

# Seqwater Dam Improvement Program

## Lake Kurwongbah (Sideling Creek Dam) July 2018



### Vegetation clearing and offsets

#### Background

Sideling Creek Dam (Lake Kurwongbah) is currently undergoing an upgrade. This involves strengthening the main dam and spillway to better withstand earthquakes and extreme weather events. The upgrade is expected to be complete mid-2019, subject to weather conditions and other unexpected delays. Once construction is completed, the dam level will return to its original full supply level.

As part of early upgrade work, Seqwater and the construction contractor will need to clear existing vegetation adjacent to the current dam wall to allow for the earthworks to occur. It is unsafe for trees to grown on or near the dam walls as they reduce the integrity of the earth embankment.

#### Assessment

We have carried out ecological field surveys to confirm the construction activities will not have a significant adverse impact on threatened species, such as the grey headed flying fox and koala, as listed under the *Federal Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act*. The assessment also investigated and confirmed impacts on State matters such as protected flora and fauna and regional ecosystems.

An environmental management plan and species management plan has been prepared for construction in order to mitigate the impact of construction on local fauna, species and other environmental values. Specialist fauna spotters will be involved in clearing works to minimise the risk of environmental harm and fencing will be installed once clearing works are complete to limit movement into the construction site.

While there are no significant adverse impacts identified, the existing vegetation contains a number of non-juvenile koala habitat trees (NJKHT), which have been assessed under State legislation. In total, there are 312 NJKHT identified within the footprint of the upgrade work, however it is not certain that all of these NJKHT will be cleared during construction. The clearing extents are to be confirmed on site.

Under the State legislation, there are two options identified for offset associated with NJKHT clearing - a financial settlement offset or a land-based offset. Seqwater has elected the land-based offset on a best for environment basis and we have identified a suitable area within the greater catchment for planting of offsets.

#### Offsets

Based on the *Offsets Act*, Seqwater has identified that at least 936 NJKHT will need to be planted, within the local government area to compensate for loss of NJKHT habitat.

Seqwater has considered the catchment around Sideling Creek Dam and there are limited opportunities for viable offsets on Seqwater land in the area. Consequently, the catchment around North Pine Dam was considered, and a suitable area of Seqwater land was identified for viable offsets in the south-west corner near Mount Samson.

The area of the offset will depend on the desired tree density and is in the order of 100m x 225m (2.25ha) to 250m x 300m (7.5ha).

Offsets will aim to improve connection between existing koala corridors. The species and density of the trees within the offset will be endemic to the area and will reflect the regional ecosystems.

Vegetation offsets will be managed for more than five years to ensure the trees are well established.

#### Keeping you informed

You can stay up to date with the progress of the Sideling Creek Dam upgrade by:

- W** [seqwater.com.au/damimprovement](http://seqwater.com.au/damimprovement)
- E** [sidelingcreekdam@fultonhogan.com.au](mailto:sidelingcreekdam@fultonhogan.com.au)
- P** 1800 881 495
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# Vegetation offset map

