria for assessment.
- Very engaged Reference Group throughout the process.
- Can be challenging to diffuse a tension, once escalated.

# Water Plan 3 – An Overview



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- Building on our engagement success during Water Plan 2.
- Taking it up a notch with Water Plan 3.
- Significantly increased community interest.
- Strong interface with the Board, with the Water Plan 3 Reference Group chaired by the Deputy Chair of the Board.
- Recruited a ‘Power House’ of capability, to challenge our thinking, and ultimately shape our service delivery.



Water Plan 3  
Reference Group

# Water Plan 3 – Timeframes and Key Actions



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- Future Reference Group meetings are scheduled for December 2011, and January, February, March and April 2012.
- Number of meetings doubled in response to the Group's assessment of what needs to be considered.
- Already seeing fresh perspectives on a range of topics, i.e. GSLs.
- Using the full spectrum of IAP2 empowerment.
- Well placed to achieve Board endorsement of the draft Water Plan in April 2012.





# Summary



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## Themes for Success:

- Well-considered internal plan.
- Robust Charter and meetings process.
- Genuine commitment to the process.
- Flexibility to change the process as required.