

28 December 2006

Community Service Announcement Snowy Scheme Operations at Talbingo Reservoir & Jounama Pondage

Talbingo Reservoir and Jounama Pondage are important operational components of the Snowy Mountains Scheme and as such water levels and flows into these storages can vary substantially in accordance with the operational requirements placed on the entire Snowy Mountains Scheme.

Much of this country and in particular south eastern Australia is suffering from the effects of a major drought sequence that has been occurring since 1996. The water storages of the Snowy Scheme and the management of these storages are not immune and must reflect this continuing drought.

In order to best use the limited water resources that remain in the Snowy Scheme prudently for all stakeholders Snowy Hydro is recycling water through its Tumut 3 Power Station at Talbingo. This means that during the day when Tumut 3 Power Station is required to generate electricity, water levels in Talbingo Reservoir will drop as water passes through Tumut 3 Power Station and flows into Jounama Pondage raising its water level.

At night the reverse will occur, water levels will drop in Jounama Pondage as water is pumped up through Tumut 3 Power Station back into Talbingo Reservoir where water levels will rise and be stored for when it is required for electricity generation. Accordingly, for most of the time we aim to keep water levels in Talbingo Reservoir near full.

Recreational users need to be aware that potential hazards exist in Talbingo Reservoir and along the foreshore as the water levels in the reservoir rise and fall.

Some restrictions have been placed on the recreational use of Jounama Pondage due the potential for strong currents that may result from the operation of Tumut 3 Power Station. In particular, the area directly below Jounama Pondage entering the State Water operated Blowering Dam should not be utilised for any recreational activity and campers along the Blowering foreshore need to be aware of potential impacts as substantial water discharges from Jounama Pondage into Blowering Reservoir may occur at any time.

Snowy Hydro is working in close consultation with the NSW Department of Natural Resources, State Water and Murray Darling Commission to manage the scarce water reserves within the Snowy Scheme. However, with no forecast improvement to water inflows in the foreseeable future Snowy Hydro must act prudently to ensure that the water which remains in the Snowy Scheme is used in a balanced way for all stakeholders.

Up to date information on Snowy Scheme water levels can be found on the Snowy Hydro web page at www.snowyhydro.com.au