



Pipeline secured

RURAL

BY JESSIEANNE GARTLAN

Region

THE federal government has announced funding worth \$32 million to complete the East Grampians Pipeline Project.

The announcement came Sunday afternoon, where Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack, who is also the Infrastructure Minister, and Member for Wannon Dan Tehan gathered at a farming property in Dobie owned by Charlie de Fegeley, who farms lamb.

The funding will enable GWM Water to complete the entire project so that it encompasses up to 1500 farming properties across the region of Ararat, Pyrenees and Northern Grampians.

Prior to the announcement, only half of the project had been funded and GWM Water had to reduce the initial size of the project, meaning it would have served fewer properties.

Mr de Fegeley said having the project fully funded will ensure the region can grow agriculturally and economically.

"Until this announcement was made, there was a small version (of the pipeline project) ... and some of the people would have missed out," he said. "However, now that we've got full funding this is basically going to give everyone in this district the opportunity to get water, which is terrific.

"Unfortunately this district is no longer reliable in terms of water and we need to try and form some sort of reliability in terms of managing our risk."

The impact of not having a reliable source of water was already evident, Mr de Fegeley said.

"A lot of sheep have already left this district and we've gone into crop, and crop wasn't ideal because we got frosted," he said. "There are people wanting to bring stock and they can't

because the water is not good enough."

The project will cover an area up to 530,000 hectares

with a reticulated non-drinking water supply.

"The area under investigation includes Ararat, Great Western, Buangor, east to the Eurambeen-Streatham Road and south to the Glenelg Highway," Minister McCormack said.

The pipeline will be fed by Lake Fyans, the Wimmera River, Lake Bellfield, and other lakes in the Grampians region.



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PLANNING: Charlie de Fegely discusses the East Grampians Pipeline at his farm in Dobie with Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack. **Picture:** CONTRIBUTED.