

Fingerboards Critical Minerals Project Study Briefs – Water Source Assessment

Overview

The water source assessment will provide a systematic evaluation of water source options that could deliver the required volume to the Project. The assessment will consider availability, sustainability, reliability, and deliverability impacts/constraints, consistent with the relevant regulatory setting. It will consider trading rules, market feasibility, risk factors, and stakeholder concerns, examining a clear, evidence-based path for securing and managing the water source(s) for mining operations.

Assessment Objectives

- A systematic review and identification of all sustainable and regulatory compliant water sources that could meet the project's water demand of approximately 3.0 gigalitres per year.
- An assessment of the identified water source options in consideration of environmental and economic impacts for the extraction, delivery and storage of the water source(s)
- Generation of a robust, evidence based water acquisition strategy that provides transparency for regulators, stakeholders, and the broader community.
- Allowance for early integration of final water source(s) strategy within environmental and social impact assessment workstreams.

Preliminary Focus Areas

- **Options analysis** - Robust analysis of all potential entitlements within the region, their associated water trading rules in consideration of a single source or hybrid option of two or more sources meeting the Project's demand.
- **Stakeholder engagement** - Consultation with government, water holders, and local users regarding entitlements and trade (purchase/lease) prospects.
- **Assessment** - Evaluation of the options in the context of environmental, social, commercial and climate impacts and uncertainties.
- **Evidence and compliance** - Documentation of a final water supply strategy on the basis of environmental, commercial, community and regulatory expectations.

Specialist Consultant

Marsden Jacob Associates has been engaged to conduct the water source options assessment for the Project. They are an independent and highly experienced consultancy with extensive experience in the local and regional water sector with experience in some of Australia's most significant regulation, policy and market reforms across the rural and urban water sectors. They work across multiple scales, catchments, basins, precincts, irrigation schemes, communities, water business and legislative boundaries. This includes significant expertise in Victoria's water trading, entitlement transfer, and regulatory frameworks. More information is available at <https://www.marsdenjacob.com.au>

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