



Kevin Humphries MP
Minister for Natural Resources, Lands and Water
Minister for Western NSW
Greg Piper MP
Member for Lake Macquarie

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 13 November 2014

30 YEAR WAIT FOR WYEE IS FINALLY OVER

Minister for Natural Resources, Lands and Water Kevin Humphries today announced a fully funded \$26 million plan to connect Wyee to Hunter's Water's sewerage system.

The NSW Government will contribute \$2.4 million to the project with the remaining \$23.6 million to be funded by Hunter Water.

Mr Humphries said Hunter Water's sewer system will connect 400 lots and be built with an eye to future development, with the system large enough to transfer the sewerage flows of 1,000 lots.

"I appreciate there are literally hundreds of families who have been waiting more than 25 years for this day. I today confirm that the NSW Government and Hunter Water will fund 100% of the cost of extending Hunter Water's sewerage network to Wyee.

"Hunter Water will now complete preliminary plans to transfer the waste to the Dora Creek or Charmhaven treatment plants or possibly to a privately owned system that makes use of a small, locally operated plant.

"Wyee is well positioned to become a key growth corridor linking the Hunter and Central Coast. It has its own train station, is just 5 minutes from the M1 and has an abundance of large land that will now be developed over the next decade.

"This \$26 million investment will mean an annual saving of up to \$3,500 per family who have fortnightly been paying for their septic tanks to be pumped. For many properties, pumping can be even more regular, especially after storms when storage tanks take on rainwater via cracks in the pipes," Mr Humphries said.

Member for Lake Macquarie Greg Piper said the decision to connect Wyee to Hunter Water's sewerage network was a hard fought win.

"I'm both elated and relieved for my constituents in Wyee. Many Wyee families have been waiting up to 30 years to receive reticulated sewerage, something the vast majority of other homes in the region take for granted.

"I have personally thanked the Premier, Minister Humphries and Hunter Water for listening to the pleas of the people of Wyee, who have for decades been treated by successive governments like second class citizens.

"I'm also grateful to Hunter Water's current management, who have listened to the needs of Wyee's residents and are working to finally deliver the service this town deserves.

“The cost of pump-out services is significantly higher than reticulated sewer, and far less reliable. This has meant years of residents facing an additional cost of living while also having to manage temperamental, environmentally unfriendly effluent disposal systems.

“Connecting to Hunter Water’s reticulated sewerage system will allow Wyee to realise its vast potential. It will open up land for affordable housing, attracting families, and boosting commercial investment and local employment.

“Today’s commitment by the Government to sewer Wyee will undoubtedly be the turning point for the local community,” Mr Piper said.

EPA regional manager Adam Gilligan said reticulated sewerage had significant environmental benefits over septic systems.

“Connecting to Hunter Water’s system means less raw sewage inadvertently leaking from malfunctioning septic systems in Wyee and potentially entering local waterways.

“Wyee’s creeks run through an environmentally sensitive corridor before reaching Lake Macquarie, which means this project will benefit both the local area and the thousands of people using the Lake each week,” Mr Gilligan said.

Wyee Childcare Centre owner Karen O’Connor said the decision comes as good news for local business owners.

“Small businesses in Wyee have to juggle pump-out costs and septic maintenance among other overheads, which can make doing business in the area incredibly challenging. Knowing we’ll get sewerage here is a huge relief which has already lifted the spirits of the community.

“With a proper sewer connection will come young families and a better future for the local Wyee kids we care for,” Ms O’Connor said.

Hunter Water Managing Director Kim Wood said detailed planning would commence next year.

“Hunter Water will next year submit to IPART a capital works portfolio worth well over \$400 million for the next four years. Among these projects will be the sewerage of 400 Wyee lots with a capacity to connect another 600 when the area is developed.

“This is a significant project, with work to commence early next year and while the completion date will be largely determined by the option taken, we’d expect the system to be running no later than 2020,” he said.