

MEDIA RELEASE

TUESDAY, 8 JUNE 2021

120-year-old bore capped to preserve groundwater

Millions of litres of groundwater will be kept in the ground and a native fish will keep enjoying its man-made habitat at a western Queensland cattle property after the owners partnered with Bravus Mining and Resources to cap a 120-year-old free-flowing bore.

The owners of the property were already planning the works to cap the old bore, drill a new one and replace 15km of open water channels with pipes, tanks and troughs when they learned of a Bravus initiative to fund such works.

A Bravus spokesperson said that under the approvals for the mine the company was required to fund an offset program to conserve groundwater.

“Even though this property is more than 150km from our mine we have been able to partner with its owners to preserve groundwater and help them use water more efficiently to supply their homestead and cattle,” the spokesperson said.

“The owners of the property had also planned the works carefully to make sure that one of the man-made water channels that over the last 120 years has become home to native fish, is kept open and continuously supplied with water through a pipe. The channel flows into a local creek that until the late 1800s would only have flowed after rain.

“This is a great result and shows the benefits of working with people on the ground who know the land inside out.

“The other open channels on the property have been filled in and replaced with pipes to stop evaporation and water loss.”

Bravus’ approvals require the company to preserve 730ML of groundwater per year for the first five years of operations by partnering with landholders to cap existing man-made bores.

Background

Since the 1800s, bores have been drilled in Western Queensland to supply groundwater for farming, town water supplies and other industrial uses.

Until the 1950s, these bores were often left free-flowing and uncontrolled. Property owners dug open channels to direct water to different parts of their properties. This was inefficient as water evaporated and seeped back into the ground.

Since the 1950s governments have put regulations in place to protect groundwater, which requires all new bores to be fitted with a water-tight headworks, like a large tap, meaning the flow can be controlled, turned on and off as required. However, despite various programs to cap these bores, some old free-flowing bores remain open.

The Federal Government made it a condition of Bravus' approvals that it must offset any potential groundwater seepage by capping man-made bores at a rate of 730ML per year for the first five years of operations.

The owners of the property hold the necessary water license under which these works were conducted.

Attachments:

Photo "Bore Prior to Capping.jpg": *The old bore before Bravus Mining and Resources helped the property owners to pay to cap it and drill a new bore to stop water wastage. The old bore was drilled in the 1890s and water freely flowed from it until 2021.*

Photo "Bore after capping.jpg": *The new bore preserves groundwater by only pumping out the exact amount of groundwater needed for cattle troughs and to supply man-made ecosystem for native fish. The water is transported from the bore in underground pipes to prevent water loss from evaporation and seepage.*

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